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PARTICIPATORY DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION AND THE

SUSTAINABILITY OF POVERTY ALLEVIATION PROJECTS IN LESOTHO: A

CASE OF LIFAJANENG

BY

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DECLARATION

I, **HLOMPHO CYNTHIA NTOBO-LETSIE (200602522)**, hereby declare that the work contained in this research project is my original work and has not been previously in it's entirely or in part been submitted at any educational Institution for a similar or any other degree award.

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I, **HLOMPHO CYNTHIA NTOBO-LETSIE (200602522),** hereby declare that I am fully aware of the University of Fort Hare's Policy on Plagiarism and I have taken every precaution to comply with the regulations. Where other peoples' work is included or cited, appropriate reference is made to acknowledge the sources or authors.

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at assessing the impact of communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation programmes established for selected beneficiaries in the rural community of Lifajaneng. This is conducted with the purpose of understanding how the Mafeteng community engages in the poverty alleviation projects carried out within their area of residence, so as to encourage more commitment in participation. The conceptual framework for this study is the empowerment approach and the study is informed by two theories; the participatory communication theory and the diffusion of innovation theory. The study employed the mixed method approach to gather and analyze the data; that is using questionnaires, focus group discussions and face to face interviews to solicit for information from project participants and project managers. The quantitative data was presented and analyzed through charts and graphs buttressed with themes that emerged in the qualitative data. The study revealed that the sustainability of the poverty alleviation projects remains questionable due to a number of challenges. The results reflect that communities are more comfortable when the mother language (Sesotho) is used predominantly as the medium of communication. The results also reflected that meetings had a higher attendance rate if called for by local leaders through word of mouth followed by communications done telephonically. Mainstream media such as radio and newspapers were the least effective when mobilizing the communities for meetings related to the poverty alleviation projects in the poor community. The study also unfolded the following issues; lack of full participation and commitment of the beneficiaries, inadequate funding to allow sufficient training of the beneficiaries. This is because the funds had some strings attached and the beneficiaries had their own expectations of the funds, therefore the objectives and the limits of the funder did not match the objectives and the limitations of the beneficiaries. Hence, the end results are lack of motivation for the beneficiaries.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my daughter Letsabisa Letsie and my husband Mapoho Letsie who have always been supportive and my late father Mohapi Ntobo who would have been proud of this achievement.

ACRONYMS

ADB- Asian Development Bank

AFDB- African Development Bank

AHDI- Adjusted Human Development Index

AIDS- Acquired Immuno-Deficiency Syndrome

ARV- Aantiretroviral

BFG- Beneficiary Focus Group

CDP- Community Development Programme

DCYA- Department of Children and Youth Affairs

DFID- Department for International Development

ECA- Economic Commission for Africa

FAO- Food Agriculture Organisation

FIG- Figure

GDP- Gross Domestic Products

HDI- Human Development Index

HIV- Human Immuneo-Deficiency Virus,

IAEA- International Atomic Energy Agency

ICT- Information and Communications Technology

IFAD- International Fund for Agricultural Development

IISD- International Institute for Sustainable Development

IMF- International Monitory Fund

MDGR- Millennium Development Goal Report

NEPAD- New Partnership for African`s Development

NGO- Non-Government Organisation

NSSD- National Strategy for Sustainable development

OECD- Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

PRS- Poverty Reduction Strategy

PRS- Priority Areas and Cross Cutting Issues

SPW- Student Partnership Worldwide

UN- United Nations

UNCED- United Nations Conference on Environmental Development

UNDP- United Nations Development Programmes

UNEP- United Nations Environmental Programme

UNICEF- United Nations Children's Fund

WCED- World Commission on Environment and development

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLE OF CONTENTS

xi

CHAPTER 1: CONCEPTUALIZATION OF THE STUDY

1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Poverty alleviation has been one of the world`s greatest challenges and it has incessantly struck people mostly in Africa and it has been so conspicuous that no one can ignore it (African Economic Outlook, 2013). Organisations either governmental or non-governmental have been fully engaged in alleviating this crisis (African Economic Outlook, 2013). The Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) supports poverty alleviation through its mandate which puts more emphasis on raising the nutritional levels and living standards, improving the agricultural production, and to improve the living condition of people in rural areas, (Millennium Development Goals Status Report, 2012).

On a similar note, the United Nations' Millennium Declaration aimed at reducing the number of people in the world who suffer from hunger by half by 2015. The Plan also called upon countries in African to develop and implement food security stratagems within the context of national poverty alleviation programmes, (Millennium Development Goal report (MDGR), 2005). This supports the New Partnership for Development in Africa on NEPAD's agriculture segment aims, which include among others: the advancement of the productivity of agriculture, which put more emphasis on women and the small-scale farmers in order to secure food, and upsurge the access of the poor to sufficient food and nutrition and to assist Africa to export of agricultural products (MDGR, 2007).

Like in other African countries, the government of Lesotho has made poverty alleviation one of its major priorities. This is because Lesotho has many people living below the poverty datum line due to various reasons (Millennium Development Goals Status Report, 2012). Different strategies have been used by both the government and non-government institutions to address poverty. Non-governmental Organizations have come up with feasible solutions to the overwhelming problem of poverty on the African continent (Millennium Development Goals Status Report, 2012). The millennium development approach has been the implementation of initiatives and projects which

aimed at sustainable development. On the same issue Coldevin (2000), adds that in order to attain the desired sustainability in projects, information must be communicated throughout the framework to inform decision making at all levels. He also adds that discussion is the critical factor in sharing knowledge that builds trust ensuring communal understanding (Coldevin, 2000).

However, the researcher has observed that even though several plans have been made thus far, the Millennium Declaration has not been achieved as there are still many people in Lesotho who are living below the poverty datum line. This was proved by Rocchi (2016) as he declares that, poverty affected about 57.1% of the population and the number of people who are extremely poor went up by 35.1% in 2004 when compared to 34% in 2002/03, as the rural areas were mostly affected as compared to urban areas. The millennium declaration has not addressed the core problem because there is still no sustainability in poverty alleviation projects, which are assumed to be the core in combating poverty (MDGSR, 2012). This may be because of different issues like their limited time of implementation, their use of parallel structures and their decisions in communication methods (MDGSR, 2012). In view of the above, the study intends to look into the impact of communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho: the case of Lifajaneng village in Mafeteng District.

1.1 THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

There is a general concern that poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho are failing due to several reasons such as failure to empower beneficiaries sufficiently, lack of capacity, building to the beneficiaries, increasing the effectiveness of projects, improving project efficiency, cost sharing and responsibility sharing as well as corruption due to politics. This has been proved by the collapse of poverty alleviation intervention programmes such as Machobane Farming System and Moteng Small Farmers Association in Butha-Buthe which had some serious communication issues which led to the projects being unsustainable. Other rural development projects in Thaba-Putsoa, Leribe and Tsakholo collapsed due to corruption and mismanagement of aid funds and lack of sufficient training to the beneficiaries and poor communication (Ngqaleni, 1991).

Foley (2005) believes that it is important that all relevant stakeholders should communicate effectively for the benefit of any kind of poverty alleviation project to succeed. However, ineffective communication Management system in poverty alleviation projects appears to be the major course for the failure of such projects (Foley, 2005). Tipili, Ojeba and Ilyasu (2014) emphasize that more than 50% of the projects are not successful because poor communication appears to be one of the major contributing factors. Foley (2005) insists that poor communication results into failure to produce good results even when the strategies put in place are the best. Foley and Macmillan (2005) indicate further that averages of two in five projects do not meet their intended goals, and one half of those unsuccessful projects are due to ineffective communication.

The study will unpack only the issues of communication and try to understand the extent to which it affects the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. This is because the researcher's experience has shown that some development projects are successful and sustainable, while others are not firm and are completely failing to be sustainable in Lesotho due to different reasons such as corruption, insufficient training, poor communication and lack of ownership to instill sustainability.

1.1.1 Aim of the Study

This study aimed at looking into the impact of communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho, the case of Lifajaneng village in Mafeteng District.

1.1.2 The research objectives

- To understand the methods of participatory communication available to ensure sustainability of poverty alleviation projects.
- To find out, the usefulness of the channels of communication in ensuring the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects.
- To understand the impact of participatory communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects.

1.1.3 The research questions

- What form of participatory communication methods is available to ensure the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?
- To what extent are the channels of communication useful towards ensuring the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?
- What are the impacts of participatory communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The researcher believes that the issue of communication affecting sustainability has been documented, but research on the impact of participatory communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects within the context of Lesotho is not enough. Due to that, projects stakeholders are not entirely aware of the significance of communication as a process and their participation from the planning until the execution of the project. This study therefore hopes to seal that knowledge gap in this issue. In addition, the beneficiaries of poverty alleviation projects will benefit from the results of this study as they will clearly see where they normally go wrong for the sake of the sustainability of their projects. The most significant issues about the results of this study are to see poverty alleviation projects being sustainable and giving beneficiaries as well as other community members relevant skills and adequate techniques to improve their lives.

The government and the policy makers as well as the NGOs which are interested in issues of poverty alleviation can be in a position to incorporate the findings of this study into their policies, so as to overcome the problem of sustainability. The findings of the study will broaden the understanding of the NGO and government practitioners on issues of sustainable development and their consideration on the beneficiary needs. The recommendations of the study will give the most relevant suggestions of how to keep the projects sustainable. This study will also work as an eye-opener to the Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of natural Resources as well as the ministry of trade and industry as they are engaged in projects that are meant to combat poverty and sustain the lives of Basotho who are leaving in poverty.

1.3 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study was limited to one project which was purposively chosen in `Masemouse constituency in the Mafeteng District of Lesotho. The study was only focusing on the beneficiaries of Lifajaneng project where the village is extremely poor, yet there are several projects making efforts to combat poverty as well as project coordinators operating on the ground in the area. Also, due to time constraints and inaccessibility of other villages and the depth of mixed method data, the study has therefore only been limited to the one village of Lifajaneng. The results of this study were therefore generalised based on the one village of Lifajaneng in Mafeteng District.

1.4 CONCLUSION

In this study, the purpose was to improve the lives of rural poor by making them to spearhead the initiatives and getting them involved from the planning until the execution of the projects while they benefit and improve their lives. In order to achieve that, the main objective this chapter explained the background relating the problem that exists in the area of participatory communication in poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho. It lays the basis upon which an investigation of communication in poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho can be realised. It has also given the details of what is going on in different organizations and in poverty alleviation projects. The chapter also highlights the factors hindering sustainability in development projects. The statement of the problem has been discussed as well as the purposes of the study, the research questions and the significance of the study. The next chapter reviews the available and relevant literature relevant to participatory communication and sustainable development of poverty alleviation projects.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Literature review pertinent to the study was the focus in this chapter and it is divided into two sections which consist of the conceptual and theoretical reviews. The researcher begins by unpacking relevant concepts to the study such as, poverty in Lesotho, the role of communication in sustainability, methods of participatory communication, channels of communication and the impact of participatory communication on the sustainability of the projects. The conceptual and theoretical framework which features the participatory approach were used to explain the diffusion of innovation theory.

2.1 An overview of poverty in Lesotho

Recent statistical records have shown that poverty levels are increasing in Lesotho (UNDP, 2014). Lesotho massively increased its Human Development Index (HDI) value between 1980 and 2013, and it moved from 0.443 to 0.486 thus representing 9.8 percent increment (an average annual increase of about 0.28 percent, United Nations Development Programmes (UNDP, 2014). The number of very poor households also increased from 34% in 2003 to 35.1% in 2013 (MDGR, 2013). In addition to that, poverty may be high in urban areas but it is worse in rural areas, because agricultural productivity which is their main source of income is very low (MDGR, 2013).

The Gini inequality coefficient was high and escalated from 0.52 in 2002/3 to 0.54 in 2010/11 (UNDP, 2014). UNDP (2014:24) also proved that; "*the jobless rate is worse in the 20-29 age groups and higher in rural areas compared to urban areas. In the 18-24 age group 52.5% of urban males are working against 50.2% in rural areas. The corresponding female proportions in the urban and rural areas are 54.7% and 47.9% respectively. The retrenchment of migrant mine workers in South Africa has further exacerbated the unemployment situation.*" The above quotation is elaborating the percentages of people who are affected by poverty especially the ones in rural areas; their percentage seems to be higher than that of people who are in urban areas. This can be due to different reasons such as the fact that their lives depend mostly on agriculture, so when the production is bad, that affects them negatively. Whereas the urban people depend mostly on their salaries as they depend on buying their daily food.

In 2012 the Lesotho's economy was devastated due to drought that reduced agricultural production by approximately 70% (UNDP, 2014). In the same year Gross Domestic Products (GDP) also went up by 3.8% even though boosted by mining and construction sectors respectively. The country's economic policy was spreading out, to rehabilitate the infrastructure, which was affected by floods (UNDP, 2014). In the same year, inflation was at 5.5% due to drought, high international commodity and fuel prices resulting into massive negative impact on food security. However, the private sector though very small, had promised to generate growth and employment in the country, but Poverty and extreme hunger still persist. It challenges the initiative programmes that the country has achieved towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) with the aim of reducing poverty such as free primary education provision, gender and women's empowerment (AFDB, OECD, UNDP, ECA, 2013).

The government of Lesotho, among other things, has been fighting poverty through an extensive provision of financial assistance to the agriculture sector as a long-term goal (AFDB, OECD, UNDP, ECA, 2013). It has collaborated with various developmental agencies to sustain its fiscal budget in order to improve and increase access to sustainable financial services and agricultural activities in rural and urban areas (World Bank, 2012). There are credit loan systems in place to help the agriculture sector of which 50% support agricultural inputs and direct farming partnerships with the Government of Lesotho (World Bank, 2012). Recently, several programmes have been set up to promote community-oriented activities, and have provided valuable experience (Ndabe and Turner, 2006).

Community development is a widely accepted model that was promoted by the United Nations and some rich countries in an effort to alleviate poverty in the Third World (Plein, 2011). Community development programmes were designed for the purpose of mobilising people in their local communities as an integral part of medium term plans made by national planners and operated under centralised management and fund allocation (ibid, 2011). Lesotho as one of the developing countries, adopted the system of using Community Development Programmes (CDP) to alleviate poverty (Ndabe and Turner, 2006).

The Department for International Development and Student Partnership Worldwide (DFID and SPW) (2010) emphasised the importance of participation of the relevant stakeholders especially the community as it is a procedure through which participants' influence, share and control the development creativities, decisions and resources that are within their reach (ibid, 2011). It is therefore imperative that this study analyses the role that participatory development communication plays in the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects since the country is in dire need of a sustainable structure that will serve as an impetus for poverty alleviation. The researcher feels that participation gives beneficiaries some sense of ownership to the projects and the feeling that initiatives come from them. This means that the solutions that are brought forward are directed towards the problems that they are facing. They are therefore given a chance to suggest possible solutions towards their own problems.

2.1.2 Poverty alleviation Initiatives in Lesotho

In 2004, the Government of Lesotho launched its Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) of 2004-2007. It has also maintained the same areas of focus under the PRS Initiatives of 2008-12.

PRS Priorities

1. Job Creation
2. Food Security
3. Infrastructure
4. Governance
5. Health Care Quality and Access
6. Education Quality and Access
7. Environment
8. Public Service Delivery

PRS Cross-cutting Issues

1. HIV and AIDS
2. Gender
3. Children and Youth
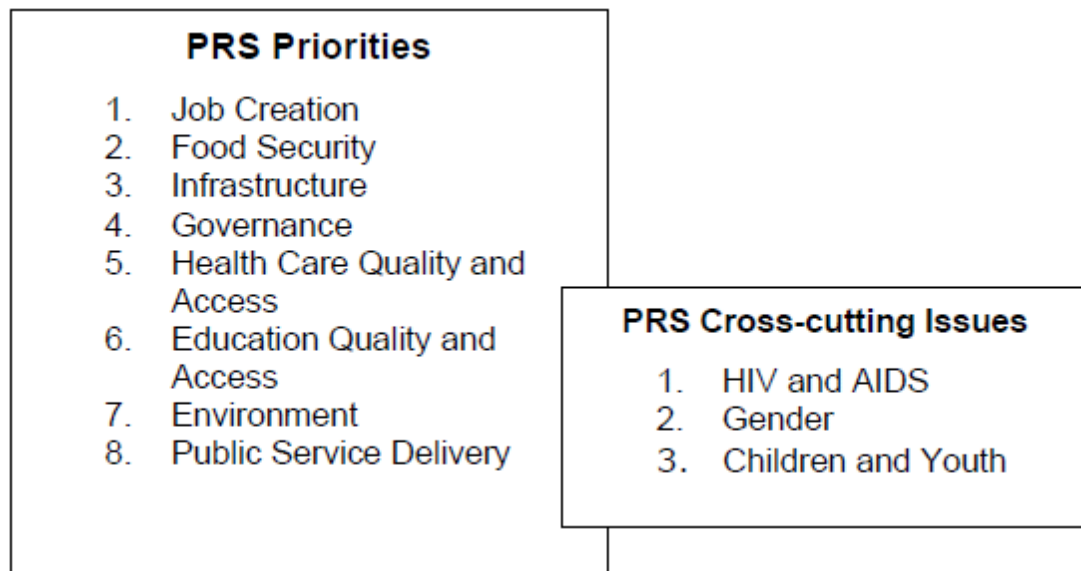
Fig. 1: (PRS) Priority Areas and Cross Cutting Issues.

Source: DMG (2008)

8

The proposed (PRS) have got the following aspects; job creation, and food security deepening good governance, safety and security structure development. It encourages the promotion of access to quality and indispensable health care and finally the social welfare services. In addition, it also considers the improvement of the quality and access to education. The strategy also includes focus on the HIV/AIDS pandemic, environmental conservation as well as the improvement of public service delivery (IMF, 2012).

The strategy was not fully achieved because of high inequality and slow employment growth in the industry as well as the high spread of HIV/AIDS; that slowed the agricultural productivity as individuals were not physically fit to be engaged in the requisite field work. Climate change effects such as natural disasters also hinder the expected production. In this case the participatory development communication can give both parties a chance to communicate and together come up with strategies that can solve the specific challenges that can be achieved. Of late the policy document of the Lesotho Government on agriculture concentrates on promoting homestead production for personal consumption and increasing this adequately to produce surpluses for sale (IMF, 2012). Additionally, the government is promoting commercialization of very valuable crops. The elevation of homestead production aspires to increase production through established approaches of strengthened organic agriculture on land adjacent to homesteads, and encouraging low-cost livestock systems for the underprivileged (IMF, 2012).

On one hand, as a way of alleviating poverty in Lesotho, the environmental affairs division is regulated by the Environment Policy of 1998 section 6.3.1. The policy addresses Lesotho's national development urgencies. These comprise social and economic dimensions, the administration and preservation of the natural resources, and the preferment of community participation. Development initiatives under the Social and Economic dimension include fighting poverty (Government of Lesotho, 2010). This is the most prioritised programme areas, meant to achieve sustainable development through an integrated programme of developing human skills and reduce poverty (Government of Lesotho, 2010). This in actual fact, if the strategies can be well

implemented, can help Basotho to be able to sustain their lives. They can be in a position to live better and have healthier lives as they will be consuming organic food, most importantly the economy of the country will improve whilst spending less on medication.

2.2 ROLE OF COMMUNICATION IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The notion of communication and sustainability go hand in hand as one depends on the other in development projects. Communication has been seen as the most important aspect of sustainability (Coldevin, 2000). Communication enhances participation of the project stakeholders, and this enables the planners, after recognizing and formulating development programmes, to consult with populace so as to take into account their needs, attitude and traditional knowledge on such projects (Mefalopulos, 2003 and Melkote and Steeves, 2015).

Earlier on, communication was not given the priority it deserves; it was just a matter of the sender communication a message with the receiver. Awareness was later cultivated so that message and the media had to be prudently matched to the receiver's notions and social context (Melkote and Steeves, 2015). As a result, Information was now designed with caution bearing in mind the representatives of the target audience with the idea of assisting to identify what ought to be said and how it is said (Blundel,1998). The developmental projects which are formed with the purpose of alleviating poverty must have the planned communication; it has to use variety of media to achieve specific changes (Melkote and Steeves, 2015). The idea is now recognised that people can modify their behaviour if they are not just inert recipients of messages but are more actively involved in the procedure of discussion (Hartley and Bruckman, 2002, Melkote and Steeves, 2015).

On that note, the researcher believes that beneficiaries before getting involved in any kind of projects, they need to understand clearly the main purpose of the project and how to achieve it. This understanding can enable them to support and participate effectively in the project hence their assurance to sustainability. If development is understood as a procedure in which humanity can be able to partake, then an

appreciation of communication fundamentals becomes essential. Sustenance of communication in development does not just mean offering more information to poor people, but It means giving them the chance to partake, and to be involved voluntarily in their progress through specific communication processes; pronouncing views, participating in decision-making, acting on information, having a dialogue, using whatever networks of communication are available (Balit,1998).

Communication has been seen as the most essential tool to achieve participation, empowerment and sustainable development initiatives (UNDP, 2011). It has been noted as a tool for exchanging information and building consensus around specific issues. Communication helps in achieving the objectives of the project by giving the stakeholder a chance to participate actively and freely in any cycle of the project (such as in planning, implementation, nurturing and evaluation), whilst endorsing the sustainability of the development efforts (UNDP, 2011). Therefore, the researcher feels it is essential to scrutinize the package of communication in order to help achieve the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho. These several components of communication that enhance sustainable development are discussed below:

2.2.1 Participation

There are several components of communication which can lead to sustainable development. Participation is one of them and it is described as a procedure of influencing decision making by the citizens to issues that impact on their lives. It helps in improving people's competence and educates them, SPW and DFID (2010) and Mekote and Steeves (2015). Theron, (2005:119) emphasizes the importance of participation by highlighting the issue of empowerment: "*it empowers people by developing their skills and abilities so that they can negotiate with the development delivery system and can make their own decisions in terms of their development needs and priorities. Unless empowerment is understood entirely, the true meaning of empowerment cannot be achieved.*"

This means that, empowerment serves as a base for local development, and it gives people a sense of ownership and the ability to work hard towards their goal. It is clear that people need to first of all understand empowerment and be able to take

responsibilities towards the implementation. Participation is not only important to the citizens because it is also a route through which participants' influence and share control over growth initiatives, but also make decisions that affect their daily lives (Mekote and Steeves, 2015). SPW and DFID (2010) maintain that participation can be used by participants' involvement in the development process and they can share information over development plans, decisions and resources that have an effect on their lives.

The importance of these issues has also been visible to the International governments and non-governmental agencies in understanding that lack of energetic, effective and lasting communication participation of the envisioned beneficiaries is one of the major reasons for immeasurable and unsuccessful development projects (Server, 1999).
The basis of community initiative is regarded as active communication participation of the community in the project design and application. Communication in most development projects put more emphasis on people participation in the programme, it progresses the existing circumstances of the people and helps to change targets in their lives, for example, beneficiaries are able to adopt to the new style of life that has a very strong and positive impact on the sustainability of their poverty alleviation projects (Coldevin, 2000). This simply gives beneficiaries' proper and sustainable tactic to deal with their sustainability problems.

Mohammed (2003) sees participation as community initiative projects support that embrace self-reliance among communities and reduces dependence on external sources. The involvement, which includes people in decision-making, helps them to assess their needs by prioritizing, identifying solutions, adequate planning and implementation rather than just accepting a programme as it is (Coldevin, 2000). The researcher therefore, finds it necessary to incorporate the issue of participation and communication in this research as it distinctively contributes positive results to the sustainability of the poverty alleviation initiatives. The participation processes in all the angles seem to have promised sustainability as it facilitates self-reliance and empowers the community with skills that can make them to be independent rather than dependent.

2.2.2 Participatory communication methods

Methods of communication also play a critical role as they help in the transmitting of the necessary information to the relevant stake holders. When being specific about the issue of communication and its importance to the rural communities or beneficiaries of particular projects, it is imperative to understand and identify their participatory communication methods. SPW and DFID (2010), highlighted that the conventional participation is important especially when there is valuable contribution in making structures and in crafting policies and programmes that entice people`s interests.

SPW and DFID (2010) continue to say that Participation appears to enhance people's independence in their projects at different levels. People feel the ownership from the grass roots when they voluntarily take part, as they feel that they are democratically administered. This helps them to gain confidence in self-reliance and feel the project is rooted in their tradition and culture. But the beneficiaries in poverty alleviation projects were very reluctant to fully participate as they were mostly interested in the freebies that the projects were offering. The community of Lifajaneng and the beneficiaries of this particular poverty alleviation project are not fully engaged and they lack ownership of the project, their participation is not efficient. In general terms, the concept of participation has been understood as a contribution of people on matters that affect them particularly in the decision-making process (DCYA, 2015). It is popular that participation brings a progression that community memberships participate in at all phases of a programme, especially from the launch, preparation and design, implementation, monitoring and assessment, and finally to the sharing of benefits (DFID, 2010). This as a result will give the beneficiaries confidents and skills to apply on their own.

The community participation has three dimensions which are its objectives, its intensity, and the instruments used to foster it and the objectives of community participation. As an active process it empowers, building beneficiary capacity, increasing project effectiveness, improve project efficiency as they share all the cost and responsibilities sharing (Fundi; 2005, Wasilwa; 2015 and Wangu,Nyariki and Sakwa; 2015). As a result, the above-mentioned objectives are expected to reflect in the Lifajaneng poverty

alleviation project. However, in this case it was different because, people were not empowered with communication skills because there was very limited time; their schedule was limited due to time and funding from the funders who were waiting for results after a particular time frame. Due to this reason, the project coordinators had to concentrate on particular issues while leaving other important issues such as communication behind.

In the 1980s, the participatory approach was encouraging participation in development and its main focal point was in projects than in extensive community enhancement. The active participants were basically; the development professionals, participation learning groups, Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), World Bank, and United Nations agencies (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Mohan, 2004). However, this kind of development seemed to have left the most relevant participants which are the beneficiaries and they are the center of the development. It was evident from the development project in Mutale Municipality results that the initiatives were just imposed and there was no community participation in the project from planning, management and implementation because such projects were not sustainable. The results of a top-bottom approach were not appealing, so major donors and development organizations embarked on participatory approaches with the purpose of empowering the local people (Ravhura, 2010).

The indigenous people's knowledge had to be understood in order to help them to ensure the sustainability and efficiency of their interventions (Cornwall, 2000). FAO (2006) on one hand emphasized the same issue by declaring that:

> *"Effective communication in a development process cannot be one-way because it requires feedback and continuous exchange of information between partners and interest groups, communities and official entities. Proper participation creates understanding, connectivity and commitment and thus synergies, without which communication remains at a basic level without participation and commitment. It helps focus knowledge creation on the most important targets and shortens the time for acquisition/integration of knowledge and conversion into*

14

action, Food and Agricultural Organisation (Food Agriculture Organisation, 2006*)."*

The above statement puts emphasis on the importance of communication; which is not supposed to be a one-way procedure; the reciprocal type of communication seems to be the most beneficial because it gives the opportunity to all relevant stakeholders to communicate and have a chance to receive important information as well as discussing and asking for clarity where necessary. The researcher fully supports the above statement as it puts more emphasis on the importance of communication and participation in any kind of development. Communication gives the participants a chance to share important information and be in a position to ask for clarity. This will also instil the issue of empowerment and self-determination in the minds of the participants.

Communication has been proven to be an important tool to be used by stakeholders in their participation on development projects. It is also important in strategic planning because powerful strategies are grounded on two-way communication, which increases projects progress success and sustainability. Communication stratagems have to be professionally designed and geared up to avoid some of the glitches found in most projects and programmes which show the results of inadequate analysis and defective design, or wrong timing (Hornik, 1988; Bacon, 2012). The researcher agrees with the above statement and believes that in order for voluntary participation to be appreciated; people should be fully involved, dedicated and appreciate the initiative in order to have sustainable projects. It is also important for beneficiaries to first of all understand the purpose of a particular initiative and get involved with the positive mindset that can work towards the attainment of the project objective.

2.2.3 Importance of Community participation

The ideas of community development and community involvement took shape in the 1950s (Chowdhury, 1996). Community expansion and community participation are seen as identical; however, the situation has now changed because there is no clear understanding of the connection between the two (Abbott, 2012). Community participation enhances development projects especially in discussion sessions in local communities using the local language. When communities are engaged in participation,

they emphasize a dialogue approach and the use of techniques and tools that are culturally appropriate and appealing internationally (Shepard, 2015). The communities are the ones who feel the pressure of the altering priorities, economic competition, so they demand for greater effectiveness as they are affected by social welfare (Shepard, 2015). Kaufman and Poulin (1996) added that, the use of non -professionals through citizen participation techniques to address social glitches has become more common.

> "*In the setting of development, community participation refers to an active process whereby beneficiaries influence the course and execution of development projects rather than simply receive a share of project benefits. However, that community participation should be seen as an evolutionary process in which activities at the project level can create the conditions for an increased popular participation in development programmes at the local, regional, or national levels"* (Kaufman and Poulin,1996).

This shows that, it is important and best that the beneficiaries of the projects are the front-line leaders of their sustainable development projects because the sustainability of the project depends on them, so their participation from the planning until the execution is essential. When they only receive the benefits of the project, they develop a dependency habit, which limits the chances of having the sustainable projects that they can depend on in their households. It is essential to distinguish between beneficiary participation in the planning and implementation of the projects (community involvement); external assistance in increasing or forming local organizations (local organizational development); and the impulsive actions of local organizations (indigenous local participation) (Kaufman and Poulin, 1996).

The researcher perceives that there is rationality in looking into communication participation in poverty alleviation projects no matter the productivity of the project. If the community is not fully engaged, as was the case with Lifajaneng where the communication channels were not effective; there will always be a high possibility that such projects would not yield the desired results. There is also a high possibility that such an initiative may not be sustainable for a long time. Kaufman and Poulin (1996) identified the purpose of participation in project activities through his five-community

involvement purposes namely; project cost sharing, cumulative project efficiency, increasing project effectiveness, building beneficiary capability and empowerment. The objectives' seriousness also depend on the efficiency and empowerment, therefore, they must be considered as harmonizing or conflicting objectives (Osnes, 2014).

The prioritization of community involvement objectives is dominated by their choice on overall goals of development. Their choices are based on the idea of improving the economic circumstances of the poor or to bring about a fairer society, Larsen, Sewpaul and Hole (2014). Community participation also takes into account the organizations and the groups involved, the project implementation approaches, the phases of the project in which beneficiaries participate, the scope of the programme, who contributes and the strength of participation (Larsen, Sewpaul and Hole, 2014).

Active community involvement in project preparation and implementation may improve the project design through using local knowledge by the beneficiaries; this will in turn boost project acceptability and produce a more reasonable dispersal of benefits; encourage use of local resource mobilization, and help guarantee project sustainability (Osner, 2014). Community participation also involves the following costs; delays in project start-up, necessary staff increases and pressure to raise the level or range of services (Shepard, 2015). Bacon (2012) sees community involvement as the process through which persons, families, or societies presume accountability for their own wellbeing and develop a capacity to contribute to their own and the society's development. In the setting of development; community involvement refers to lively process where beneficiaries influence the course and implementation of development projects rather than simply receive a portion of project benefits (Shepard, 2015). Christian and Villadsen (2012) on the same issue state that the idea of citizen participation is mostly accepted and no one is against it in principle because it brings good results. However, they also identified that there is a little scrutiny of the content of citizen involvement, its definition, and its relationship to social structure, social interaction, and the social context.

17

Even though there are different views on the issue of community participation, Greighton (2005) adds on the importance of community participation with different ideas, that participation educates citizens and improves their capability. It is a means of influencing choices that affect the lives of people and way of shifting political power. It serves as a method to engage in arguments, a mechanism for guaranteeing the accessibility, compassion, and even accountability of social amenities to the consumers. While Nabatchi and Leighninger (2015) highlight that citizen involvement as a procedure by which people take action in response to public apprehensions, voice their sentiments about decisions that affect them, and take accountability for changes to their community.

Melkote and Steeves (2015) suggest that citizen participation may also be a response to the traditional sense of powerlessness felt by the general public when it comes to influencing government decisions. "*People often feel that health and social services are beyond their control because the decisions are made outside their community by unknown bureaucrats and technocrats* (Chappel, 1997:99)." This simply means that when development is imposed and people are not involved, they do not own the initiative and can never be fully engaged as their desires, needs and problems are not fully solved.

Food Agriculture Organisation's communiqué for Development Group has debatably been one of the leading practitioners of applied communication for improving agriculture and associated sectors in the developing world (e.g., forestry, environment, and nutrition), ever since its establishment in 1969, FAO (2006). The purpose of communication has commenced a dramatic change from a one-way, top-down transfer of messages by agricultural specialists to farmers on a social procedure designed to unite both groups in a two-way sharing of information among communication equals - in short, participatory communication (Melkote and Steeves, 2015).

The definition by Larsen, Sewpaul and Hole (2014) brings a completely new issue when defining participation as communal hard work to upsurge and exercise control over resources and institutes on the part of groups and movements of those who have not

been included in the control. The World Bank's Learning Group on Participatory Development (1995:3) agrees in style with the Larse, Sewpaul definition as they see participation as; "*a process through which stakeholders' influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources which affect them*". Participation programme involves a significant number of people working together to augment their well-being, especially their revenue, security, or self- esteem (Chowdhury, 1996; Larsen, Sewpaul and Hole, (2014).

Participatory communication has turn out to be a key linkage between farmers, extension workers, and researchers for preparation and executing consensus-based in development initiatives. Consciousness raising, knowledge achievement, attitude change, confidence building, contribution in decision-making, and action, all require processes of learning and communication. However, there has been a missing link causing many projects to fail (Larsen, Sewpaul and Hole, 2014). Fraser and Restrepo-Estrada (1998) conclude that the accomplishments and catastrophes of most development projects are often determined by two critical factors, such as communication and people's participation. Even though Servae (2008) declares that, "*communication for development has clearly shown its usefulness and impact in change and development actions, its role is still not understood and appreciated to the point that it is routinely included in development planning.*" This means there is a need to understand the significance of communication and incorporate it in all the developmental structures as communication has shown some positive results.

 In this study, the open-ended discussions have been used by beneficiaries and the project managers to improve their understanding of the causes of Sustainable Development. This is because the development shows positive results when people in rural areas are at the core of development, especially when their opinions are considered and they are completely involved from the beginning to the end of the projects. Having made the observations above, it therefore is important to explore the various channels of formal communication.

2.3 FORMAL CHANNELS OF FLOW OF COMMUNICATION

2.3.1 Channels and tools of communication

Communication, like any other discipline, has formal channels, models and tools that determine its correct flow. According to Clampitt's (2005) model, a channel can be anything used to deliver messages; it may include face-to-face, phone, beeper, written, radio set and video communication. Face to face communiqué appears to be the most effective and is mostly preferred for communication of more important matters. An effective communicator chooses the channels which are mostly appropriate to the specific goals; this helps in attaining such goals (Clampitt's, 2005).

In order to have sustainable development, channels of communication have to ensure a two-way flow of statements, speak to human features such as sociology, psychology, culture, behaviour, and politics, and assist in building harmony and partnerships regarding the development plans. All aspects in life which impact on people such as, internal and external factors of human communication have to be taken in to consideration for effective communication (Abbott, 2012). The Internal factors are also the important to consider as they form part of human character like norms and ethics, attitudes and character, feelings and beliefs, culture and societal relations. The external influences include posters or cell phones which are used to carry the message, as well as print or broadcast media, information and communication technology (Kyton, 2011). The channels of communication can depend on both the external and the internal factors but the internal influences the choice of the external factors. These factors are mostly used in community media which have the best interest of the community members at heart.

Community media in particular facilitates debate and gives voice to the community member as ICTs can also be used to receive information, but their active involvement is only beginning to be exploited (Kliem, 2007). With new ICTs, every user is possibly an active inventor of information, a voice as well as a pair of ears. The channels of communication present equally information and voice aspects. Media gives information but also articulates voices and allows participations to appeal to the government and political progressions when provided with a podium for debate (Kliem, 2007). The

researcher feels the importance of unpacking the success in different channels of communication; with a view to improve the quality of activities in sustainable development projects to successfully benefit the targeted group. Hence it is crucial to address all the options that would lead to a successful development programme. In simplest form, the most common formal channels of communicate are downwards, bottom-up as well as horizontal flow of communication which can be used in development projects. However, the results of each channel may be different due to the nature of the problem at hand; the kind of people who are communicating, their level of education and their background on the issue at hand, as well as their involvement and their willingness to find clarity and to pass messages where necessary.

2.3.2 Downward Communication

The downwards flow of communication is one of the most common and first form of communication which was used in some development projects which has a very low impact on the level of sustainability. It is a communication form that is from a higher level of management in an organization to a lower level, it is a more directive form of communication. According to Brandes and Darai (2014) it is normally managers and their subordinates who mostly give resolutions about work related issues. Downward communication channel is the channel of communication where the movement of communiqué is from the top administration to the operational level, it is also communication from the superior to the subordinate (Brandes and Darai, 2014). It is basically based on the plans, the policies, orders and the instructions, procedures and the organizational rules and guidelines, benefits, and structural provisions so as to get some degree of standardization in organizational practices, and development is based on the increase of employee performance (Brandes and Darai, 2014).

In support of downwards communication, Wagner, Bezuidenhout and Ross (2015) posit that downward communication is mostly efficient when top managers communicate straight to immediate administrators with the expectation that the immediate supervisors communicate the same message with their staff. Management can communicate directly to the employees inwards to follow up on the delivered massage. In describing the importance of the implementation of downwards communication, Canary (2011) posits that there are several important uses of downwards communication. Such

importance is demonstrated on the implementation of goals, strategies and objectives of any developmental project. When communicating stratagems and goals, information is provided about the explicit targets and the anticipated behaviour.

Downwards communication also provides individuals with job instructions, rationale and the performance feedback. These are basically the directions on how to do an explicit task and how the job relates to other actions of the organization. Organizations have to synchronize individual and departmental objectives by synchronizing them with the organization-wide goals (Wagner, Bezuidenhout and Ross, 2015). On one hand, it also enables the management to provide the departmental progress reports, individual performance appraisals in respect of the extent to which performance standards and goals have been achieved (Tourish, 2010). Lastly, it encourages socialization by motivating every staff member to adapt to the organizational mission, cultural ethics and to partake in organizational actions. It is an effort to ensure commitment, a sense of belonging, and unison of direction among members of staff (Lunenburg and Ornstein, 2008). However, the efficient supervisors maintain a good and positive attitude to top-down communication in the organizational structure as the support is based on job satisfaction and performance (Demirhan, Kula and Karagöz, 2014).

The downward current of communiqué gives a channel for directions, instructions, and information to administrative members. However, a lot of information gets mislaid as it is passed from one individual to another (Tourish, 2010). Furthermore, the message can be distorted if it moves a great distance from its sender to the final receiver down through the formal organization hierarchy (Tourish, 2010). So, if the message gets distorted along the way this means that the intended message will not reach the target audience and the mission of the project will not be accomplished.

Wagner, Bezuidenhout and Ross (2015) declare that in most cases it is evident that individuals who are powerless in their communities are mostly excluded in the decision-making processes. They are always told what to do as passive recipients. In other words, their capability is mostly limited as they are undermined because of their illiteracy, and not speaking the official languages (Wagner, Bezuidenhout and Ross,

2015). This is a one-way communication, which imposes development on people, but it has serious consequences because development is never sustainable (Tourish, 2010). Even though this channel has some positive results; the researcher has a different view in relation to poverty alleviation projects. The researcher`s understanding of this form of communication is that, it is an instructional form of communication which can be difficult to implement in rural communities. It gives a feel that developmental information is imposed into the community which has its own way of doing things, hence the difficulty in terms of adopting the new ways of doing things.

2.3.3 Bottom up

Amongst other communication channels there is the bottom up one which is the information that flows from the bottom to the top level in an organization. It provides the organization with the feedback on how well it is operational. The projects coordinators use bottom up communication to express their difficulties and performances (Canary, 2011). The beneficiaries of the projects also use bottom up communication to discuss how well they have understood the downward communication. Management in any organization can know how well its guidelines, plans and objectives are followed by those employed at lower levels of the organization. It may also be used by the beneficiaries to share their views and ideas in order to participate in decision-making (Tourish, 2010). In most cases, Keyton (2011) emphasizes the upward communication to be direct to more dedicated and loyal workforces in the projects as the beneficiaries are given a chance to express their views to the higher levels. At the same time, project coordinators get to know about the beneficiaries' feelings towards the project and the supervisors.

The researcher feels that there is a need to make the voice of the beneficiaries to be heard because lack of resources and representation in the project design and implementation limits their access to powerful people. In most cases, beneficiaries lack means of communication such as telephones. They do not have skills of using computers and the Internet as it is expensive. It is therefore important to strengthen peoples' communication by engaging them in a dialogue in order to share information which will lead to vital change in the lives of most states not only developing ones (Kliem, 2007).

23

Development is understood as progression, which includes effective communication in which everyone in a society has a right to participate.

Support for communiqué in development does not mean providing more data to poor people, but it is about making one's voice heard so that they contribute in decisions and debates that aim to improve their lives, at the same time keeping the management tells people about the progress of the work and the problems faced in performance (Bacon, 2012). This means that the two-way communication form is essential in societal development programmes. Its emphasis is on participation, it gives people the chance to engage vigorously in their progress through communication procedures such as articulating opinions, partaking in decision-making, acting on information, speaking and getting a response through all available communication channels (Harland, 2005).

Schultz, Duit and Folke (2011) and Renn (2014) support the two-way communication and emphasize on the issue of its mutual understanding between the stakeholders to address the needs of the communities. This process provides a dialogue platform which is viewed as the ideal dialog situation that takes place between equal participants, providing the chance to discuss and solve the needs and difficulties of the community (Bakke and Subedi2008; Melfalopulos, 2005). Melkote and Steeves (2015) add that; in order for development projects to contribute to the development of societies, the communication used should be in a form of participatory approach, which will enable all the relevant stakeholders to be engaged in the discussion of the development issues. In this channel, communication travels from staff to the top management, and the messages describe serious glitches and exceptions to routine performance so as to make the leader aware of difficulties in a case of work environment. This kind of communication gives staff a chance to voice their views (Abbott, 2012).

As results of this kind of communication, the subordinates are able to discuss their suggestions for improvement with the management. These messages are thoughts for improving chore related measures to increase the quality or efficiency of organization members (Canary, 2011). The subordinates are able to report their performance with the information that include episodic reports that inform the supervisors how individual

organization members and sections are performing in their departments (Abbott, 2012). The employees provide their grievances and conflicts that travel up the organizational hierarchy for a hearing and probable determination. If the complaint procedure is supported by the presence of a collective bargaining agreement, members in the organization are even more encouraged to express true feelings (Kyton, 2011). The researcher feels that this kind of communication is better than the above discussed channels because at least the beneficiaries have a voice and most of the communication is centered on them. However, there is still a need for the kind of communication which can give both parties who are the role players in the development project a chance to communicate at the same level. This is because the beneficiaries have their own experience and the project coordinators have some strategies which need to be communicated, and this can be achieved through the use of horizontal communication.

2.3.4 Horizontal Communication

Horizontal communication is interested in the broadcast of information and understanding among people at the same level of organizational hierarchy. This kind of communication is within the supervisors working at the same level of organization and amongst subordinates working under the same boss (Abbott, 2012). It helps to speed up information and promotes mutual understanding within an organization because supervisors operating at the same level can exchange information and control their actions without referring all matters to top level of management (Kyton, 2011). These communications are informative too, but in a dissimilar way than downward and upward communication, information is essentially for coordination and to harness activities within or across departments in the organization or within the divisions in a school-wide organizational system (Canary, 2011).

The researcher feels that information here is fundamentally for administration and tying together activities within and across departments in the organizational system. The above channels of communication are all essential and need to be used effectively as they all have positive results. As a result, beneficiaries and Project managers can communicate well and be able to attain the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects if they choose one relevant channel of communication that suite their project and the

innovation that need to be shared amongst the beneficiaries. This kind of communication is the base for sustainable development, its characteristics guarantees sustainability.

2.4 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development was initially drafted and presented to the world's leaders and the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP) at Stockholm in 1972, and after that several international conferences followed and were concluded in Rio De Janeiro Conference in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), recognized as the Earth Summit. The (UNCED) agreed on Agenda 21, which entails a strategy of action that serves as a universal framework for the implementation of sustainable development (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2004).

The major objective of Agenda 21 is to help societies and governments in forming programmes and guidelines that would achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability through the development of national stratagems, plans, policies and procedures. Agenda 21 also alerts all governments to produce National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) by 2002 (IISD, 2004). Sustainable development is at the centre of population management that has stabilised the globe in the last twenty-five years (Pearce, 2013).

When the UN was debating the issue of sustainability they used the sustainable development framework. This framework is based on how people on this planet conserve, keep, and sustain the environment while maintaining the benefits that accrue out of the environment by putting a foundation for an appropriate relationship with nature (UN, 1992). The Agenda 21 proposal for sustainable development highlighted the social and economic dimensions of poverty, consumption designs, population growth, health and human settlement, the need for preservation, and good administration of all natural resources. In partnership with governments, it emphasized the vigorous contribution of main groups such as women, children and youth, civil society organizations and business in taking care of the environment while benefitting from it. It also considered the necessary means of implementation (UN, 1992).

The UN has been anxious about the excessive depreciation of the human setting and natural resources which resulted in the deterioration of economic and social development. Sustainability is one of eight Goals, linked to 18 targets and 48 indicators projected to be a guide for gauging improvements in people's lives (Sachs, 2015). Most people are struggling to access food, safe drinking water, health care and shelter they need for existence. Those who are just above the poverty line are seeking for better wealth and a happier future for their offspring. Sustainable development attempts to make sense of the influences between the three complex systems: the world economy, the global culture and the earth`s physical environment (Rogers, Jalal and Boyd, 2008).

This is not different in the case of Lesotho where most people in rural areas are below the poverty line. The country was classified 162 out of 187 countries in terms of the Adjusted Human Development Index, (AHDI), with an HDI score of 0.486 in 2014 (UNDP, 2015). Mafeteng as the area of study is one of the districts that have been affected by drought and poverty. It has about 57% of the populace below the poverty datum line, and has a large population of patients of chronic diseases (Cross and Red, 2006). NGOs and the government brought the sustainable development project to this area with the aim of combating poverty and equipping people with skills that will help them to alleviate poverty.

2.4.1 The benefits of using the sustainable development plan

Sustainable development in view of Sachs (2015) helps to attain sensible levels of fair distribution of economic well-being that can be upheld for many human generations. This implies that the resources will be used in a conservative way rather than using them up carelessly. Sustainable activity can be continued for the predictable future with three dimensions by not irrationally exhausting natural resources and not manufacturing waste products that significantly change natural structures, and not undermining social stability (Peet and Hartwick, 2015). Barboza (2000) argues that when people support sustainable development ideas, they can determine and pursue a reasonable approach to economic policies; have respect for the future generations by taking into consideration the environmental protection and gradually progressing towards the full participation of all concerned parties. World Commission on Environment and

Development (WCED, 1987) sees sustainable development as an entity that assists in spotting the key aspects of development that can be sustained while not compromising the future generations in meeting their own basic needs.

2.4.2 Models of sustainable development
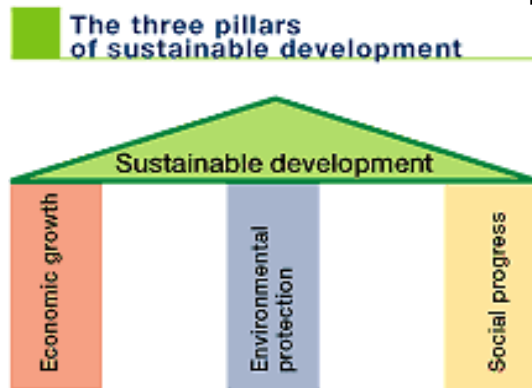
Figure 2: The Three Pillars of Sustainable Development adapted from Brebbia and Beriatos, (2011)

The above figure is one of the models of sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development has three pillars. The three pillars of sustainable development came after the Brundtland 2008, Brebia and Beriatos (2011) definition of sustainable development which captured two aspects namely; environmental and economic leaving behind the societal aspect. The new thinking of Sustainable development came up with an idea of a three-pillar model which included the societal aspect (Adams, 2006; Elliot, 2013).

The first pillar focuses on the economic concept, it entails basic needs and stresses on helping the poor. The concept comes from the society, so economic and social concepts are almost the same. They relate to a set of rules formed by the society to control changes in the economic goods or value (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011). The other pillar represents the social concept, which deals with satisfying people's cultural, material and spiritual needs in a reasonable way. It maintains that individual engagement in pro-environmental issues should be sustainable. These types of actions need effort, hence the need to consider the individual`s limited abilities (Cooke and Fielding, 2010). The third and the last pillar is the environmental concept, which

stresses on the significance of putting together environmental protection and conservation values into the development process and upholding the long-term capability of supporting ecosystems (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011). In order to keep the environment in its original condition, there should be a control on its reciprocal processes. The natural capital should be used in a way that will allow them to replenish (Cooke and Fielding, 2010).

The environment supports both societal and economic concepts. The resources available on earth are limited to human action. Effective restrictions are often much more exact and framed, in that the capacity of the biosphere to absorb pollutants, provide capitals and services are evidently limited in space and time (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011). Environmental sustainability, stresses on individual behavior in all societies that it impacts on our capability to meet the needs of the present-day without compromising the capacity of future generations to meet theirs (Cooke and Fielding, 2010). The three dimensions of this concept cleverly capture two primary issues, the problem of environmental degradation which goes together with economic growth, and the growth that leads to the alleviation of poverty (Elliott, 2013). Pearce (2013) puts more emphasis on assuring self-sustaining development in output and quality of life of the communities and societies, to ensure that production processes do not damage the natural resources core and compromise the quality of the environment because this will limit the options of the poor. To the contrary, it should allow people now and in the future to participate freely.

The main aim of sustainable development is to strike a balance between three the pillars - social, economic and environmental of communities. More focus is on refining the value of life for all of the earth's populace while not increasing utilization of natural resources in such a way that the environment cannot afford to supply them indefinitely (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011). There is a need to understand the consequences of environmental management so that people must find some ground-breaking ways to change institutional structures and impact on individual behaviour. If this can be done successfully, there will be a need for verifying policy and practice at all points, from the

individual to the international sectors to accommodate the new balance between the three pillars (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011).

2.5 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION FOR DEVELOPMENT

Communication for Development is defined as the intended and participating use of communication approaches and tools that enable the sharing of information and knowledge. Participation is able to transform the attitude and tendencies targeting at achieving development goals amongst all stakeholders. It is based on negotiation, involvement and the sharing of information and knowledge. It takes into consideration the needs and abilities of all participants and it is achieved through the use of media and other channels (FAO, 2006).

Participatory communication facilitates participation that gives a voice to diverse stakeholders to partake in the decision-making process. It gives the citizen a chance to engage in their development in order to bring about societal change amongst the impoverished and vulnerable population groups (Yee, 2010). Participation should be nurtured through communication, so that it leads to the change in the community. This is because communication is the essential or the mediating feature facilitating and contributing to collective change procedure (Sarvaes and Liu, 2007). It also focuses on making information fathomable and meaningful while it includes explanation and conveying information for training, exchange of experience, and sharing of know-how and technology (Yee, 2010). It means that the interactive procedure in which knowledge, information, and relevant skills for development are traded between communal members and the information is provided either personally or through broadcasting such as from the radio, on print media, through telephones and oratory that is aimed at combating poverty. The main objective of effective communication appears to place rural people in a situation where they have the necessary information for decision-making and the appropriate skills to improve their living standard (Adedokun, Adeyemo and Olorunsola, 2010).

Participatory communication helps in fostering policy buy-in, by passing and promoting policies, particularly when there are new prospects for rural people to get services and resources. It also fosters for engagement in the participatory design and implementation of state policies and initiatives for governance, which is of dominant significance not only for processes of empowerment to take place. It also generates favorable institutional and policy environments in which unbeaten experiences of empowerment in governance can be replicated, adapted, or scaled up at the country level (Prato and Longo, 2012). More participatory and effective communication is known for guaranteeing a higher degree of sustainability for any project; it does not break the traditional boundaries of communiqué. It is not about conveying messages or coaxing people to change, but it is about building confidence, sharing experiences and knowledge, identifying and investigating problems, needs and opportunities and defines priorities and solutions (ADB, 2011).

Communication, naturally, is the most important element that can be used in ensuring meaningful participation, as it is capable of giving results in the process of exchanging information and insights needed to successfully describe problems and plan solutions (Yee, 2010). While on the other hand, development advocates for change, and if development ingenuities are to be sustainable, they should begin with the apparatus that ensures broad involvement by all those who share the same vision about the intended change. As a result, communication goes deeper than expected as it goes through a sociological perspective where it becomes active in creating realities or, as Wilkins (1994:2) noted, in constructing "inter-subjective meanings constituting shared realities produced and maintained within social communities".

The diversity of realities needs to be taken into consideration and not overlooked or modified by trying to enforce the proper perspective. Such a supposition has often been recognized as one of the main causes of failures in development projects. Communication that is free is very essential in appreciating, conflicting and sharing the truths of different stakeholders, before even thinking about conveying messages (Anyaegbunam et al, 1998; and Mefalopulos, 2003). UN (1993) roundtable has suggested that communication needs to facilitate negotiation and evaluate the situation

in a participating manner. It should continuously be remembered that even when we refer to environmental matters and management of natural resource in communication for development, people are the most important role player. It was evident that problems could not be simply addressed by applying a scientific tactic without communicating and considering the people's knowledge and their perceptions about their changing lives (Bessette, 2004; FAO, 2004 and FAO, 2007). Bessette (2004:79) also adds that;

> "Communication has to facilitate dialogue among different stakeholders around a common development problem or goal. The objective is to develop and implement a set of activities that contribute to a solution to the problem, or the realization of the goal, and which support and accompany this initiative."

The objectives of communication should aim at increasing knowledge and influence the attitudinal change of the society towards a development. It has to describe the environmental communication activity. Once the problems have been acknowledged and the stakeholders analysed it, the communication objectives should be clearly defined. However, communication objectives are generally not the same as the projects' goals which are expected to be the final results of the whole communication strategy and other supporting outputs (Bessette, 2004; Tolomelli, 2012).

Communication as a two-way process establishes a rapport between two or more stakeholders. This supports the idea of unity; it helps in facilitating and assessing the problems and come up with strategies, which can lead to change (Lunenburg, 2010). It is an element that openly establishes a relation between the educator and the learner based on equality (Tagliavia, 2008). However, communication dialogue can be used also to compare different realities and perceptions. It helps the stakeholders to build a trust and give a chance to resolve problems among themselves. It is apparent that Freire (2013) does not take dialogue as a simple education technique leading to the realization of certain results. Tolomelli (2012) considers dialogue as complementary to human nature, where people can know themselves and affirm their identity through other people.

Communication objectives need to be set in a project to achieve specific goals. It needs clear activities that can provide a clear operational direction that will facilitate a clear evaluation. In this case, however the target beneficiaries of the projects can be able to play this role clearly (IAEA, 2006). Participatory communication for sustainable development is about empowerment, fosters self-sufficiency, discussion and cultural identity. These are rudimentary indicators of the participatory approach (Brebbia and Beriatos, 2011).

2.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Sitko (2013) defines conceptual framework as the structure of concepts, assumptions, beliefs, expectations and theories that support and inform research. Sitko (2013) continues to say that conceptual framework clarifies either graphically or in descriptive form the core things to be studied- the key factors, concepts or variable- and the assumed relationships between them. The conceptual framework for this study is going to be discussed in the light of (i) empowerment approach, (ii) behavioural change and (iii) social change.

2.6.1 Empowerment approach

According to Cornell Empowerment group (1998:5) "*Empowerment is an intentional continuous process, rooted in local community; it involves mutual participation, through which people lacking an equal share of value resources gain greater access to and control over these resources.*" It is a process whereby individuals and groups get power, have an opportunity to have resources and manage them for their own lives (Ambrosina and Heffrman, 2015). Empowerment is a way in which people either individually and collectively get power. It assigns the capability of individuals to be in a position to take action independently, to look for means needed and to know the procedure of being able to act and make one`s own assessment regarding life (Sofield, 2003; Shulma, 2015). When beneficiaries are empowered it is clear that they will be able to make some well-versed decisions about their lives.

Williams, Suzanne, Seed, Janet, and Mwau, (1994) observe that there are 4 aspects of empowerment. The first of these involves power assets which puts a lot of emphasis on economic power which considers material properties such as revenue, land, tools or technology. It also embraces better health, access to amenities like loans and information training. Williams et al., (1994) go on to observe that there is power of knowledge and know-how, which denotes having a lot of skills, practical and intellectual knowledge, which will allow beneficiaries to use available opportunity for their own improvements. Thirdly, the approach also has the power within, which is concerned about one's values and fears, self-confidence and self-perception psychological strength and spiritual power (Williams et al., 1994; Ambrosina and Heffrman, 2015). This is very strong in the building of sustainability as well as the resolve of the beneficiaries. Empowerment is about making one's own choices, considering one's plans for the future, as well as the challenges facing one's community. Lastly the approach drew attention to its ability to capacitate individuals in making own decisions as free and responsible citizens. In so doing it enables a person to take charge in the use of resources including the ability to influence the decision makers and control them for one's own sake (Williams et al., 1994).

Empowerment appears to be a critical strategy to use in poverty alleviation because in the case of this study, the concerned beneficiaries have a survival interest in solving their deprived conditions (Dowla, 2006; Shulma, 2015). In order for beneficiaries to strengthen their resolution skills and to maintain their interest, they need to be equipped with tactics so that they can improve their self-esteem. In addition, empowerment emphasises participation of the beneficiaries (Gigler, 2015). In order for beneficiaries to have a sustainable project, they must consider their participation as one of the crucial aspects of the empowerment. Understanding and experience in project activities can boost beneficiaries' confidence in all development decisions they will be making at that point and in the future to ensure the sustainability of their project.

Empowerment, according to Chitnis (2005), is the ability to regulate decision-making in issues and circumstances that influence the lives of those involved. It is the right of people to participate and to be heard in their development because involvement results

in their empowerment (Gigler, 2015). It has been identified that individuals and societies are empowered by the acquisition of knowledge pertaining specific issues, communicating about matters that are considered important, making their own decisions and negotiating power relations. Empowerment can be identified as the practice by which power is shared among different individuals and groups with the aim of being at the same levels of power. It can be achieved through participation, as societies share power and knowledge on economic, social and political level. It helps in the realization of the human basic needs, promotion of self-esteem, to follow choices that help to appreciate the human potential and attain collective thinking patterns (Fourie and Kloppers, 2009; Gigler, 2015).

It depends mostly on the movement of information and the major elements of communication, which have greater impact on the establishment of empowerment. Within the development setting, this suggests that power is divided so that each person in the society has some form of power that they can use to assist themselves, when called to. It advocates for power individually owned can improve their intellectual abilities and individual potential (Waisbord, 2001; Shulma, 2015). Awareness is made to people through the transfer of knowledge for empowerment is called conscientisation (Chitnis, 2005a; Servaes, 1995; Ambrosina and Heffrman, 2015). It refers to the act and their reflection on the state of affairs, which people need to reflect on their own lives and the situation they are in; this implies making people aware of important issues and the individual reaction.

2.6.2 Behavioural Change

Behavioural Change Communication supports the process of using communication to endorse behaviours that improve the lives of the people. It encompasses the use of qualitative and quantitative research information, spreading information and measuring change in people's attitudes and behaviors. Information does not have to be limited to factual knowledge, (Whitmarsh, O`Neill and Lorenzoni, 2011). It covers behavior modeling, self-efficacy and empowerment of the people. It also, focuses on promoting essential actions in the home, community, health facility or society that improve life outcomes by promoting changing of lifestyles (Victorian Government, 2009; Whitmarsh, O`Neill and Lorenzoni, 2011).

The researcher feels that it is a procedure that works with individuals, societies and cultures to develop communication approaches to endorse positive behaviours that are suitable to beneficiary settings. It can give a helpful atmosphere, which will permit people to initiate and maintain positive behaviours, with the aim of changing information, attitudes and practices of participating groups and motivating and facilitating wider societal change at the local and national level. The behavioural change communication change is a progression and it clarifies the psychological progression that people experience as natural. This is because individuals experience at different levels of motivation to change. Prochaska, Diclemente and Norcross (1992) are of the view that involvement should match persons at their respective phases in the change process; the change of behaviour can be categorized by five stages (Servaes, 2008; McMichael, 2016).

Communication can also more effective when local idioms that are more culturally immediate to the audience are used, so that people can understand and easily adapt to the new changes. In most cases beneficiaries are not given enough chance to confidently participate in communicating their experiences and technical know-how hence they do not feel a need to adapt to new changes (UNICEF, 2005). Despite the efforts that the project designer and funders have provided, some beneficiaries think the programmes are not well organized. In communication for development, people in the rural areas are at the centre of planned development and so clear communication is should be used to entice participation and mobilization of the communities in decision making, building their confidence and raising awareness, sharing knowledge and changing their attitudes, behaviour and lifestyles (FAO, 2006; McMichael, 2012).

2.6.3 Social Change

This is one of the most important stages in implementation as it allows the recognition of the problem. It also helps to identify the early stages of the problem. This stage entails the identification of the problem as well as the catalysts in order to work towards its solution. The main idea behind is that participation and community endeavour are the core elements of every communication process and can lead to collective action (Servaes 2008; McMichael, 2012).

Freire (1972) defines communication as a two-way participatory process, supported by dialogue. He also adds that dialogue, media and communication can give power to individuals and communities and commence a significant process of analysis which can give understanding that can lead to individual and social change, Edu, Emmunemu and Oshati (2014).

The community works together with a common understanding which has future plans that include everyone. They work together to identify the problem, plan and put some objectives where, after a process of reaching a mutual understanding, the collective decision on how to go about certain social issue become important. The process is based on community dialogue and collective action and is projected to endorse participation and cultivate people's empowerment Edu, Emmunemu and Oshati (2014). This is a very important step which leads to the mobilisation and collective action of the community when the solution to the problem is being drafted and people individually and responsibly are being given roles (Figueroa, Kincaid, Rani, and Lewis, 2002; Howley, 2009; Maxwell, 2010; McMichael, 2016).

2.7 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Theory provides a point of focus for finding the unknown in a specific area and stimulates research. The main theoretical frame work for this study is the participatory communication theory complimented by the diffusion of innovation. Both theories helped the researcher to see the relationships within the phenomenon, as they both put more emphasis on the participation of the beneficiaries of the projects.

2. 7.1 Participatory approach /Participatory communication theory

The first theory informing this study is participatory communication theory. This theory is relevant to this study because it is specifically for the purposes of guiding communities on the best communication patterns when participating in projects. Participatory communication become popular in the late 1980s/early 1990s. At this time, several scholars developed an interest and started working on this perception, who include *Servaes* (1991), Modi (1991), Mendez, Bacon, Cohen and Gliessman (2015).

Participatory communication according to Mefalopulos (2003) is an approach which helps people participate in decision making processes on matters affecting their lives. It is specifically about the desires and priorities of the pertinent people, while at the same time assisting them to be empowered. It is a necessary element which is associated with a democratic vision of international development, as it boosts project sustainability and ensures genuine ownership by the beneficiaries (Israel, Schulz and Parker, 2013). In this study, it is important for the beneficiaries to be empowered with communication skills that help them to be in control of their lives, have the courage to partake in sustainable projects. However, communication serves as the bases for skills adaptation because one needs to understand the innovation and be able to interact and effectively disseminate the same information to other family members or among other interested stakeholders.

Uphoff (1985) discussed the most crucial parts of participatory theory of communication that emphasis on giving people a platform to participate physically and verbally. Participatory communication development theory highlights several issues that are endured through communication so that participants benefit from such initiatives. Participants should be given equal opportunity to communicate and critically analyze the success and the failure of the project before enjoying the benefit of such project.

This theory declares that community members have to come up with new ideas that can work for them and plan how it can be executed in their communities. The theory encourages self-reliant where after taking part in the community initiative members can be able to confidently do their own projects. The bottom line is: participants should be able to choose the proper channel of communication that can be used by the entire community. Along with the choice of channel communication, the training offered should emphasize the importance and the principles of taking part and how communication can instill the importance of physical participation in the project. Yoon (1994) added that participants or community members can be introduced to some of the importance of communication in regular meetings. This skill can help members to know how to address issues according to their importance. The theory emphasises that communication should be taken as a gadget which gives power to people rather than as tool that moves information.

The emphasis of the theory is on a bottom up oriented style so that people are involved in the decision-making process (Servaes, 1996; Kindon, Pain and Kesby 2007). One of its main characteristics is the horizontal conversation of information amongst everyone involved mostly in a dialogue where everybody is expected to be both the receiver and the sender of the information simultaneously (Anyaegbunam et al., 1998; Coldevin, 2001; Fraser and Restrepo Estrada, 1998; Jacobson and Servaes, 1999; Melkote, 1991; Mody, 1991; Mendez, Bacon, Cohen and Gliessman, 2015). Through this approach beneficiaries interact with the project manager about the different methods that they have can use. It also assists the managers to understand why beneficials leave so that they introduce new methods which beneficiaries can easily adopt depending on what they have been doing for years.

Balit (1999) declares that participatory communication is a social progression that intends to achieve a mutual understanding between all members and then have them be active on the basis of the agreement achieved. In a nutshell, participatory communication is expected to be there throughout all the stages of any development initiative as a progression not as alterations of focus toward a more multifaceted and articulated reality (Melkote, 1991; Servaes, 1991; Mendez, Bacon, Cohen and Gliessman, 2015). The major disadvantage of participatory communication develops from ambiguity of the description and the different understandings that affect its practice. Its strong point is based on its dynamic procedure, built through discourse, whose conclusion cannot be easily envisaged (Balit, 1999; Israel, Schulz and Parker, 2013).

2.7.2 Diffusion of innovation theory

Diffusion of innovation theory is the second theory used to compliment the participation theory in sensitizing societies on the best way to the introduction of new projects in their communities. It specifically gives detail on how to introduce postmodern development ideas to especially conservative communities, like the Mafeteng case under study, for them to acknowledge and accept new innovations. Modernization is perceived as a process of dispersion whereby persons move from a traditional way of life to a different, more technically developed and more rapidly changing way of life. Diffusion of innovation, according to Rogers (2003), is the procedure of communicating an invention

through certain channels of communication over time. Mass media are significant in spreading consciousness of new opportunities and practices, but at the phase where decisions are being made about whether to accept or not to accept, personal communication is likely to be far more influential. Consequently, the universal conclusion of this assumption is that mass communication is less likely than individual influence to have a direct effect on social behaviour.

The message that is being delivered has to be relatively a new idea to the social system. It is expected to take a two-way process among the relevant stakeholders. The theory explained the how and the why part of the innovation over a given time. Rogers (2003) stressed the acceptance and dispersal processes of cultural innovation. This method is therefore concerned in the process of dispersal and espousal of innovations in a more efficient and planned way (Lehnmann, 2007; Glaz, Barbara, Rimer and Viswanath, 2015). It also has some four elements which are communicating innovation through channels, over a period and amongst the members of a societal system and it builds on prevailing local knowledge, use of local phrases that are culturally applicable in order to identify local resolutions within societies, and, if possible, augment what works locally (Lehnmann, 2007).

 "An *innovation* is an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (Rogers, 2003:12). It can be an old innovation, but when an individual recognizes it as new, it is still a novelty for them. The novelty feature of an acceptance depends on three steps which are knowledge, persuasion, and decision of the innovation-decision processes. Furthermore, Rogers (2003), claims that there is a dearth of diffusion investigation on technology clusters. The second component of the diffusion of innovations practice is the means of communication. According to Rogers (2003:5), "communication is a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding". It takes place through certain networks between sources. Rogers (2003:204) asserts that "a *source* is an individual or an institution that originates a message. A channel is the means by which a message gets from the source to the receiver". He continues to say that diffusion is a precise kind of communication and comprises communication elements

such as an innovation, two individuals or other units of adoption, and a communication channel.

Rogers (2003), opines that the period issue is not taken seriously in most social research. He is of the view that the period dimension in dispersion research demonstrates one of its strengths. The innovation-diffusion progression, adopter classification, and rate of acceptances all include a time dimension. Rogers (2003:23) further describes social system as "a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal". Since diffusion of the innovations happens in the social system, it is persuaded by the social construction of the social system on the patterned planning of the units in a system. He further claims that the nature of the social system influences personalities' innovativeness, which is the key principle for classifying adopters.

Application of the theory of the diffusion of novelties, communicators can spot "early adopters," for example individuals who are already active or have accepted a new behaviour or impression that a programme is attempting to encourage within a community, and use these early adopters to influence the behavior of the target group so that the whole community adopts. Early adopters are opinion leaders in the society and enjoy a certain social position (Lehnmann, 2007; Glaz, Barbara, Rimer and Viswanath, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the study of literature related to this research, starting off with an overview of poverty in Lesotho, establishing what participation is, and types of communication patterns and channels that promote community participation in projects. The chapter also presented the conceptual and theoretical framework that underpinned the study which are participation communication theory and diffusion of innovation theory.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research methods used in this study. In order to bring about insight and information on the participation of beneficiaries in poverty alleviation projects, two approaches were used to collect data, as both approaches complement each other. The study used the mixed method approach, meaning both qualitative and quantitative research techniques were used in this single study. The main reason for the researcher to mix these methods was to seek for increase, enhancement, illustration, and interpretation of the findings from one approach with the results from the other technique (Craswell, 2013).

3.1 Area of study

The study specifically concentrates on Lifajaneng poverty alleviation project which was established by CARE Lesotho NGO. The project kick started in 2013 after the economy of Lesotho was badly disturbed by political instability. The main reason for the establishment of this project was to improve food security and household nutrition. This initiative was undertaken to help people in need. The initiative was implemented after a research was carried out and the following are some of the research results: many people were on ARV medication but never had proper daily meals and were taking their medication on empty stomachs. It was evident that not only the HIV patients were affected, even old people were also affected as they were no longer productive in their fields and had no pension grands and some of them were taking care of their grandchildren who are HIV/AIDS orphans. Due to the instability, most people lost their jobs as a result they were not able to buy seeds for their fields as they had to concentrate on taking care of their daily livelihoods. It was also apparent that people were not able to assist each other or even do the collective ploughing and this really affected the whole country very badly.

Due to the above reasons, CARE Lesotho came up with a donor funded project which came in different phases: the first phase, people were taught how to do small household ploughing and they were encouraged to compete amongst themselves. After doing the small household, farming the NGO would compensate each household which had a plot

with a 5l of beans, seeds, cooking oil and 12.5kg maize meal. This phase took 6 months with the close supervision of the project coordinator and after this beneficiary individually were expected to continue with the project. This was a very short-term phase but was expected to last for a life time.

The second phase was on: Indigenous poultry breeds whereby the villagers were given pigs and "Koekoek" chickens. These native chickens are able to tolerate harsh environmental conditions and poor husbandry practices. The aim was to benefit the communities and contribute to their welfare. The first group of the beneficiaries was provided with chickens which, after hatching, had to be distributed to other members of the project and those people were also expected to do likewise and the chain continues until the wealth is distributed equally among the beneficiaries. This phase was expected to last for 4 years.

The third phase of the project: farming and the intention was to have organic food and minimize the use of harmful pesticides and synthetic fertilizers. The vegetables, maize and fruits were grown naturally using natural compost fertilizer. The beneficiaries were also provided with seeds, equipped with skills on how to keep the seeds and finally how to take care of the fields. They were also equipped with irrigation systems. The intention was to help them to be independent commercial farmers.

3.1 MIXED METHOD APPROACH

In the mixed method approach, the researcher was able to choose the variables and elements of analysis, which are most usable in getting the answers to the research questions (Phillips and Stawarski, 2008; Yin 2015). The qualitative methodology has been more applicable where variables were discovered because they were later tested quantitatively, and the researcher observed the quantitative measures where they could not effectively describe or interpret the situation (Mis, 2012).

The dependent variable in this study is the participation while the independent variable is the communication of the relevant stakeholder in sustaining the development projects. The most important issue in quantitative and qualitative methods are their

compatibility while formulating a mixed methods research, which includes: prioritisation, implementation, and amalgamation (Creswell, Plano Clark, Guttman, and Hanson, 2003; Yin, 2015). This method, allowed the researcher to understand the methods of participation which were used and its impact as well as the effective channels used in poverty alleviation projects through the personal experiences of the beneficiaries. The qualitative approach extracted the knowledge from the natural setting (Creswell, 2003 and Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). It was evident from this research that both numerical and text data, collected simultaneously, gave a better understanding of the research problem (Howe, 1988; Mis, 2012).

However, at times it is possible that, priority can be given to either quantitative or qualitative depending on the nature of the study. Happ (2009) denotes that quantitative and qualitative data gathering and analysis can be done sequencially or in chronological stages, one after the another, or in parallel. Amalgamation emphasises the stages in the research procedure where the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data takes place (Maxcy, 2003; Happ, 2009: Phillips and Stawarski, 2008). As a result, in this study, the mixed methods gave the researcher a chance to integrate quantitative and qualitative data rather than collecting them separately. The main purpose was to maximize the strengths of the quantitative and qualitative data and minimize their weaknesses. The integration in this study was done through merging (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2011). This merging was completed by using tables and figures that show both the quantitative and the qualitative results. It was attained though recording of the results concurrently in a discussion section of the beneficiaries in this study. The reporting primarily used the quantitative statistical results which were then followed by qualitative themes that supported the quantitative results (Sandelowski, Voils and Knafl, 2009; Yin 2015).

3.1.1 Qualitative research method

This method has empowered the researcher to understand the situation through the eyes of the actors themselves. It has been the most appropriate as it has allowed the researcher to distribute some questionnaires to the beneficiaries of the project. The questionnaires have helped the researcher to inquire understanding about the complex situation of poverty alleviation projects, the holistic picture, the detailed views of informants because this study was conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 2012). This

method has been appropriate because it aimed at explaining, describing and illustrating behavior interaction and it revealed inadequately understood variables which affected the sustainability of the projects (Drew, Hardman and Hosp, 2008; Creswell, 2012). Kalof, Dan and Dietz (2008) also confirm that the objective of qualitative study method is to comprehend the processes; experiences and meaning people give to things in their natural setting. Mount (2005:270) declares that, "the researcher is seen as the main instrument in the research process."

The qualitative approach assembles strong descriptive data relevant to a specific phenomenon with the purpose of developing an understanding of what is being observed (Silverman, 200; Creswell 2013). As the study has been on people, this method was very appropriate as it emphasizes people's own understanding of their experiences and what they say and do in detail (Kolof at al., 2008). The primary source of information was from the sampled Agricultural Project beneficiaries, who were selected purposively from the Lifajaneng community project and the project coordinators. However, the sample in qualitative is relatively small so the results obtained using this method alone cannot be generalized to the beneficiaries of the project in Lifajaneng village, hence the triangulation of the method.

The method gave the researcher a chance to be on the site setting to see and record the people's behavior directly as it happened (Merriam, 1988). The method stresses on quality and the depth of data not on the scope and extensiveness of the information (Maree, 2007). The depth of information and its descriptiveness in writing gives clear details which permitted the researcher to appreciate the behaviour of the respondents (Merriam, 1988). The method enables the researcher to see through the eye of the participant (Maree, 2007 b; Yin, 2015). This research method supported the researcher in attaining the most relevant and important information by bringing out new meanings and improving understanding of the existing situation (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The theory, hypothesis and details are built from an idea; this shows that it uses inductive processes (Merriam, 1988; Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). The collected data is very descriptive and it uses meaningful language (Eisher, 1991; Yin, 2015). The instruments

used to collect and analyze data liaise within human instrument rather than by inventory of questionnaires or machines (Merriam, 1988; Miles and Huberman, 2013).

However, Qualitative studies claim to appreciate and describe the world by human experiences, so qualitative research cannot escape subjective experience (Myers, 2000). The in-depth, comprehensive approach to data gathering limits scope because individuals have different experiences over time so that makes replicability very difficult (Burke and Chistensen, 2007; Miles and Huberman, 2013). The Qualitative approach is criticized as a non- numerical method, with small sample sizes which cannot be generalized (Myers, 2000). The research findings of this study were not generalised to the whole village but to only the beneficiaries of the project who were included in the study, findings may be different in different cases (Burke and Chistensen, 2007).

Nonetheless, using of both quantitative and qualitative methods in this study eliminated the shortfall. The data collection in this study was simultaneous, done in one phase of the research study. The precedence was equivalent between the two methods, but in practical application the precedence was given to the qualitative approach that produced thick data. It is a method that is grounded in the positivist research paradigm. Denscombe (2002) views the quantitative as a method to social research that pursues to apply the natural science model of research to investigations of social phenomena and explanation of the social world.

Quantitative research puts more emphasis on numerical data. The data attained from questionnaires is always numerical and can be converted into numerical form and then analyzed (Martin and Bridgmon, 2012). Neuman (2004) posits that this method highly considers the use of charts, graphs and statistical tables. It is also highlighted in this approach that the information is in the form of numbers and can be quantified and summarized (Yin, 2015).

According to Bless and Higson (2002:37), "the quantitative research method measures, compares and analyses different variables, either by identifying the characteristics of an observed phenomena or by exploring possible correlations between two or more phenomena." In quantitative research, the researcher depended on numerical data to

test the relationships between variables. This type of research can be an experiment or a survey (Ivankova, Creswell and Clark, 2007; Miles and Huberman, 2013). According to Houser (1998), quantitative research is a research which is totally based on measurement and quantification of data. It is important to have a means of transforming variables into numbers in a quantitative study. Aliaga and Gunderson (2002) quoted in Muijs (2004:1) added that, quantitative research "explains phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analyzed using mathematically based methods". However, Quantitative data in most cases cannot provide specific answers, reasons, explanations or examples, even though its results can be generalized. The data gathered through this type of research can disclose generalizable information for a large populace, but it cannot allow the researcher to look at individual cases (Ryan, 2006). This approach was not adopted alone in this study as it does not engage in-depth analysis that discloses people's experiences with the phenomenon under study.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design has been defined as the logical steps of research or a guideline that holds all of the elements in a research project together (Trochim, 2006; Yin, 2013). It can be qualitative or quantitative depending on research questions that the researcher needs to explore. According to Coolican (2004), the design is the general structure and strategy of the research study. The researcher can elaborate or enlarge the findings of one method with another method. In this study the researcher has begun with a qualitative method for the purpose of probing, followed up with the quantitative approach with a large sample so that the results can be generalized to a bigger number (Cresswell, 2000; Honcock and Algozzine, 2011).When choosing this particular design, the researcher`s interest was to understand meaning from the beneficiaries' view in a non-controversial and open way which helped to explain the existing situation in poverty alleviation projects (Patton, 2002; Yin, 2015).

In order to understand the phenomenon under investigation, the researcher identified empirical study as an appropriate design which enabled her to use both qualitative and quantitative; the primary data in this study was collected from the beneficiaries through the use of questionnaires and focus group discussions, while the secondary data was

collected from the sample of project coordinator. The primary data gave the researcher an opportunity to engage with the beneficiaries in their focus groups discussion interviews, while the secondary data gave the researcher the chance to distribute the questionnaires to the beneficiaries of the project in the fields and, to interview the project coordinator in their natural setting.

3.2.1 Case study

The design for this study is a case study. In this regard, the case study helped in explaining the existing situation on communication in development projects. Case study has been mostly relevant in this study. Maree (2007) advocates that in qualitative approach, the case study underpins the complete understanding of how respondents relate and interact with one another. Yin (2009:26) defines a case study as "a logical plan for getting from here to there." He further explains that there has to be the initial set of questions asked and proper answers and conclusions to those questions. Case study has helped the researcher in this study to obtain an apparent understanding knowledge about the effects of communication on poverty alleviation projects (Yin, 2015).

Cohen et al., (2006) explain the main objective of a case study as, to create interpretations of experiences that are so close, their uniqueness, context and reality are thoroughly described to the point that a sense of witness-account is felt. As a result, a case study has been predominantly relevant in this study so the primary data collection instrument was the case study for which the researcher prepared some questionnaires as suggested by King and Horrocks (2010). Case studies in most cases are criticized for being too dependent on a single case which lacks generalization conclusion (Maree, 2007; Honcock and Algozzine, 2011). It is normally too long, not easy to do and produce enormous documentation (Yin, 1984; Yin, 2015). Yin (1984:21) argues that, "too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy and allowed unequivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions."

In this study, the data was collected from a very small sample and generalized only to similar cases and data was not used to predict empirical techniques because of its small size (David, 2007; Thompson, 2012). At the same time, it enabled the researcher to

understand the relationship and form of interaction between the key communicator in poverty alleviation projects. Even though there are disadvantages of case studies, there are advantage ways out of them. Case study supports the studying of a single case in-depth, which leads to Lifajane village in Mafeteng district in Lesotho to be the only village under study (Kalof, Dan and Dretz, 2008; Yin 2013). It develops rich and solid understanding about people. The research was primarily carried out within the framework of its use. It permitted various sources and methods in the data gathering situation (Yin, 2003 and Maree, 2007).

3.3 POPULATION

Briggs and Coleman (2007:130) advocate that the population setting be considered as "the entire group in which we are interested in and which we wish to describe or draw conclusions about." This is a plausible plan to strategise about the population focus since in many studies the population groups targeted are often too large for all members to participate, Babbie and Mouton (2005). The population which the sample was drawn from is the beneficiary of the poverty alleviation project at Lifajaneng village. The selected sample are the agricultural Project beneficiaries who were selected purposively from the Lifajaneng community project which was established by CARE Organisation, a non-profit making NGO which aimed at empowering the villagers especially those who were leaving with HIV/AIDS, the child headed families, as well as the AIDS orphans in the project and the project coordinator.

The main reason for picking this village is because there was more than one project running in the same village and all the projects were meant to combat poverty though by different stake holders. Because of that reason, it is a lot easier to get detailed data as CARE has had the same kind of projects so many times in the village. This village also appeared to be the most vulnerable village in the district of Mafeteng, it has the highest statistical record on poverty yet there are several poverty alleviation projects. However, due to time constraints and the depth of qualitative research, the sampled beneficiaries of Lifajaneng villages will be easily accessible, as well as the project coordinators.

3.3.1 Sampling Procedure

The population are both men and women beneficiaries of CARE poverty alleviation project at Lifajaneng. The respondents were only in the current project. The questionnaire took about 15 minutes to answer per person. Only members who appear on the list of the beneficiaries were included as sample but not all of them had a chance to be selected. The sample was taken from the list, where every fourth person from the list was chosen as a sample. Quantitative data frequently involves random sampling, so that every individual has an equal likelihood of being nominated and the sample can be generalized to the larger populace. However, in qualitative data, purposeful sampling is utilised so that persons are selected based on their experience with the phenomenon (Thompson, 2012). As a result, this study will adopt purposive sampling.

According to Engel and Schtt (2010:97-102), in purposive sampling, "The sampling units are selected subjectively by the researcher, who attempts to obtain a sample depending on the subjective judgment of the research." This means that the researcher makes the decision on picking participants s/he sees as relevant in the project circumstances. The participants' beneficiaries were identified and chosen from the list of beneficiaries collected from the Project Manager, since they were on the list every beneficiary had a chance of being chosen, so every fourth participant on the list was identified and informed to take part.

Qualitative sampling typically works with smaller samples of persons in their own context and are studied comprehensively (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Thompson, 2007; Thompson 2012). Maree (2008:79) affirms that "participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of the data needed for the study; the sampling decision is made in other to get the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions." In this case those people who were actually involved were chosen to form part of the focus group. There were three focus groups consisting 6 members. Beneficiaries were also being given questionnaires to fill; only 30 beneficiaries took part as they formed the 25% of the 120 beneficiaries which is a sufficient sample to draw a conclusion from. Finally, there was face to face

interview with one Project Manager who is the only manager in charge of this particular project who reports to one responsible Project coordinator.

In this research, data was triangulated when the researcher used data from interviews, focus groups and questionnaires which have helped her to predict and generalized the findings with the use of quantitative while the qualitative enabled the researcher to generalize the findings to the similar situation. The quantitative provided the researcher with the important information about methods of involvement and the level of partaking of the beneficiaries and the officials, the demographics character of the beneficiaries, while qualitative data provided the complimentary information. In this study, it was evident that the combination of the two research methods added value to the data collected and reinforced each finding.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

3.4.1 Interviews
In this study, semi structured face to face interviews were used to collect data. It involved the beneficiaries and the officials. Interviews were used to solicit data from respondents. Cohen and Manion (2000) explain that an interview is a conversation between two people that is initiated by the interviewer so as to obtain relevant information. Interviews are used to solicit data from respondents. They indicate focus comes by way of objectives and content intended to be covered.

For the study, interviews were semi- structured as well as focus groups. Semi-structured interviews permit the researcher to evoke information for issues raised in research questions. The advantage of the semi-structured interview is that the researcher brings pre-determined questions on interview schedules which is however not pre-cast and allow the flexibility of probing (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995).

3.4.2 Semi- structured interview

For the study, interviews were semi- structured as; the advantage of the semi-structured interview is that the researcher brings pre-determined questions on interview schedules which is however not pre-cast and allow the flexibility of probing. It allows the

51

participants to express themselves at length, but offered enough structure to prevent aimless movement (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). The interviews were able to probe the information about the participatory development communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects; the researcher interviewed one official on the attitude, experience, views and the perception of the community participation in the projects. The officials were interviewed because they worked very closely with the participants. The beneficiaries formed part of the focus groups and face to face interviews.

3.4.3 Focus group

Focus group interviews were formulated with the impression that group interviews can be more productive than one on one interview. The data in this kind of interview was said to be richer because participants give differed responses, and examples in detail while at the same time reminding each other forgotten information (Maree, 2008; Shamdasan and Stewart, 2014). The purpose of focus groups was to select participants who were willing to disclose their opinions, experiences, feelings and thoughts. This is usually done in an environment which is free and natural. Usually, focus groups are composed of 5 to 10 people (Kruger and Casey, 2009; Phillips and Stawarski 2008; Krueger and Casey, 2014). The size was made small enough to allow participants to get opportunity to share experiences yet large enough to allow for diversity. Too small a group results in too small a pool of ideas, where as too big a group does not allow full involvement of all members. Three focus groups were held, which consisted of six people from the project under study and each focus group.

3.4.4 Questionnaires
Questionnaires deliver numeric data that can be designed, linked, and statistically tested. The self-administered questionnaires were used in collecting quantitative data. The subjects were a sample made up of project beneficiaries. Questions were asked in the same order. The Self-completion questionnaire helped to reduce bias by characteristics of interviewer and variability and it increased the reliability of responses when the topic of the research is sensitive (Bloch, 2004).

The Self-administered questionnaires were made up of designed questions. Data from questionnaires were pretentious by the characteristics of respondents such as their

education, knowledge, experience, motivation and personality. There is a possibility of a social attraction bias when people are retorting by putting themselves in good light (Robson, 2002). The questions were standardised so there was no need for the presence of the researcher when they were being filled. However, there are great advantages of using questionnaires such as: its provision for broad information, its easiness to administer and because it covers a large group. Therefore, self-completion knowledge questionnaires were appropriate for collecting information about beneficiary participation.

Questionnaires were distributed by the researcher and administered by her during that process. The researcher was there to answer questions where they needed clarification. The structured questionnaire saved time as it was easy to analyse, these structured questionnaires were used in the collection data from beneficiaries at Lifajaneng village where thirty questioners were distributed to the beneficiaries.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, the collected data from interviews and questionnaires were analysed in relation to communal participation of the beneficiaries in the projects. The analyses were both in qualitative and quantitative, because it was appropriate to present facts that explain the phenomena under study. Analysis included arranging raw data in order to reveal the results of the research. Data has to be organized neatly and be presented in some realistic ways that allow decision makers to quickly identify the patterns in the data analysis (Patton, 1990). Quantitative data was presented in simple percentages through graphs, charts and tables while qualitative data was analyzed thematically. This involves making inferences of themes occurring in data elicited from respondents (Babble and Mount, 2005).

3.6 ENVISAGED ETHICAL ISSUES

Drew *et al.*, (2008) define ethics as recognized principles that encourage responsible research practices and guarantee protection of human participants. Ethics in research are very important because they prescribe what is permissible or not when conducting research (Kalof at al., 2008). According to Suter (2006) the rights, needs and values of the participants in a research have to be seriously taken care of because it is highly

possible that sensitive information about the participants can be revealed and tarnish individuals' reputation if it is not well taken care of. The researcher should clearly stipulate the purpose of the study to the participants and what the study entails.

This study took into consideration the rights and the welfare of the people who are participants in the research. The participants' rights were highly respected; that is the beneficiaries and officials and their anonymity and confidentiality, protection from harm, informed consent and voluntary participation was guaranteed. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that the promises and the commitments are kept. The researcher should consider the following:

3.6.1 Informed consent and voluntary participation

According to Gibbons and Sanderson (2002) the participants are expected to be fully informed about the purpose of the research and the processes involved in the study. It was assumed that upon understanding everything, they are then expected to voluntarily participate in the research. Suter (2006) adds that the participants also have the right to freely withdraw from the study whenever they want. In this research, the beneficiaries and the officials were fully informed. People are not supposed to be forced into participating in a research because participation has to be voluntary (Neuman, 2003). In the case of this study, the topic under investigation did not fall within the sensitive category, and the participants are all over nineteen. The participants were given a form which stated their rights to their participation and that their anonymity was guaranteed as codes were used to represent their names.

3.6.2 Confidentiality and Anonymity

Cournoyer and Klein (2000) claim that the researcher has a responsibility to protect the identity of their sources, mostly by maintaining their anonymity. The issue was important to our social beliefs that persons and their matters have the right to privacy. Briggs and Coleman (2007:113) insist that "one approach to maintain privacy is by fictionalizing or codifying names and places and even dates." Singleton, Straits and McAllister (1988) claim that it is the individual`s rights to decide when, where, to whom and to what extend their attitudes, beliefs and behavior will be revealed. The researcher cannot disclose the participants' identity or linking them to the information they gave.

Dane (1990) and Babbie (2001) differentiated between anonymity and confidentiality; "they believed that only the researcher and the possible a few members of his staff should also have made a commitment with regard to confidentiality" (Dane 1990 and Babbie 2001 cited by De Vos, Strydom, Fouché and Delport (2007:62). This is supported by Babbie and Mouton (2005:523) who claim, "The researcher cannot identify given response with a given respondent". Confidentiality is frequently viewed as comparable the principle of privacy (Oliver, 2003; Gregory, 2003). De Voset (2007) postulates that the researcher's report can at least use some averages rather than using the information about individuals which can easily be obvious to everyone.

3.6.3 Protection from harm

The subjects can be exposed to both physical and emotional harm. It is the responsibility of the researcher to protect his subjects, within reasonable limits, from any kind of physical discomfort that may crop up from the research project (De Vos, 2007). According to Babbie (2001), since the negative behavior which took place in the past can be remembered at the time of investigation, it could be the commencement of new personal harassment or embarrassment. Babbie (2001) adds that unless the information is very important to the research it should not be added in the measuring instruments. The full disclosure of the possible risks to the participants enables them to decide whether to take part or not (Cournoyer and Klein, 2000).

3.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter has discussed the methodology, which will be used in the study in detail. It has highlighted the most crucial issues on quantitative and qualitative approach, design of the study, sampling procedure and data collection and analysis procedure, as well as the ethical considerations issues which are appropriate for the study.

CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents data that was gathered quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data was collected through self-administered questionnaires with both open ended and closed questions on 30 project participants. Quantitative data was presented using frequency distribution; tables, charts and graphs. Qualitative data collected from 18 project participants through focus groups and interviews from the project manager and the project coordinator was presented in emerging themes buttressing quantitative data. The information solicited from participants was in response to the following sub-questions:

1. What form of participatory communication methods is available to ensure the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?

2. To what extent are the channels of communication useful towards ensuring the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?

3. What are the impacts of participatory communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects?

The chapter commences by presenting the biographic characteristics of surveyed respondents and the profile of focus group respondents. Data collected through questionnaires and focus groups will be presented and analyzed simultaneously.

4.1 BIOGRAPHIC DATA ON SURVEYED AND INTERVIEWED RESPONDENTS

In this study, the researcher was concerned with the respondents' characteristics such as gender, age, academic qualifications, professional qualifications and their experience in the implementation of projects. The biographic data enabled the researcher to ascertain sustainability of projects through the methods and participatory communication channels. This information gave the researcher an overview of the caliber of personnel, their knowledge and level of understanding on the phenomenon under study.

4.2 Demographic information of the surveyed project beneficiaries

4.2.1 Gender distribution
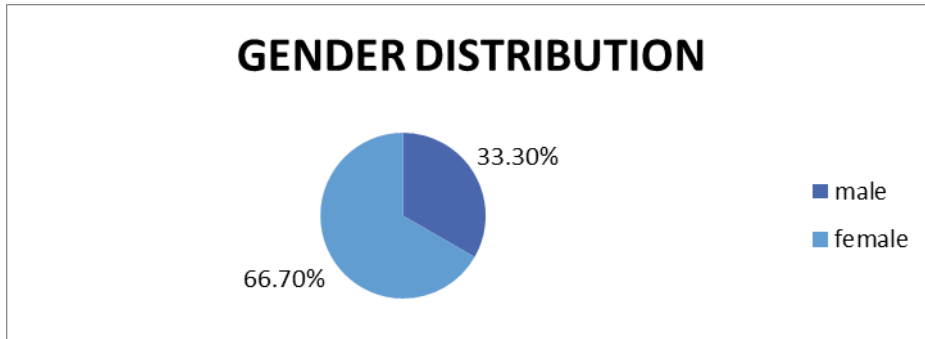
Fig 1: Gender Distribution of the beneficiaries

The above chart displays the gender distribution of the sampled participants. Data in figure 1 indicates that the sample comprised of two groups: the surveyed sample consists of 66.7% (20) female participants and 33.3% (10) male participants, who were sampled.

4.2.2 Age Level
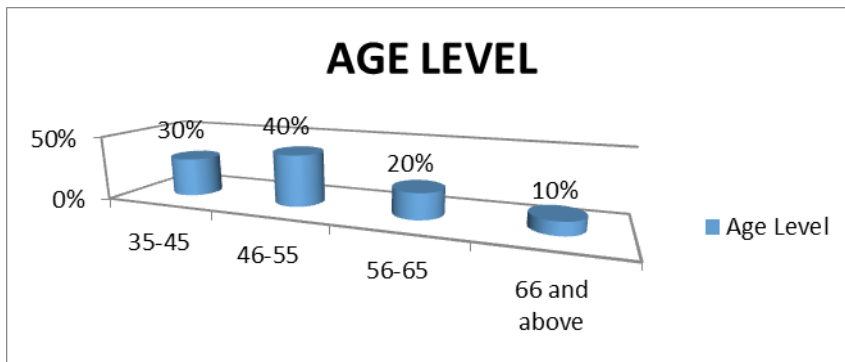
Fig 2: Age Level of the participants

The figure above displays the age level of the participants; it emerged from figure 2 that the majority of surveyed respondents 40% (12) were in the age range 46-55, 30% (9) were ranging from 35-46, (20) % (6) were between 56-65 while 10% (3) were ranging between the ages of 65-70.

4.2.3 Marital Status

MARITAL STATUS

- never married
- widowed
- married
- divorced

13.30% 20%

16.70%

50%
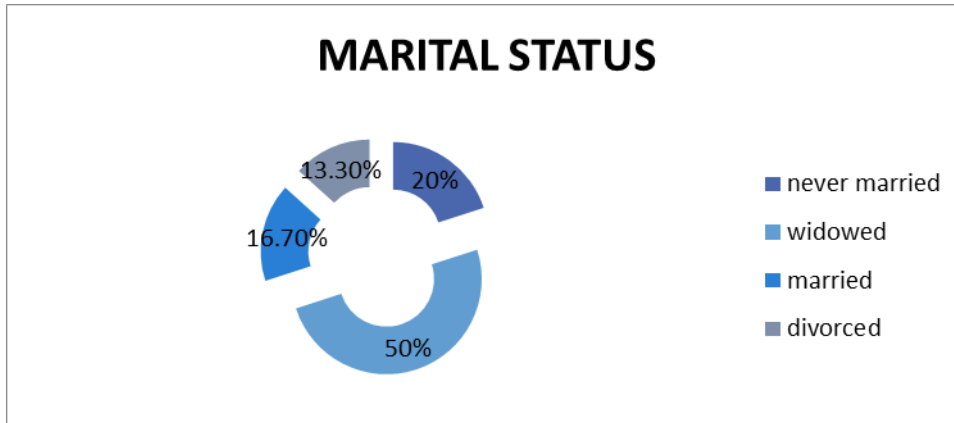
Fig 3: Marital Status of the participants

Figure 3 displays the marital status of the beneficiaries of the Lifajaneng poverty alleviation project. In terms of the marital status of the sample, the study found a very high percentage of widowed participants in the project with 50% (15), participants who never married constituted 20% (6), those who were married were about 16.7% (5) while the divorced were 13.3% (4).

4.2.4 Head of Family

HEAD OF FAMILY

- Head of Family

53.30% 16.70% 13.30% 16.70%

self Mother Brother Husband
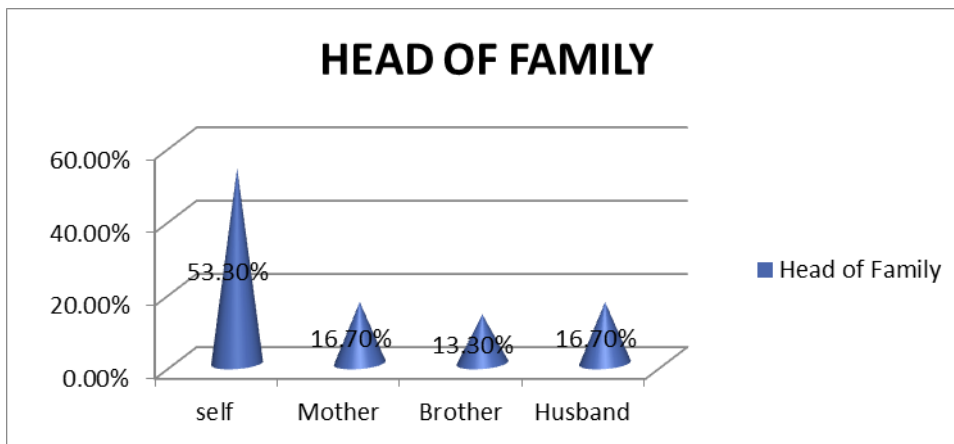
Fig 4: participants who are the Head of Family

Figure 4 above highlights the numbers of the participants who are the heads of their families. This shows that the majority 53.3% (16) participants are the heads of the families, 16.7 (5) others are the heads, 16.7% (5) husbands are the heads while 13.3% (4) are headed by the brothers.

4.2.5 Size of the Family
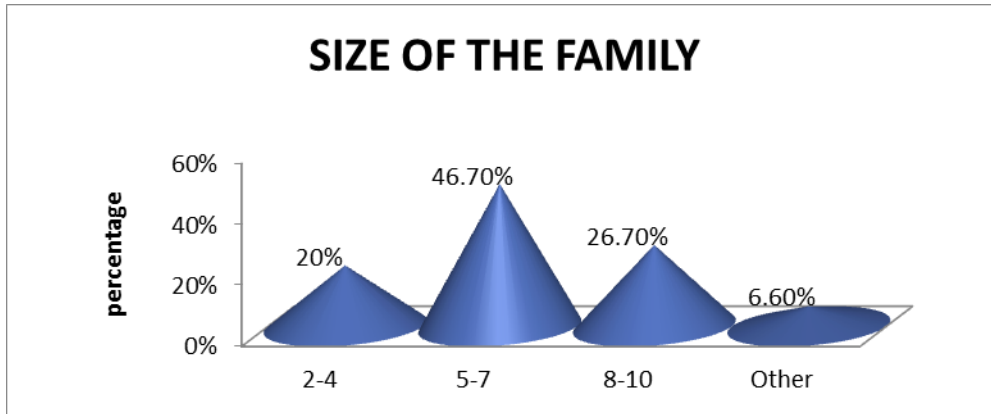
Fig 5: Size of the Family of the beneficiaries

Figure 5 declares information about the size of the families of the participant beneficiaries. This states that the majority; 46.7 % (14) of the participants were living in families of about five to seven members. 26.7 %(8) has about eight to ten members, 20% (6) only has about two to four family members while only 6.6% (2) have more than ten family members.

4.2.6 Level of Education
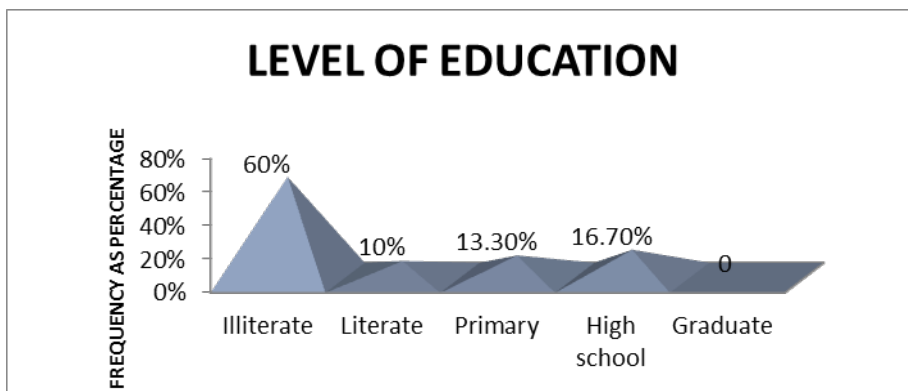
Fig 6: Level of Education of the beneficiary participants

The study went on to find out the educational level of the people involved in the projects. Figure 6 presents that 60% (18) of the participants were illiterate, 16.7% (5) had high school education, 13.3% (4) had primary education while 10% (3) were literate and there were no graduates.

4.2.7 Occupation
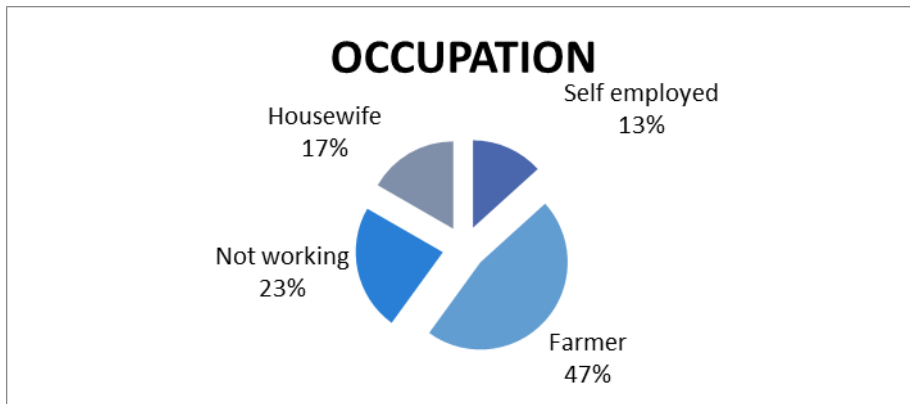
Fig 7: Occupation of the participants

The above figure highlights the information about the occupation of the participants. It is displayed in figure 7 the evidence collected from the data that the majority of the beneficiaries were farmers 47% (14), 23.3% (7) were not working at all, 16,7% (5) were house wives, while 13.3% (4) were self-employed.

4.3 DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF THE SURVEYED PROJECT OFFICIALS

Table 4.3.1

GENDER	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Male	1	50%
Female	1	50%
2		100%

The above table indicates that there were only two officials of the project, who were a male and a female.

Table 4.3.2

OCCUPATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Area coordinator	1	50%
Project manager	1	50%
2		100%

Table 4.3.2 indicates that the project has one area coordinator and the Project Manager who is mostly on the side, and report to the NGO.

Table 4.3.3

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Master's Degree (development studies)	1	50%
First Degree (development studies)	1	50%
2		**100%**

The above table indicates that the project officials had a master's degree and a first degree related to their positions, the highest qualification for the most senior position.

4.3 RESULTS PERTAINING TO THEMES

4.3.1 Means of Communication

4.3.1.1 Medium of Information
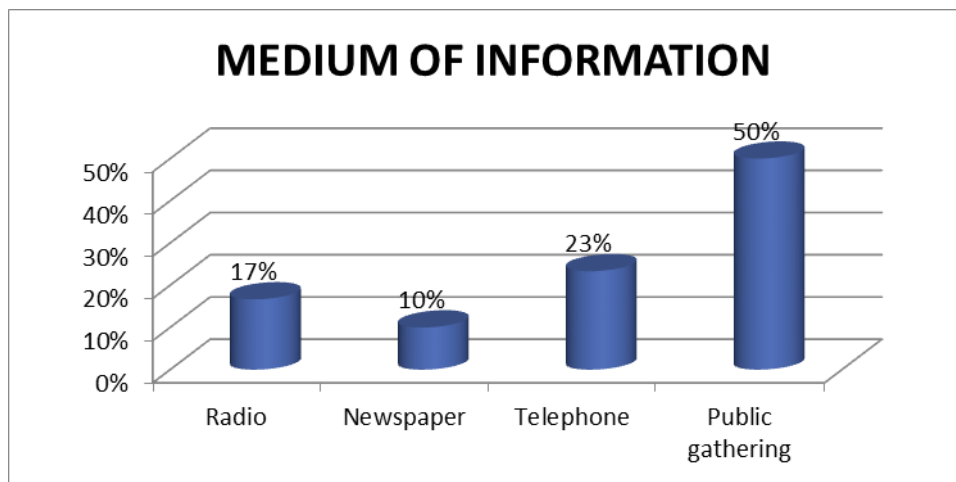
Fig 8: Medium of Information

As displayed in figure 8, the study examined how people came to know about the project. The above figure shows that the majority, 50% (15) of surveyed respondents heard about the project from a public gathering, 23% (7) heard thorough the telephone and specifically cell phones having been called by either relatives or friends. While 17% (5) of the participants heard from the radio, and 10% (3) read about the project from the newspaper.

4.3.1.2 Project Awareness Duration
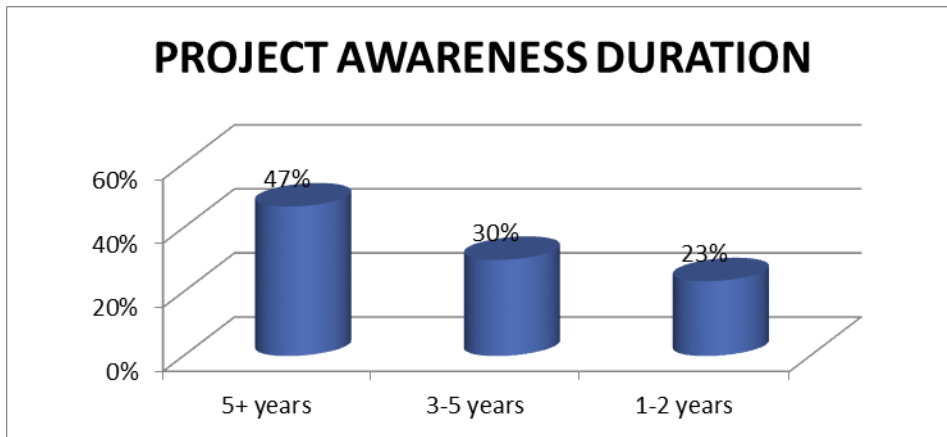
Fig 9: how long beneficiaries have known about the project

Figure 9 presents how long people had known about the project. Information presented in the figure indicates that the majority, 47%, of surveyed respondents had known about the project for more than five years, 30% of them had known about it for 3-5 years, while only 23% of surveyed respondents had known about the project for a period between 1 to 2 years.

4.3.1.3 Organizers of the Meetings
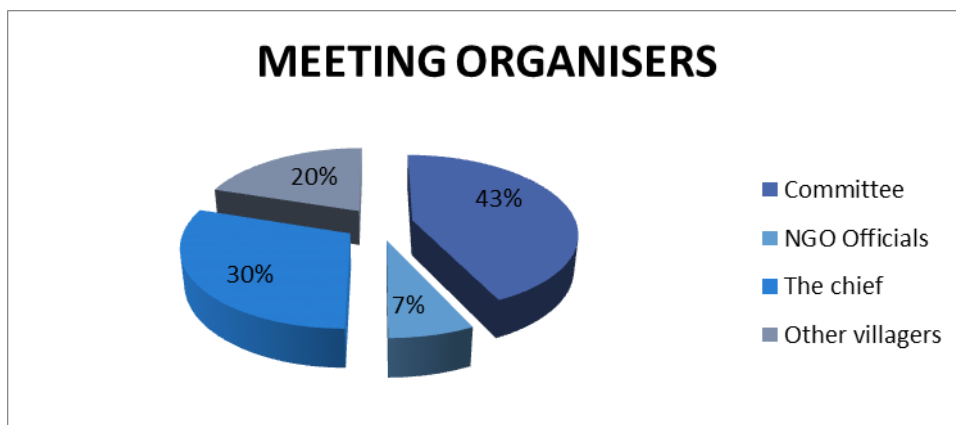
Fig 10: Meeting Organisers

The study tried to understand who normally calls for meetings in this particular poverty alleviation project. Figure 10 indicates that 43% (13) of the majority surveyed

respondents testified that meetings were mostly called by the committee members through the help of the chief, another higher percentage 30% (9) of the participants claimed that the meetings were called by the chief, 20% (6) said it was called by other villagers while the least percentage 7% (2) affirmed that they were called by the NGO officials.

4.3.1.4 Means of Communication
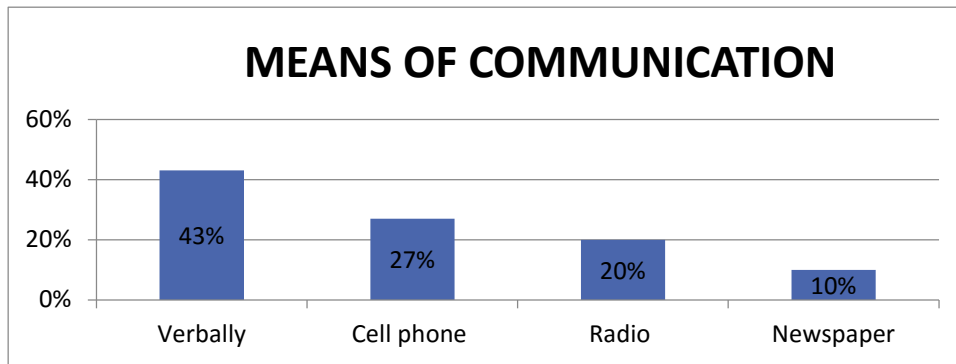
Fig 11: Means of Communication

The study investigated on the means of communication used in order to disseminate the information to the public especially to the beneficiaries of the project. Figure 11 presents that the majority 43% (13) of the surveyed respondents revealed that meetings were called verbally by the chief whistler who calls for public gatherings while 27% (8) claimed that the meetings were called through cell phones and 20% (20) reported that the meetings were called though the radio and only 10% (3) of the respondents heard about the meetings through the newspaper.

4.3.1.5 Language Used in Meetings
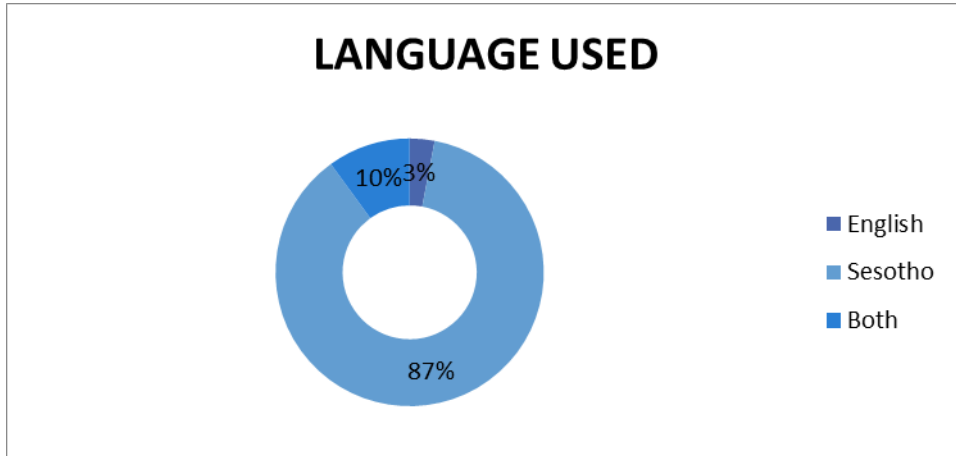
Fig 12: Language Used in meetings

In order to understand whether the massage which is being passed across in the project was understood, there was a question asked about the kind of language which was used in gatherings. Figure 12 acknowledge 87% (26) of the participants claimed that the language which was used in the meeting was Sesotho, 10% (3) also affirmed that both English and Sesotho were used, while only 3% (1) said the meetings were conducted in English.

4.3.1.6 Language Preferred in meetings
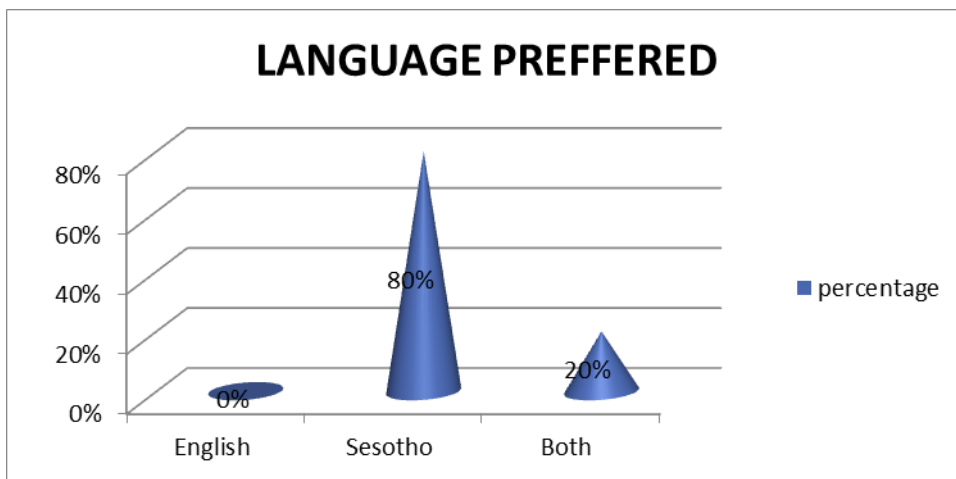
Fig 13: Language preferred during meetings

It is important for people to declare their preference in terms of the language which should be used in meetings. It was revealed in figure 13 that Sesotho was the language commonly used and preferred. The majority 80% (24) of the surveyed respondents

claimed that the language that was used was Sesotho, 20% (6) claimed they prefer both English and Sesotho language to be used and there were no participants who preferred English only.

4.3.1.7 Communication Challenges in the Project
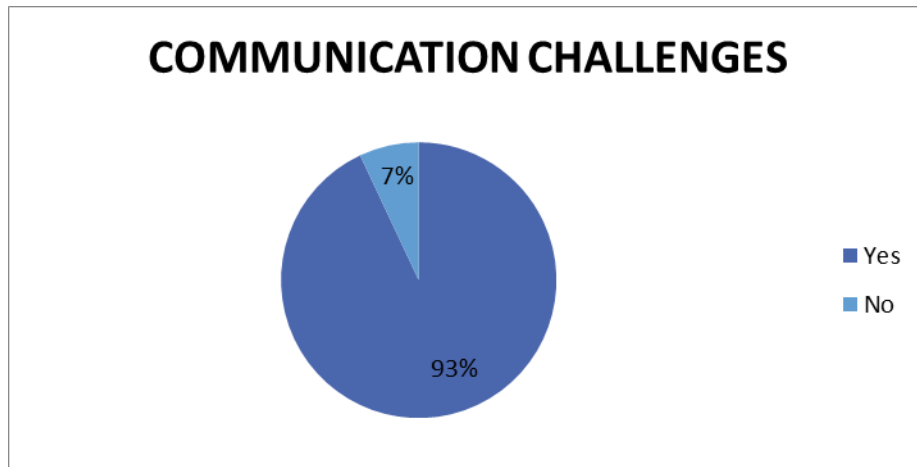
Fig 14: Communication Challenges in the project

The participants were asked if they have any kind of communication challenges, the above Figure indicates that there are some communication challenges that the participants have been facing. The majority; 93% (28) of the surveyed respondents clarified that they have communication challenges, while 17 % (2) of the beneficiaries claimed that they did not have communication problems.

4.3.1.8 Communication tools
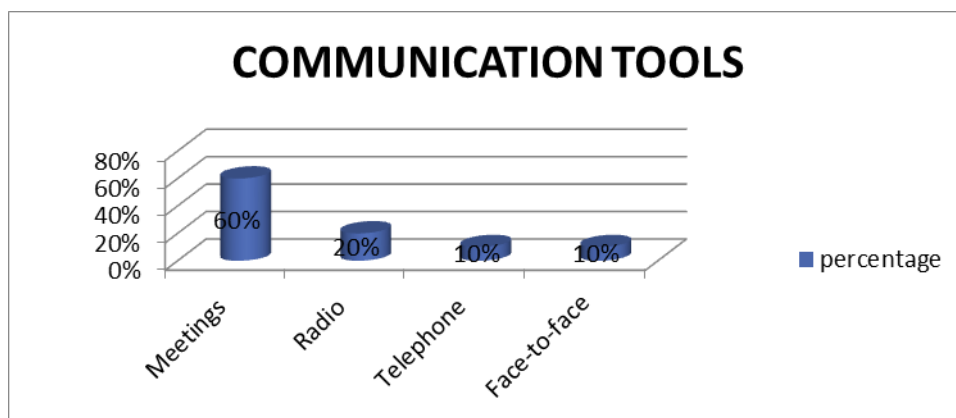
Fig 15: Communication Tools in Lifajaneng poverty alleviation project

The participants were asked which tools of communication work best for them. In Figure 15 it is displayed that the surveyed beneficiaries indicated that the most effective

tool of communication is public gathering meetings. This was highlighted by about 60% (18) of the participants, 20% (6) also claimed that phones can also be effective while 10% (3) said radio and another 10% (3) indicated that face to face.

4.3.2 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

4.3.2.1 Understanding of participation
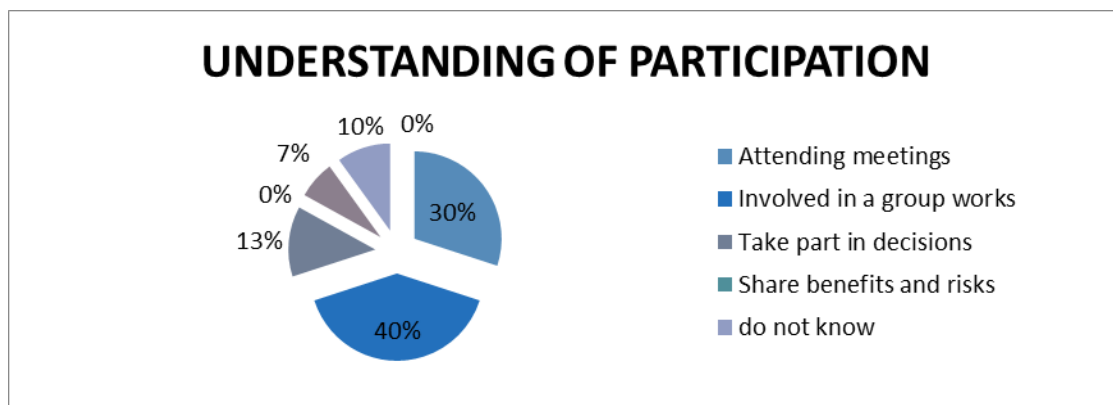
Fig 16: Understanding of Participation

Beneficiaries were asked whether they understand the meaning of participation in relation to their project. Figure 16 indicates that only 40%(12) of the surveyed respondents understood participation to mean being involved in working as a group, 30% (9) thought it meant attending meetings while 13% (4) suggested that it meant taking part in decision making while 7% (2) understood that participation meant sharing in the benefits as well as the risks that the project may have. However, 10% (3) of the surveyed respondents claimed they did not understand what participation meant.

4.3.2.2 Importance of Participation
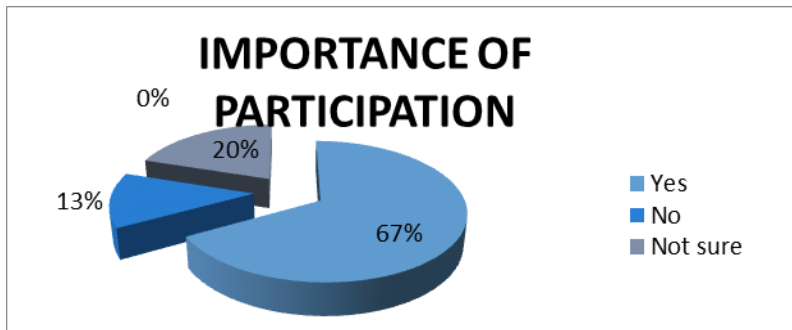
Fig 17: Importance of Participation

The beneficiaries were asked if they understood the importance of participating in the project. Figure 17 shows about 67% (20), which is the majority from the survey respondents that shared their views on the importance of participation in the project and reflected that it is important to participate, while the 20 %(6) of the survey participants were not sure about importance of participation in the project. However, 13% (4) of the survey respondents felt it was not important to participate in the poverty alleviation project especially the donor funded project.

4.3.2.3 Individual Participation in the project
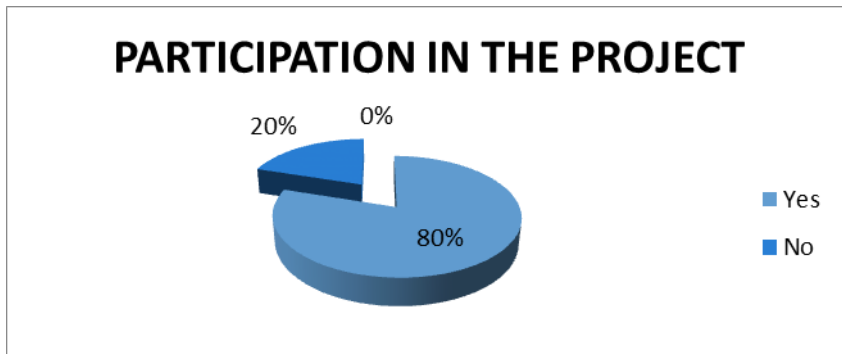
Fig 18: Individual Participation in the Project

The above figure displays information on whether there was any form of participation in the project. Figure 18 reveals that 80% (24) of the participants were actively involved in terms of participating in the activities, while 20% (6) of the participants claimed that they had not participated in the activities of the project.

4.3.2.4 Individuals Opportunities in Participation
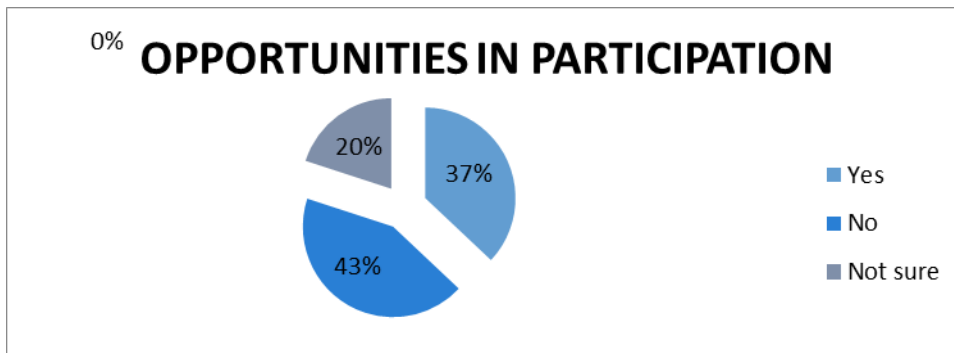
Fig 19: Opportunities in Participation

The beneficiaries were asked if they had equal opportunities of participating in the project. Figure 19 reveals that, 43 % (13) of the surveyed members felt they had not been given an equal opportunity of participating in the project. Whereas 37% (11) of the beneficiaries felt they were given equal opportunity in the participation of the project activities. Only the 20% (6) of the beneficiaries were not sure about their participation opportunity in the project.

4.3.2.5 Benefits of participation
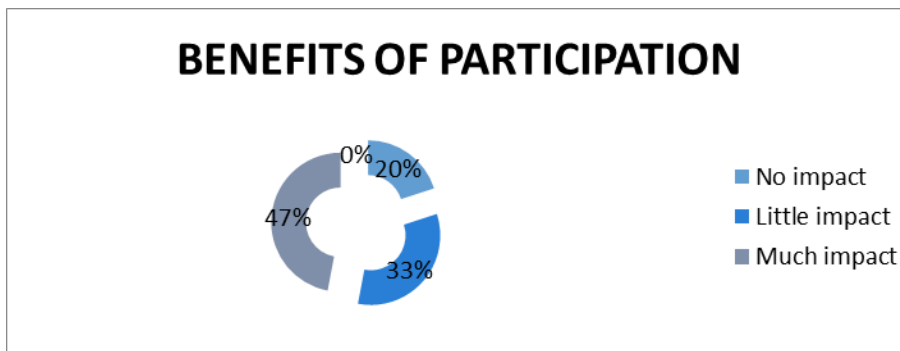
Fig 20: Benefits of Participation

The beneficiaries were asked if they had benefited from participating in the project. Figure 20 indicates that 47% of the surveyed beneficiaries felt the project had a huge impact on their lives, as they managed to change their lives for the better. Thirty-three per cent of the participants claimed that the project had little impact on their lives while only 20% declared that the project had no impact on their lives.

4.3.2.6 Individual Role in the Project
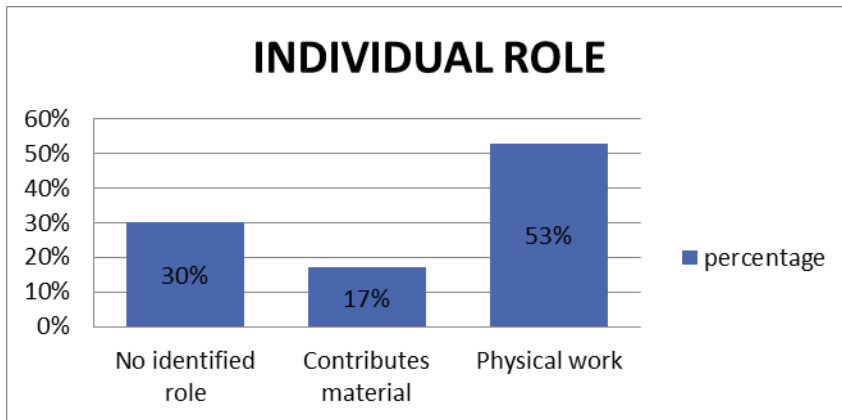
Fig 21: Individual Role in the Project

Beneficiaries were asked if they had identified individual roles in the project. The above figure 21 points out that the majority of the surveyed beneficiaries which are about 53% (16) of all the samples participants indicated that they never had an identified role in the project. The 30% (9) of the beneficiaries claimed that they did physical work whilst 17% (5) claimed that they had contributed materials in the project.

4.3.2.7 Involvement in Planning and Execution
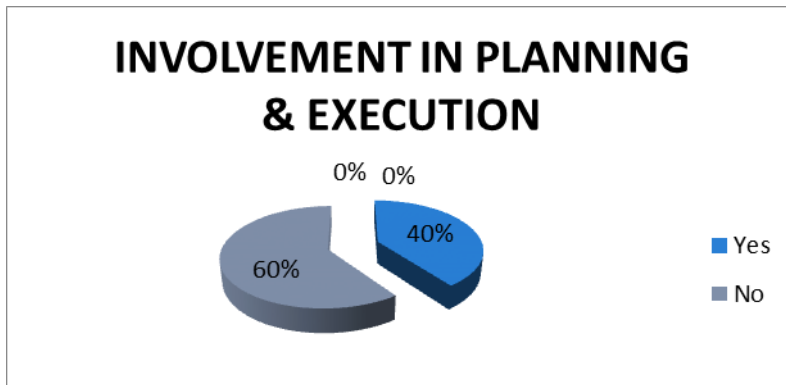
Fig 22: Individual involvement in Planning and execution of the project

Beneficiaries were asked if they had taken part in the planning and the execution of the project. The evidence from figure 22 reveals that over half of the surveyed participants 60% (18) which are the majority feel they were never involved in the planning of the project. While only 40% (12) of the participants felt they were involved in the planning.

4.3.2.8 Benefits of Participation

BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION

- ■ Yes
- ■ No

17%

83%
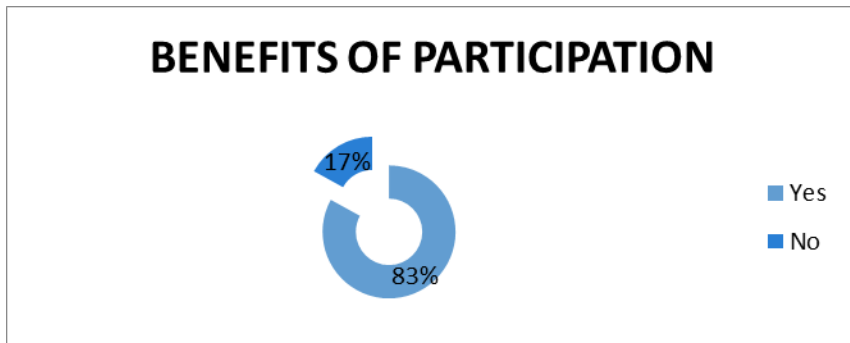
Fig 23: Benefits of Participation in the Project

Beneficiaries were asked whether they had benefited though participation in this particular project. From figure 23 above, the majority of the participants 85% (25) claimed that they had benefited, while only 17% (5) of them claimed to have not benefited though their participation.

4.3.3 COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.3.3.1 Communication and Participation

COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

- ■ Yes
- ■ No
- ■ Some times

33%

50%

17%
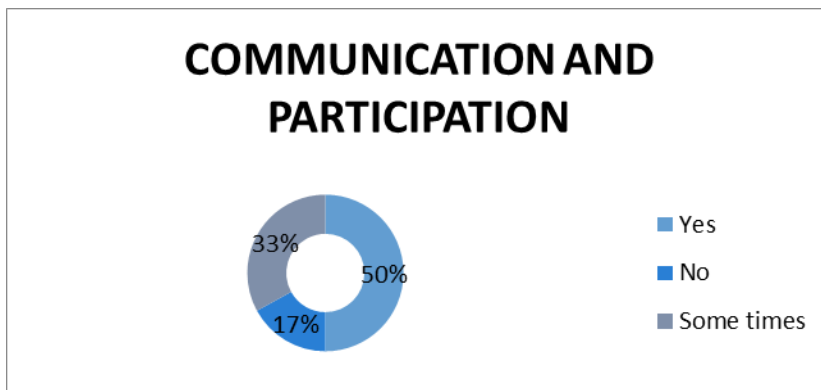
Fig 24: beneficiaries' communication and Participation in poverty alleviation project

Beneficiaries were asked if they participated and communicated in the project activities which supported the project. The above figure 24 indicates that the majority 50% (15) of the project beneficiaries supported and participated in the project activities, about 33%

(10) of the beneficiaries participated but not all the times while 17% (5) did not participate at all.

4.3.3.2 Evaluation of communication and participation

EVALUATION OF THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNICATION AND PARTICIPATION

20%
44%
36%

■ No impact
■ Little impact
■ Much impact
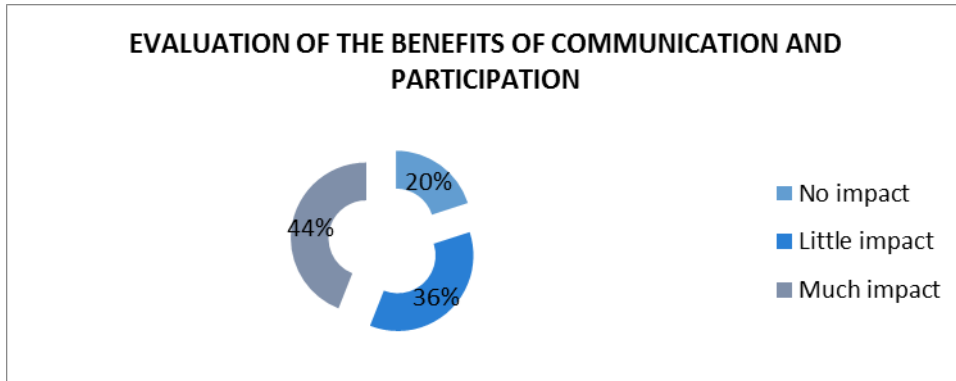
Fig 25: evaluation of the benefits of communication and participation

The beneficiaries were asked to evaluate the benefits of communication and participation in the project. The majority of the participants 44% (13) claimed that both participation and communication had a huge positive impact on the project, 36% (11) claimed that they had little impact while 20% (6) claimed that they did not have an impact at all on the project.

4.3.3.3 Participation and Sustainability

PARTICIPATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

37%
63%

■ Yes
■ No
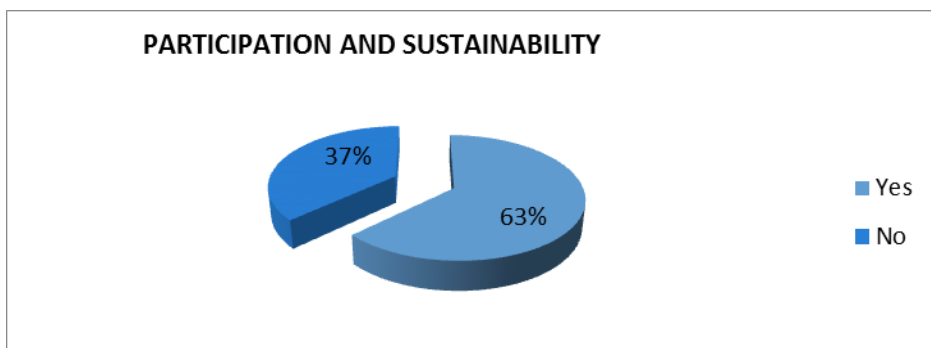
Figure 26: Participation and Sustainability

In the above Figure 26 beneficiaries were asked if participation and sustainability were relevant to the project. The figure displayed that the majority 63% (19) of the respondents confirmed that participation helped to enhance sustainability in the project,

while 37% (11) claimed that communication does not enhance the sustainability of the project.

4.3.3.4 Participation, Communication and sustainability
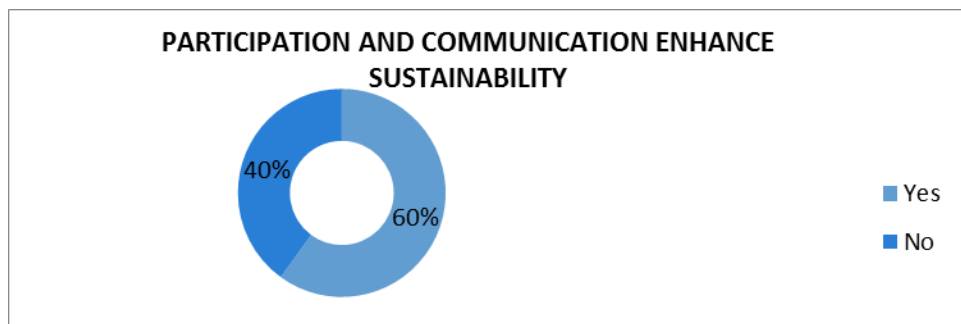
Figure 27: Participation and communication enhancing Sustainability

Participants were asked whether participation and communication can enhance sustainability of poverty alleviation projects**.** Figure 27 highlights that the majority of the beneficiary' participants, which is 60 %(18), indicated that participation and communication can enhance sustainability of the project. Only 40% (12) felt that communication and participation has nothing to do with the sustainability of the project.

4.4 QUALITATIVE DATA FROM BENEFICIARIES PARTICIPANTS

The information below was gathered from focus group discussions. The respondents gave a better reflection of the extent to which communication can enhance the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. It should be noted, however, that there were three focus group discussions which consisted of 6 members each, the total number of the beneficiaries who participated in focus groups was 18. The collected data will be presented in themes.

4.4.1 Demographic Data of the Focus Group Participants

Below are the demographic data of the beneficiaries of the project under study. It shows their marital status, heads the families, the size of the families and their levels of education. Three focus group discussions consisting of six participants each were held. The first focus group is coded as BFG 1 (Beneficiary Focus Group 1) has two males and four females, two of the participants were 36 years of age, while other were aged 38, 39, 46 and 55. Two of the participants were never married, three were widows, one married and there was no one who was divorced.

The second focus group is coded as BFG 2 (Beneficiary Focus Group 2) has three males and three females. They are aged 44, 52, 62, 43, 66 and 60 respectively. One of them was never married, three widows, one is still married and only one is divorced. Three of them are the heads of their families; two of them have their husbands as the head of the family while one has a brother as the head of the family. The size of their family was 6, 5, 4, 9, 7 and 5 represented respectively. Two members were illiterate, 2 had primary school education while one had high school education.

The third focus group has four males, and two females and is coded BFG 3 (Beneficiary Focus Group 3). They are aged 34, 45, 56, 67, 56 and 62. There are three widows, one member is still married and two are divorced. Two of the members are heads of their families. The size of the families consists of 4, 5, 7, 3, 11 and 6 members respectively. Four members are illiterate, one is literate, while on has a high school level education.

This information has helped the researcher to understand why some of the things like training were not sufficiently done because it was never easy training people with little or no education at all. Thorough this data it was also evident that some beneficiaries were not giving the projects their best as they were not the heads of the families hence they could not assume the role of the head in the project. However, some beneficiaries seemed to be very interested to the project and were dedicated.

Those who had no education and those who have low educational level seemed to have very big families and amongst them there are many widows with relatively large families. This makes the researcher to conclude that education works as foundation for understand innovation and being able to adopt easily. At the same time, more educated

members had smaller families. This means that innovations such as family planning have been highly practiced in their families and they also work harder than those who have no education as some of them are selling their own produced products.

4.4.2 Qualitative Data Analysis: Focus Group Discussion

4.4.2.1 Medium of information

The beneficiaries of the project were asked where they initially heard about the project and there were different answers to that question from the focus group participants. For instance, BFG1 participant 2 stated "*I heard about it through public gatherings which were called for by the village Chief. The whole village was gathered and we were informed about the project and we were able to get full details of the project from the gathering*".

From the same beneficiary focus group (BFG 1) participant 4 affirmed the above assertion and maintained that,

> *"We were called for a public gathering and the chief introduced the project to us and gave us the details about the different classifications the NGO was going to use when helping us, for example, people registered their names and were grouped according to their age to see which kind of donation could be given to them."*

Concurring was BFG 2 participant 1 who stated that;

> *"We heard about the Lifajaneng Poverty alleviation project through public gatherings. It was established five years ago, with the help of CARE NGO. They worked hand in hand with the chief and the villagers. In this particular project, villagers were asked to elect their own committee who would work as link persons between the villagers and the NGO or at times they got training first and were expected in turn to train the villagers."*

In agreement with that, a BFG 3 participant 3 explained that,

> "*It was through a public gathering where we leant so much about the project and how it could change our lives. The chief called for the meeting*

where we elected a committee, so the project coordinators explained what the project entailed in its different categories. For example, the categories involved irrigation, food parcels, small household farming as well as chicken and pig rearing."

Participant 4 in the same focus group added that, *"we heard about the project through a public gathering which was called by the village Chief. The whole village was called and we were fully informed by the chief, and the counsel at the public gathering before the NGO could come to address us."*

Some focus group interviewees claimed to have heard through the telephone from family and friends who had attended the meeting. Endorsing the above statements was BFG1 participant 4 who expressed that,

"Our *relatives who had attended the meeting told us about the project through cell phone. We got very interesting information from them and we felt the need to participate as well so that we could build on our stock of chickens since that is where we get money for the family"*.

Participant 6 from BFG 1 also claimed that,

"I do my piece jobs in town so I sometimes leave the house very early and it becomes difficult to get the information from the village whistle, so my neighbors sometimes call me to keep me informed. About this project specifically I was called by my neighbor, who always assists me with food when days are really bad."

Another participant in the BFG1 declared that,

"I heard it from the nearby primary school principal when we were at a parents' meeting. The principal claimed that the project had helped most parents and because of that the students were able to come to school having taken breakfast. From that day, I decided to go to the gathering which was called, and follow up on all the activities of the project."

Some of the focus group participants endorsed that they heard about the project from the radio. Confirming this notion was BFG 2 participants 3 who said,

"I heard the information from radio Lesotho; it was announced several times, for more than two weeks. I got interested in irrigation so I joined the project".

Another participant 4 concurred with the statement above and said,

> *"I got the information when I was listening to Radio Lesotho announcements that happen every afternoon; around 3pm. However, the information from the radio was just simple. It did not have much detail, so it was a must to ask around to confirm the establishment of the project. This happened a long time ago when the project started."*

In the same BFG 2 participant 5 also affirmed the above confession,

> *"The announcement was not only on Radio Lesotho because I also heard about the project from Moafrica Radio station."*

Also, only one of the BFG3 participants 3 claimed that "*I read about the project from a newspaper though there were lots of details that I did not clearly understand.*"

The Project manager also supported the above data and noted that, they used several forms of media to disseminate the information to the members of the community. Furthermore, the Project Manager stated,

> *"Action Aid, an NGO assisting the civil society, believed mostly in disseminating the information through public gatherings and working together with the chiefs and community members' representatives to make sure that the message was passed across. We also used media such as radio and newspapers to make sure that the message reached as many people as possible."*

4.4.2.2 Project awareness

Clarity was then sort from the focus group discussions. They were asked how long they had known about the project. It was clearly articulated by BFG 1 participant 2, who claimed that,

> "*I have been with this project for five years now. When it started very few elderly people were involved and there were no young people. Along the way, due to funding challenges, the NGO would stop some of the activities especially the food parcel, that's when most people who were members started losing interest in the project, so each time the number of participants would become fewer.*"

This was supported by beneficiary statements where one of focus group participant 3 alleged that they had known about the project for about 3 to 5 years. He confessed that,

> *"I have known the project for some time, I am not sure, but it's close to 5 years since I have known about it."*

Concurring with the above statement, another member from the BFG 2, participant 2 commented that,

> "The *project has been beneficial to me in these five years I have been involved with it. It has helped me to shape my life and I have several skills that I have learnt; skills such attending to pigs and chickens, the food they eat and the proper vaccines for stopping the spread of the decease. Those skills I am able to use on my own now. I even able to help my relatives with the skills and the money I am making now. However, it is difficult to cope with the young generation in the project as they learn things fast and do everything faster than we are used to so it becomes difficult to cope with them but we are trying".*

There were some beneficiaries who had a different answer to the question altogether, BFG1 participant 4 declared that,

> "*I joined the project a year ago after I lost my husband who was providing for us. This is because we had everything we needed, so I thought it was only meant for those who were very poor. Now I am struggling to cope in the farming project as most of old beneficiaries have skills that I do not have. At first, I struggled to produce in the fields for my children, but now I can manage to produce some and sell for their school fees."*

Information collected from the Projects Manager affirmed that the project has been in existence for five years. The project Coordinator unfolded that,

> "*This project has been going on for approximately five years now, but each year we have new members who need to be catered for. We have also had some several breaks or layoffs on the project due to funding. The project is meant to go on continuously for 10 years to help people in different areas such as chicken rearing, irrigation, food parcels and seeds keeping and small gardens. At the end of these 10 years the expectations*

are that at the end of the project all the members in their categories should be able to sustain themselves through these activities, for example, the very old are taught how to do small home gardening and are given food parcels, while the middle aged who are physically active are expected to work in the fields and produce food in bulk so that they supply bigger shops and sell as individuals or as a team. However, some prefer poultry or piggery as income generating projects, so having new members each year is a challenge, but we cannot prevent them from coming."

4.4.2.3 Equal opportunity to participate

The beneficiaries were asked if they were give equal opportunity to participate in the project by both the committee and the project coordinators. One of the beneficiaries in BFG 1; participant 1 claimed that, "*we are not treated equally; the old members hide information from us, they collect some of our seed parcels but never give them to us."* Confirming this assertion was the BFG 1 participant 2, who affirmed that,

> "We are not treated equally because the old members seem to be the ones calling the shots. Whenever we suggest something, if they do not like it even if the majorities are ok with the suggestion, they just ignore it or they may not take part in the implementation of the suggestion".

Another member from the same focus group claimed that,

> "We are not given equal opportunities as it is difficult to cope in the activities of the project because the older people are given too much attention and sometimes the coordinators continuously demonstrate one idea time and again and people take time to understand so it becomes monotonous for example when we were taught how to vaccinate pigs and how to remove its genitals. This had to take two full weeks so that others could understand the proper way of doing it."

Another member BFG 2 (participant 3) disclosed a different view and avowed that, *"we are given equal opportunity in this project to participate and to communicate; only few people are negative and want to own the project as if it's theirs. Initially I thought this project was only for widows so I developed a negative attitude hence I have just joined*

now after getting clear information about it and now I understand what the project is all about and we are treated the same way."

Another beneficiary (BFG 3, participant 6) affirmed the above discussions and declared that, "I feel we are equal in this project even though others have been here long before we joined. The initiative to combat poverty is not for any specific member so all members have the same rights in this project."

4.4.2.4 Organisers of the meetings

Clarity was then sort from the focus group discussions. They were asked to disclose information on who calls meetings in the project. Information on this issue was revealed in the focus group discussions where BFG1 participant 2 expressed that,

> *"The project had been effectively working, with its own village committees; the committee representative or spokesperson disseminating the information to other members if there was need for a meeting. They are the ones who understood the projects much better than anyone else because they worked hand in hand with the project coordinators. The committee members participated fully in all the activities of the project."*

The above issues were confirmed by the BFG 1 participant 4,

> *"Mostly, it is the committee members who call for the meetings as they have more experience. They share additional information, do demonstrations, show the coordinators how things have been done and have a chance to assess the progress done by the groups in the different activities of this project in different villages within the district. For example, a few weeks ago, they called us for a demonstration on how to select and keep good seeds for the next season."*

Data from another focus group discussion confirmed the above results. In response to this testimonial the FGB 2 participant 5 upheld that, "*the first meeting I attended about the project was called by the village whistler who said the chief had called for that meeting, so yes the chief does call meetings and most of the people do attend."*

In response to the same issues, another respondent from BFG3, participant 2 acknowledged that, *"even when the meeting is called by project coordinators or the chiefs we are not sure directly who calls meetings because the two groups work*

together hand in hand so that is why we normally assume it is the chief then most of the people attend."

From the Focus group discussions, such comments emerged, "*Since we normally hear about the meeting from others, we assume they are the ones who call for the meetings."* (BFG 3 participant 4). *"I don't know who calls for the meetings, I normally hear about it from others".*

On the same issue BFG 3 confessed that, "*We are not sure who actually calls for the meetings because in most cases we hear about the meetings from others especially the family members of the most active members of the project."*

The Project Manager confirmed that the chief and the committee as well as her office collectively call for meetings in connection with the project and depending on the issues that need the entire village because they always respond to the chief's call. In her own postulation, the project coordinator reflected that,

> "*Working together as a team, the chief, the committee members as well as my office decided if there was need for a particular meeting and chose specifically who will address the public. For example when we were concerned about the issues of discipline in the project we give that chance to the chief to intervene, when we had trained the committee to a new innovation, we asked them to conduct a workshop or demonstrate to the beneficiaries the new skill needed to improve the quality of the activity in the project, but when we got to funding issues and the programmes that need to be implemented we addressed the villagers as we were the ones that liaised with the donors so that the activities would be implemented as per donor specifications."*

4.4.2.5 Means of communication

The researcher probed the opinions of the participants on the means of communication used in this project. As revealed by FG1 participant 2 who stated that, *"At times the area coordinator or the committee can ask the chief to call for a gathering on their behalf depending on the needs of a particular meeting, where the chief will use his whistler to pass the massage to the whole village"*.

Expressing similar sentiments BFG2 participant 3 affirmed that, "*Our meetings are called by committee members through public announcements."* Verbal communication has been the most effective channel of calling for village meetings in the rural areas.

It also turned out that some participants declared; BFG 3 participant 4, "I a*m not sure, my neighbour always informs us. She calls us and we also call others. That is how we communicate when we have not heard the whistler even when we have, we call each other just to confirm.*"

The Project Manager also avowed the use of cell phones to communicate with other members of the project. He expressed that,

> *"Most of the time we communicate with the committee members, especially the chairman, mostly to inform him about the upcoming workshops in order for him to organize a meeting with the chief or the beneficiaries sometimes when we have agricultural experts who would wish to witness the fields and advise on issues that they see differently from us. Cell phones make our lives easier as we are able to transfer messages as soon as possible from one area to the next."*

4.4.2.6 Language used during meetings

Reiterating the same sentiments on the kind of Language used during meetings, the respondents declared the language they use and their preference of the Sesotho language affirmed, BFG1 participant 2:

> *"In meetings, we prefer the use of Sesotho as a means of communication because most of us cannot understand English. It is through such meetings that people share the challenges they face in the different activities of the*

project, their progress and the benefits of the project hence they preferred the use of Sesotho which is understood by the majority of project beneficiaries. For example, we had a problem of locusts which were destroying our vegetables, different groups came up with ideas of how to control them and we had to share the ideas and discussed which ones would work faster and effectively."

Another beneficiary (BFG 2 participant 1) affirmed the above statement and declared *tha*t *"Most of the beneficiaries have not gone far with school so we prefer Sesotho so that we get the proper understanding of what needs to be done, especially on things like how to take care of the crop and the breeds."*

Information collected also affirmed the idea of two languages being used as medium of instruction from FGB 2 participant 4 who suggested that, "*at least let us use both languages in the project".*

This was confirmed by some of the participants that, as FGB 2 participant 2 asserted that, *"At times I prefer information being disseminated in English as there are some terms which are not found in our local language of which when translated they distort the meaning".*

The Project Manager also asserted that*, "The issue of language was expressed by the project coordinator who claimed that Sesotho is the main language used. He endorsed this statement by reiterating that "we believe that every participant in this project is a citizen of Lesotho as it is one of the requirements of the project for participants to provide a proof that he/she is a citizen. So, to my knowledge all beneficiaries understand Sesotho, however at times here and there we may use some English words where we run short of Sesotho words that can describe or explain the concept, but it is very rare."*

4.4.2.7 Communication challenge

It was evident from the BFG1 participant 2 that there are communication challenges especially when he claimed that,

> *"The area coordinators dominate the communication. We just listen, and it's a one-way communication, even if we suggest something, as long it is not what the donor wants on paper. For example, we need more training especially on newly introduced concepts that might be alien to us."*

Others feel like they are denied some information especially when there are food parcels and seeds distributed to the beneficiaries. This was discussed in BFG1, by participant 3 that,

> "*Effective communication largely depends on the kind of information which is disseminated. If we have to be informed or reminded about the freebies that the NGO is going to provide us with, we are never informed nor reminded; committee members inform their relatives and friends first. Most of the times they collect our packages and never share them with us*"

The above statement was affirmed by BFG2 participant 2 who declared that, "*Important information for example about issues like the seeds that we were expecting, the gathering for that issue was not communicated and some of us were not able to go, those who went took our share but never gave them to us."* This evidence clearly proves that, there are several communication challenges that the project is facing. This was endorsed by the focus group discussions where some members acknowledged that they did not have any communication problems. BFG 2 participant 6 expressed that, "*No. We discuss our issues equally and listen to each other in our meetings especially when we are not so many.*"

Another BFG 3 participant 2 complained that*, "It is not easy to state what we need and it will be implemented as the project is donor oriented. For example, we have a need for training, we do not necessarily want to be part of the design, but if they can train us for three months before the project kick starts, we may be in a better position to understand efficiently what we need to do. Now we are being trained for two weeks and expected to start participating effectively. That is impossible."*

Another participant from BFG 3, said; *"I am 65 years old. I cannot learn as fast as those who are 30. Information needs to be repeated several times so that we remember and are able to participate"*

More data was extracted from the Project Manager to establish what he had to say from his side about this issue of communication challenges. He acknowledged that,

> *"Communication is a challenge as some of the community members do not want to communicate the project information with others, and claim most of the times that they represent them. We had a challenge a few years ago where old members were mostly collecting the food parcels of others on behalf of other members especially the old age claiming to be helping them, but now only a few still do that as we tried together with the chief to reprimand them."*

4.5 PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

4.5.1 Understanding of participation

Respondents understood participation to mean being involved in working as a group. For instance, BFG 1 participant 2 suggested that, "I *believe that participation means being able to partake in all the activities of the project where one and all members benefit from the project. It can be through taking part in project discussions as well as in physical labour."*

Concurring was another member in BFG 2 respondent 4 who said that, "*Participation means taking part in all the activities of the project from the beginning to the end. It simply means being fully engaged and fully committed in all the activities of the project. For example, we were funded with irrigation equipment that we had to make sure had to irrigate our fields so the installation was on our part."*

This was affirmed by BFG 2 respondent 1 who said, "*I think participation means attending all the meetings that are called for by the chief and the project coordinator.*"
Another participant from BFG 2 respondent 2 added that "*Participation does not only mean doing anything in particular because your presence in meetings, whether you have contributed something or not, does not matter as it represents your participation.*"
Respondents and a small number of focus group members had no idea what

participation means. This was evident from a member of BFG 2, participant 3 who declared that, *"participation can mean different things to different people, so on the basis of Lifajaneng poverty alleviation project I do not understand what is participation."* Another member from BFG 3 participant 5 added that, "*Participation depends on how individuals understand it, so since we have not discussed it together it becomes difficult to conclude on what it is."*

The project Manager claimed that,

> "*Most people take part in this project in discussions of important issues such as how best we can work together and in the allocation of tasks, but you find that some do not come when it is time for physical work but when they know that it is time for seeds and food parcels they flock-in in great numbers. This poses a serious challenge to us because we cannot eliminate them from the benefits as they are registered members of the project."*

4.5.2 Importance of participation

The participants shared their views on the importance of participation in the project and reflected that it is important to participate. The above views were supported and displayed by the BFG 2 participant 3 who disclosed that,

> "*It is important to participate and communicate because we can share ideas or advice on what we know best. For example, foods that can be grown at this particular place because of the weather conditions. The coordinators may not know much about this particular place and its climatic change as well as the levels of poverty like the chief does. The chief can confirm to the coordinators the people who are very poor and qualify to benefit from this project. So, when we participate we are able to make them aware of such issues and work together to bring about the possible solutions to the problem."*

Another BFG 3; participant 2 confirmed what the other member said and he added that,

"Participation does not only involve communication. We also participate in taking part in all the project activities like when the irrigation system was brought to our fields we had to use our labor to make sure that the pipes are installed as the donor only provided resources and equipment but no labour. Participating makes us feel like we own the project as we feel like we are founders of the project because we tend to know and understand most of the things which are important and why we have to do certain things".

Some participants were not sure about the importance of participation in the project. This view was by a very few number of the focus group participants where BFG 2 participant 2 declared that, "*We are not sure if it is important because even if we participate we are not sure to what extend we are allowed to participate because the coordinators are the ones who conclude as they always tell us about the donor.*"

However other respondents feel it is not important to participate in the poverty alleviation project especially the donor funded project. This was picked when the BFG 3 participants 3 said that, "*It is just a waste of time because the donor knows what he wants and the project coordinators are in control as they know what needs to be done. So, communication issues in the project are just a waste of time.*"

The Project Manager believed that participation is very essential to all the relevant stakeholders as it helps them to improve their day to day activities. He confirmed this by saying that,

"Participation, from all angles, opens a learning platform for all relevant stakeholders. We learn from the beneficiaries as they also learn from us, then we transfer that knowledge to the donors. We cannot do everything on our own. When we are in offices working on paper work, people need to be working with little supervision to encourage sustainability, so physical participation can enhance empowerment through observation and one can acquire skills that can help in problem solving without us physically being at that particular place. Participation makes people to learn faster on the job and can transfer skills to others with confidence."

4.5.3 Participation opportunities in the project

Participants were asked if they have opportunities to participate in the project. The majority claimed that they had a chance to participate although there were some problems. Participant 3 from BFG1 affirmed this statement by saying that, "We *are given chances to suggest what we felt could work for us but if it is not in line with what the donor wants, it can never be implemented.*"

This was supported by participant in BFG 2 respondent 1 who declared that,

> "*This is because some of the issues cannot be changed as they are donor based issues, for example we had suggested that we be given more time for training but the project coordinators told us that the project has got a time frame for all different activities of the project which has been assigned by the donor and there are intervals for reports on those activities.*"

BFG 3 participant 6 also declared that, "*we only have to suggest or change to align our activities within the expectations of the donor. Otherwise it would be pointless.*" The Project Manager also confirmed what the beneficiaries had declared that,

> "There *is nothing much that can be done in changing some of the mandates of the donor, if he has funded a training course for a week and beneficiaries feel a need for more training we cannot do it because it will be out of what he had budgeted for. Yes, the beneficiaries can suggest and put down some strategies to go about their development but it is to a certain extend depending on what they want.*"

Some focus group members believed that they were given equal opportunities to participate in the project. BFG 1 Participant 2,

> "*We were given chances to discuss issues and we were able to allocate tasks amongst ourselves and the different times that we could be free to participate in the project. We managed to set different groups that worked in the project at different times that suited their needs.*"

BFG2 participant 2, also concurred that

> "*I cannot come to the fields in the morning as I have to take care of my grandchildren and prepare them every morning for school, so I was given a chance to negotiate the issue of time with others. I work the same allocated number of hours per day as others do, but I start around 10 while others start at 7 in the morning, but I am not alone. There are a few of us who start late and we are still being monitored.*"

Other focus group members declared that they were not sure about their participation opportunities as it seems to be to a limited extend. One of the BFG 3 participants 2 declared that,

> "*It is true that with some of the information or the food parcels that we were given, we had no choice or a chance to discuss them as the donor and the NGO made final decisions. This at times becomes an issue as they sometimes give us things that we do not actually need. For example, we were given bean seeds yet in this area due to the weather conditions beans do not easily survive. If they had asked us, we could have opted for sorghum as we are able to manage it. But at the same time some issues we are able to discuss and come up with our own decisions and implement them. So, this issue is confusing.*"

The Project Manager declared that, "*all the participants are given equal opportunities in the project, in terms of physical participation and communication.*"

4.5.4 Benefits of Communication and Participation

Participants were asked if they had benefited from the communication and participation in the project. The focus group 1 participants 1 claimed that, *"The project had a very huge impact on their lives as they are able to grow their own vegetables and make profit out of the chickens they are rearing."*

This affirmed by BFG 1 participant 2 who claimed that, "*This project has been very helpful, it has changed our lives because I have been able to supply Malea-lea lodge with chickens.*"

Another BFG 2; participant 2 confirmed what the other members had said and added that,

"The projects are of great help in our lives. We are able to produce food and able to take our children to school with the money we have accumulated from the sales of our crops. It is also very nice to be independent and being able to take care of our families unlike before when we used to depend on others. Our pride has been restored."

The same issue was confirmed by BFG 2 participant 5 who claimed that,

"Well we do get some life changing skills which we really appreciate and use individually but as for some other benefits like freebies some of us do not get because some members take them and never share with us. For example, last time when I was supposed to get the chickens simply because I was absent at the gathering, I never got some and now no one seems to know what happened but on the list, it looks like I have taken them. It is unfortunate and very painful as some members signed for me but we cannot locate who exactly."

Another BFG 3; participant 1 confirmed the above statement and added that,

"The committee members are the ones who mostly benefit with their relatives and their friends. Whenever there are some freebies like seeds they are always on top of the list even those who do not attend meetings properly are always on top of the lists whenever we are to get something."

Some beneficiaries had a different view all together on the same issue, BFG3 participant 2 who attested that,

"This project mostly benefits people who have joined it for a long time. We are treated like outsiders, and we are never fully informed about important issues especially the meetings where there are freebies like chickens and the seeds. It is very sad because I am one of the people who do not have even a husband to help me in taking care of the family."

The Project Manager affirmed that, "*There is a cocky behaviour amongst the beneficiaries, but we always advise them to treat each member with respect and each member should have the same benefits as others. That behaviour seems to be core in members who are the pioneers of the project; they want to own the project and all the benefits. As the coordinator whenever we see this kind of behaviour we try by all means to correct it."*

4.5.5 Involvement in planning and execution of the project

Most participants feel they were never involved in the planning of the project especially the design part. The first statement was affirmed by BFG 1 participant 2 and 4 declared that,

> *"If we were involved in the planning we could not have had the problem of resources not being enough for every one because even if people are poor and qualify to be in the project, some are lazy and cannot work in their fields yet their fields have been connected to the irrigation system while the resource could not cover other fields especially for other members who are very active".*

In support of the same issue, another beneficiary from BFG 1 participant 3 revealed that.

> *"The planning of the project has nothing to do with us, but because we are normally not even aware of the donor demands, we only take part in the execution of the project. We feel it's a bit difficult to perfect our activities to the best of our ability as we feel there is a need to adjust to some of the issues like training."*

Some participants revealed that they were involved in the planning. BFG 2 participant 5 declared that, *"We were involved before the project kick started and decided on several issues like the kind of tools that we would need and what individual could bring from their own homes besides what the project was offering"*.

Another BFG 2 participant 4 avowed that, "*Our involvement is limited and we do not have 100% freedom to do what is best for the community, we can identify people who are capable of working and those who cannot, but because the NGO together with donor have their own classification criteria, they classify beneficiaries as poor people they are being allocated resources which they cannot use.*"

Another beneficiary from BFG 3, participant 6 added that, "*Planning for a project has so many faces that need to be discussed thoroughly before the project can start. The donor, even though he funds the projects, there is need to provide some space or a platform for the beneficiaries to voice out their concern and iron them before the project starts which is not happening.*"

This was affirmed by the project Manager who said, *"CARE does its own research and finds out which programmes can be funded. After identifying the donor, they send the proposal which normally compete with other NGOs who are in the same category with it and mostly the civil society NGO. The donor normally gives out donations based on their demand. It becomes very difficult as project coordinators or NGOs to avoid the donors demand because we may forfeit our chances of getting more funding in the future. There is a very high competition for resources so making endless demands may lead to us not getting donations".*

4.5.6 Individual roles in the project

Participants indicated that they never had an identified role in the project. This was justified by a BFG 1 participant 2, who claimed that,

> *"I do not know which role is specifically mine. Most of the time we share the responsibility so that the work can be done as soon as possible. From time to time we allocate responsibilities to avoid monotony."*

From the same focus group participant 3 affirmed what was said above and declared that, "*Because the project is ours we do everything assigned to us so we do not have specific tasks.*"

Another participant affirmed the testimonial; BFG 2 participant 5 claimed that,

> *"We do everything in the project with no specific task for any individual. This is our project, and we are jacks of all trades. We cannot say we are waiting for so and so to do something; we just do it so that we can easily see our progress. This project is for our own good so having specific roles can lead to dependency so we cannot afford that as it can slow down our progress."*

BFG 3 participant 4 claimed that*, "We have most of the time used our physical labour in the project in order to make sure that all the activities of the project are done on time."* Another beneficiary affirmed in BFG 2 by participant 5 who said that*, "We off load the truck and make sure that all the distributed materials are safe in the store room, to avoid the goods being stolen".* Beneficiary's participant focus group 3 participant 2 claimed that*, "They have contributed some material which was used in the project to enhance the results of the project."* This was

affirmed by BFG 2 participant 1 who claimed that, *"I have been giving out my tools like a wheelbarrow and wood cutter and spade."*

The Project Manager explained that, *"Some people are committed to the project so they can do anything that can be assigned to them at any given time. The purpose of this project is to empower them so if they participate fully they will be empowered but some beneficiaries are very lazy they always complain and compare what they have done with others so at times we give them specific roles to make sure that they participate."*

4.6 COMMUNICATION AND SUSTAINABILITY

4.6.1 Participation

Beneficiaries were asked if communication and participation in the project are important and necessary. The majority of the participants agreed that both communication and participation are relevant and important in their project. This statement was affirmed by BFG 1 participant 2 who claimed that "it is important to participate in the project, as participation can be in many different ways but the most common ways that can benefit the project is through sharing information, doing the necessary physical work that   to be done like helping in the installation of irrigation pipes."

Another BFG 2 participant 4 affirms this statement by saying that, "participation helps one to inherit some skills and to learn easier and faster by being engaged. If one shares what he has he stands a good chance of being corrected if he is wrong". Some beneficiaries are of the view that both communication and participation are not that important. BFG 1 participant 1 claimed that, "*Well one can communicate or participate but those are not the only things that can make the project successful*".
Another member affirmed the above statement BFG 2 participant 3 maintain, that "*Communication and participation can be important to a certain extend but in this case, I feel they are not necessary and important because no matter what you communicate, as long you're not an old member your issues or whatever you have communicated can never be implemented.*" Other members were of a different view altogether, BFG 1 participant 3 claimed that, "*Participation and communication are voluntary so we cannot say it is that important because one may choose not to participate or communicate but*

he will still benefit from the project". A member from BFG 3 participant 4 claimed, "*It is not important to communicate because the donor has the final say on everything that needs to take place in the project. So, if we participate and communicate we are just wasting our time we can just take the benefits and go in peace.*"

4.6.2 Evaluation of communication and participation

The beneficiaries were asked to evaluate the benefits of communication and participation in the project. The majority of the participants declared that participation and communication has changed their lives in a very positive way. FBG 1 participant 1 claimed that, "*Sharing of information has made a very huge impact in our lives as we were able to share skills and techniques on how to take care of our livestock. We are able to independently take care of our families and transfer the knowledge we have to our family members*".

FBG 3 participant 3 concurred with the statement thus; "*The benefits of communication and participation are very positive and enable us to change and adopt new relevant skills that enhance our becoming independent farmers*". Another FBG 1 participant 2, confirmed the above statement and declared that, "*I nearly lost all my chickens because of the resent chicken flue, but because I asked for help from the project, most people helped me and gave me different tips to take care of that situation, and because I am an active member in the project it was easier for me to get help*".

Some other participant said (FBG 2 participant 2) stated that, "*Well, it has a very little impact in our lives because sometimes we are told when there are some activities in the project but sometimes we are not told so we cannot say it has a positive effect as sometimes we are not told*".

In concurrence with the above statement FBG 3 Participant 4 declared that, "*We cannot say they are completely not relevant but they are not used effectively to impact positively on all of us*". Some members claimed that they are not important because they do not benefit anything from them. FBG 2 Participants 4 claimed that, "*I have not benefited anything from communication as most of the information has always been kept away from me*". Another FBG 3 participant 1 affirmed that, "*When there are freebies we are always not communicated to and not given the chance to participate in activities related to the freebies like to unpack the truck and arrange the store room.*"

4.6.3 Participation and Communication enhancement of sustainability

The participants in the project were asked if participation and communication can enhance sustainability, one of the beneficiaries, BFG1participant 2 claimed that,

"Participation and communication help to enhance sustainability because we advise each other on the issues that are beneficial. For example, we once had a terrible chicken flue which killed most of our chickens, but one participant advised us to use the green aloe and put it in water for the chickens to drink. This really helped and most of the chickens were saved".

Another participant also supported the statement BFG *1* participant 3 claimed that*, "Some information from the area coordinator to beneficiaries may take long so if we communicate amongst ourselves we are able to solve the problems before huge damage is done."*

The same statement was affirmed by another beneficiary participant 4 who claimed that, *"When we participate, we are able to adopt the development as easy as possible because one can see when we are being demonstrated to."* Another beneficiary declared that participation in terms of communicating in the gathering and passing information to others as well as physical involvement in the project can enhance sustainability because when the project phases out, we will be able to work on our own and be able to produce for our families. Another participant from FBG2 participant 1 claimed that*, "It is important to participate because you can learn by doing something and you will be able to see your mistakes and be able to ask for help immediately."*

This was also affirmed by the area coordinator, who said*, "We work together as a team in most cases and demonstrate who we should take care of in the fields or the poultry. As we do this, we choose one member whom we can use as an example and we expect the other members to do the same when they get to their homes. We try as much as we can to let them be hands on because they need to be carrying on with the project when we leave this place."*

4.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the analysis of data collected. Data were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively. The quantitative data were presented numerically through the use of charts and tables while the qualitative data were presented thematically. The chapter also presented the demographical data of both the participants and the project officials. All the results were presented in themes that were derived from the research objectives and this enabled the smooth transition in the study.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the key findings of the study, focusing on the impact of communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in the Mafeteng district of Lesotho, means of communication, participatory communication and their effect on the sustainability of the projects. The main objectives of the study were: to understand the methods of participatory communication available to ensure sustainability of poverty alleviation projects, to find out the usefulness of the channels of communication in ensuring the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects and finally to understand the impact of participation communication on the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. The main target of this study was the community of Lifajaneng village; specifically, the Lifajaneng poverty Alleviation project supported by CARE Lesotho which is an International non-governmental organization.

The study commenced from 2016 to early 2018 where Lifajaneng poverty alleviation project was under study. Lifajaneng is in Mafeteng district in Lesotho, 71.1km to the south of Maseru the capital city. For this study, the mixed method approach was adopted, where the researcher conducted 3 focus groups of 6 members each and distributed 30 questionnaires to other members of the surveyed group sampling, the researcher purposefully sampled the participants. Qualitative data was collected, presented and analyzed thematically whereas the quantitative data was presented through the use of tables, graphs and charts.

5.1 Summary of Research Findings

5.1.1 The demographic information

The majority of the respondents and the participants in the project were female. This is not a surprise because the Canadian Food Grains Bank (2016) report reveals that, women contribute about 43 percent of the agricultural hard work whereby they are sometimes paid for on top of their household responsibilities as a way of supplementing the family income-generating activities. Women`s high participation rate is not only visible in this project, IFAD (1997) also has revealed that over 70% of the participants in

their poverty alleviation projects are women as they carry more family responsibilities for every household activities. On the same note, this issue stresses the importance of women's commitment to ensure sustainability. Generally, gender imbalance is prevalent in most environments where females outnumber the males more so in this study because men are employed in the corporate world.

It emerged from the data collected from both the survey and the focus groups that the majority of the participants and respondents were in the age range of 45 to 55. There is bound to be a higher presentation of participants in the age range of 45 to 55 who are energetic and more responsible in doing any work. According to the study conducted by Tsheola (2012), 25% of the beneficiaries in most poverty alleviation projects are between the age of 40 and 45 and the 37.5% are between the ages of 41 to 50 which is the highest number from his findings. These categories of individuals seem to be the most active and responsible as they are mostly family caretakers and they participate voluntarily in community activities without being pushed or forced.

In terms of the marital status, it was evident from the respondents that the majority of the samples in the study were found to be a very high percentage of widowed participants and respondents in the project. Psychologically, being engaged in the project is some form of therapy that helps the widowed to heal from their loss. It also helps them to sustain their families as mostly women in rural areas depend on their husbands for financial support. This clearly affirms that the project played a very important role in sustaining the households especially where the husband is late. So, widows in rural areas have no choice but to be fully engaged in farming projects for the benefit of their family. It also revealed that the majority of the participants are the heads of their families. These people carry a lot of family responsibilities on their shoulders; they are possibly the most focused group of people who need to be taking good care of their families through the skills that they acquire from this project.

 The study went on to find out the educational level of the people involved in the projects as education provides people with the strength and wisdom to deal with a myriad of challenges. It was revealed that the majority of the participants and

respondents are illiterate and this poses a serious challenge in the sustainability of the project as it was also identified by Bridge, (2014) that lack of education presents a serious challenge in taking part in agricultural activities that are for livelihood improvement. More than two-thirds of the world's illiterate people are living in rural areas. However, there are the younger beneficiaries in terms of age who have a higher educational level yet they have no formal employment, who are taking part in the project but they seemed to have no much interest in the activities of the project. In terms of occupation, most participants and respondents are fulltime farmers and the focus group discussions also have a high percentage of farmers who are housewives who basically do not have any formal or identifiable occupations except for taking care of their households.

5.1.2 Means of communication

The study examined how people came to know about the project. The majority of the respondents heard about the project from a public gathering. Information emerging here indicates that public meetings called for by the chief were more effective in terms of information dissemination while the radio and the newspaper were not so popular or as effective. This follows the high illiteracy levels in the country which were highlighted and indicate that much of the respondents preferred verbal communication through public gatherings. The interview with the project manager affirmed the declared statement that the NGO mostly use public gatherings and for their success they work hand in hand with the chief to disseminate the information to the public.

The study went on to find out how long people had known about the project. Information revealed more respondents had known about the project for more than five years. From this information, one can deduce that information about the project was well spread throughout the community judging by the difference in years between five and one year. The project manager clarified this issue and testified that the project has been in existence for about five years now and it is expected to be in existence for 10 years as long funding is still available.

The respondents testified that meetings were mostly called for by the committee members through the help of the chief. The committee members have a right to call for meetings because they are regarded as the early adopters, as they are most of the time firsthand receivers of whatever innovation that is to be implemented, hence they call for meetings at times to share whatever they would have learnt from different workshops they would have attended. All this information they have to share with other project beneficiaries.

The coordinator of the project together with other members claimed that all members of the project are treated equally and were given equal opportunities to participate in the project although there is unbecoming behaviour by some of the members. Some members feel uncomfortable. One respondent confirmed that by highlighting that they were not treated equally in terms of participation opportunities in the project, as the old members would not take their suggestions in to practice no matter how good they are because they have just joined the project. Older members also were hiding information from the newer members especially when it is time to collect the food parcels and seeds as they keep for themselves and do not distribute to the newer members.

The majority of the respondents revealed that meetings were organized by the committee and the project manager whenever there was need to learn a new skill, but at times only the committee can call for a meeting if there is a need to disseminate particular information. Most of the time they work hand in hand with the chief who normally calls for meetings verbally through his whistler who calls for public gatherings. Due to high illiteracy levels, poverty and poor reception, the radio and the newspaper are the least forms of media that can be used to disseminate information to a wider population in this research area, hence very few people access this form of media. When it comes to poverty alleviation projects, the assumption is that many villagers cannot afford to buy a newspaper.

The language used in these meetings is of vital importance as it ensures that people understand their mandate towards the project for its sustainability. It was revealed that Sesotho was the language commonly used and preferred. The project manager also

believes that the use of mother tongue can help to speed up the understanding of the concepts that need to be instilled in the beneficiaries. There were some communication challenges that the participants have been facing. The majority of the respondents clarified that they have communication challenges where at times they do not get information at all or get the information very late especially when there are parcels to be distributed. One way communication from the donor is predominant with the final word always coming from the donor though was identified as a challenge because project members have different needs to what he is offering. We cannot ask for more training as the project has time frames for all the activities.

5.1.3 Participatory communication

The respondents understood participation to mean being involved in working as a group and communication in meetings. It was clear that they clearly understood the meaning of participation as it is defined by Brown and Wyckof-Baird (1992) who explain it as a means of getting the local community participation in the plan, implementation and evaluation of a project or plan (Brown and Wyckoff-Baird, 1992). Smith (2003) says that in a community based project, participation process involves several steps such as Preliminary Planning and Design, Develop the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, Plan Implementation and finally Feedback. None of the above-mentioned processes were highlighted by the participants during the interviews. This means that their understanding of the participation was not precise hence they could not identify some important elements of participation. The project manager agreed that some of the participants understood the meaning of participatory communication while others were not actually sure about the word participation.

The majority of the respondents agreed that it is important to participate in the project, while very few claimed it was not important as they feel discouraged by a number of reasons such as: beneficiaries who joined the project earlier are given preference in everything. However, they cannot be discouraged to an extent of leaving the project but they feel their participation is not that important. Therefore, even in poverty alleviation projects, it is important for beneficiaries to participate as empowerment is based on the individual ability to receive and to take part in the skills developing activities. This is also

supported by Chambers (1992) who claims that empowerment depends on individuals' participation and whether the person empowered uses such skills to improve her livelihood. The project manager affirms the finding by stating that, participation opens doors for learning which can enhance sustainability in poverty alleviation projects.

The majority of project participants feel they were never involved in the planning of the project especially the design part; they mostly took part in execution which they feel is a bit difficult to perfect as they feel a need to adjust to some of the issues like training. The community was supposed to be fully involved in the formulation of the project objective and be fully informed about the issues that affect them. This would have helped to determine whether the set objectives of the project reflect the needs of the beneficiaries. In this case, the beneficiaries were not even aware of the project objectives. This view is in accord with what Starling (1979) thinks should have happened. He claims that community should be involved at every stage because the issues on the ground are likely to be addressed through generating relevant objectives together with them. This was affirmed by the project coordinator who indicated that they start with research before engaging in any kind of project, but the donors put their demands on the projects and time limits before they can agree to fund the project. Participants however indicated that they never had an identified role in the project; the roles were determined by the daily activities, so each person may have a different role for a different activity.

5.1.4 Communication participation and sustainability

The findings of this study revealed that beneficiaries have agreed that both participation and communication are important to enhance sustainability. This is because when people learn by doing and asking they cannot forget easily what they have learnt; their acquired skills can be used even when they are on their own. However, Participants indicated that their participation is limited because they cannot change any mandates that come as directives from the donor even when they feel there is a need. Beneficiaries can come up with strategies and how to go about with their development but if the donors do not understand it, it cannot be funded so it hinders the sustainability of the project. Project Manager declared that all the participants are given equal

opportunities in the project in terms of physical participation and communication; nevertheless, what they suggest cannot change what the donor wants. For example, training schedules cannot be adjusted because of the funding restrictions that are attached to it.

Participants were asked if they had benefited from the communication and participation in the project. Though they participated and communicated with other members, beneficiaries declared that they are able to produce vegetables and chickens that they are selling and making profits. However, there is uncooperative behaviour from other members which hinders proper participation and communication amongst the members. New members feel belittled as their participation and suggestions are taken for granted and nothing that comes from them can be implemented. Project manager affirmed the above statement and said that working as a team, they make sure that the skills and innovations are instilled in the minds of the beneficiaries.

The researcher has also found out that beneficiaries were not trained specifically about the importance of communication. Though they some of them understood the concepts of communication, the beneficiaries were still not able to communicate clearly about the proposed action of the project as they were hiding information amongst the members. On top of that it was clear that the Project Manager never collected feedback about the proposed action by the beneficiaries as they were working on tight schedule by the donor. Hence, they did not finalize the actions that seemed more effective. Participants were never informed about the progress and the gathering of the beneficiaries' action which can be reported as the impact action.

5.2 Recommendations

This study has come up with the following recommendations:

5.2.1. Improving means of communication

Project manager should incorporate ideas from all project members when they are meaningful and turn down those that are not constructive in a manner that appeal to the sensibilities of the rural folk. Communication channels should be explored and

encouraged; vertically, horizontally, top- bottom and bottom- up in order to ensure that there is maximum transparency in communication. Otherwise stumbling blocks to the free flow of communication will emerge in the form of self-imposed gate keepers who might end up hindering communication between the project initiators, project funders and project participants at different levels. Communication should take into consideration cultural aspects such as age and gender differences so that the elderly does not feel belittled by the young and to circumvent the dominance of project activities by the elderly or by those who might have joined the project earlier.

5.2.2 Ensuring self-reliance of projects

It is also recommended that donors should focus on ending the dependency syndrome within poor rural communities by educating them on hard work and self-reliance. This can be achieved by donors taking a partnership approach rather than a patronising role over the activities of projects they fund. Such a patronising approach will perennially make the donor beneficiary communities to have the approach that the donors are on that other side and we are on this other side. The end result is that there is no space for convergence and donor funded poverty alleviation projects will always be regarded with scepticism by the beneficiary communities. Aid providers should also allocate more time and resources towards training of production and project management so as to empower communities to have the knowledge of how to produce rather than leaving them with half ideas of how to work and produce from the project. The result is that people will end up frustrated by failing to produce to the maximum and the project will die in its infancy.

5.2.3 Ensuring participatory communication and sustainability

It is evident from the research findings that in the first place, communities should have an appreciation that poverty alleviation projects are meant to benefit communities themselves in the long term rather than it being a once of activity of feeding the communities for just a short period. The authorities responsible for poverty alleviation programmes have to invest in sensitizing and giving the community enough space to do their own local plan that can enhance the communities on the pertinent issues of

communication and participation. Most of the strategies that are used are adopted from elsewhere and are donor based.

5.2.4 Implementation of Effective communication skills

It therefore is strongly recommended that Non-Governmental Organizations who have the good will to assist in poverty alleviation should engage communities at the level of educating them about the importance of transparency in communication, empower those communities with the skills to communicate effectively and provide each other with the relevant and correct information within their communities as well as with providers of aid. Beneficiaries should sufficiently be offered adequately training firstly on the importance of communication and on the different methods of communication which suite their lifestyle. The training should emphasize the principles of participation and the supportive role of communication which activates participation. That way it would be easier for communities to take part whole heartedly in new initiatives that aim to put an end to poverty within their community and enhance sustainability.

5.2.5 Provision of Adequate training

There is a need for more time and resources to be shared amongst the beneficiaries. There is a need to adjust on the time frame for training, as most beneficiaries do not have high school education which can enable them to understand some of the technical issues of the innovation. Their level of adaptation is influences by their level of education hence it is very low. If they are not given sufficient time to understand they get frustrated and turn to lose interest in the project and end up developing a dependency syndrome where they will only come collect the freebies. However, this will help them to be sufficiently prepared to handle the responsibilities and sustain their lives.

5.2.6 Reconsideration of the targeting of the beneficiaries

There is a need for thorough research on the sustainability of the intended projects and if it is what the beneficiaries need and want before they engage in the project. The NGOs should reconsider their targeting criteria and their classification of the beneficiaries before projects are initiated so that only capable and willing members are engaged for the project to be beneficial and sustainable in alleviating poverty. For example, people should not be given seed in advance but after they have their land prepared and ready for planting. The implication for the Project Managers is that they inspect the project initiatives before aid is given. Beneficiary team members should only help those who have ploughed their fields to put the seeds in to the soil in order to get rid of some cocky behaviour of some beneficiaries who take other`s seeds parcels.

5.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter presented the summary of key findings of the study derived from the objectives of the study. The chapter also presented some conclusions derived from the findings and recommendations which are relevant in assisting the beneficiaries as well as the project Managers to improve their skills. Some of the recommendations are that beneficiaries should be trained longer and sufficiently enough in order for them to run the projects independently and from a position of being knowledgeable rather than depending on handout hampers and the dominant knowledge of aid providers and project coordinators.

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APPENDICES

7.1 APPENDIX I: COPY OF QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaire for the Beneficiaries

Section 1: demographics of respondents
1. **Age**

   15-25 ☐   25-35 ☐   36-40 ☐   46-55 ☐

2. **Gender**

   Female ☐   Male ☐

3. **Marital status**

   Never married ☐   Widowed ☐   Married ☐ Divorced ☐

4. **Head of family**

   Self ☐   Mother ☐   Brother ☐   Husband ☐

5. **Size of the family**

   Single   2-4 ☐   5-7 ☐   8-10 ☐   other ☐

6. **Educational level**

   Illiterate ☐   Literate ☐   Primary ☐   High school ☐ Graduate ☐

7. **Occupation**

   Self-employ ☐   Farmers ☐   Not working ☐   House wife ☐

SECTION 2: MEANS OF COMMUNICATION

Medium of information
8. How did you first hear about this project?

Radio

Newspaper

Telephone

Public gathering

9. How long have you known this project?

1-2 years

2-5 years

More than 5years

10. Who calls meetings?

Committee

Officials

The chief

Other

11. Meetings are called through?

Cell phone
Radio
Face-to-face
Other

12. Which language is normally used during meetings?

English
Sesotho
both

13. Do you have any communication challenges?

yes
no

14. Which Language would you prefer?

English
Sesotho
both

15. Which method of communication do you think is more effective?

Telephone
Radio
Meetings
Face-to-face

SECTION 3: PARTICIPATORY COMMUNICATION

16. What do you understand by the participation?

attending meetings
Involved in group works
Part taking in decisions
sharing benefits and risks with others
 I do not know what it means

17. Do you think participation is important in this project?

Yes
No
Not sure

18. Do you participate in the project activities?

Yes
No

19. Do u have an equal opportunity to participate in project decision making processes?

Yes
No
Not sure

20. How do you evaluate the benefits of participation in this project?
No impact
Little impact
Much impact

21. What is your role in this project?

No identified role
Contributes material
Physical work

22. Were you involved in the planning, and execution of this project?
Yes
no

SECTION 4: COMMUNICATION, PARTICIPATION AND SUSUTAINABILITY

23. Do you participation and communication in the project?
Yes
No

If no, why? Please give two reasons
1. --
2. ---

If yes, please give two reasons
1. ---
2. ---

24. How do you evaluate the benefits of communication and participation in the project?

No impact
Little impact
Much impact

25. Do you think your participation and communication in the project are important?
Yes
No

If no why? Please give two reasons
a. --
b. --

If yes, please give two reasons
a. --
b. --

27. Have you benefited through participation and sustainability in this project?
Yes
No

If no why? Please give two reasons
     1. ---
     2. --

If yes, please give two reasons
     1. ---
     2. ---

28. Do you think participation and communication can enhance sustainability in this particular project?

. If no why? Please give two reasons
     1. ---
     2. ---

. If yes, please give two reasons
     1. ---
     2. ---

7.2 APPENDIX 2: COPY OF INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP
Section 1: Personal characteristics
      1. Sexual Orientation
      2. Age
      3. Occupation
      4. Marital Status
Section 2: Method of communication
      5. How did you first hear about this project?
      6. How long have you known this project?
      7. Who calls meetings, through what?

      8. Do you have any communication challenges?

      9. Which language is normally used during meetings?

      10. Which Language would you prefer?

      11. Do you have equal opportunity to participate in project decision making?

Section 3: Participatory Communication
      12. What do you understand by the participation?

      13. Do you think participation is important in this project?

      14. Were you involved in the planning, and execution of this project?
      15. Do you participate in the project activities?
      16. How do you evaluate the benefits of communication in this project?
      17. Can communication help to ensure sustainability of the project?
      18. Have you benefited through communication in this project?
      19. How do you evaluate the benefits to you?
      20. Do the beneficiaries support and participate in the project?
      21. What is your role in this project?
      22. Do you think your participation in the project can enhance sustainability?

7.3 APPENDIX 3: DEMOGRAPHICAL DATA OF THE FOCUS GROUP PARICIPANTS

Demographics of respondents for focus group

1. Age

	35-45	46-55	56-65	66 and above	
Focus group 1	2	1	2	1	6
Focus group 2	1	2	1	2	6
Focus group 3	3	2	1	0	6

2. Gender

	Female	Male	total
Focus group 1	4	2	6
Focus group 2	5	1	6
Focus group 3	3	3	6

3. Marital status

	Never married	Widowed	married	divorced	total
Focus group 1	1	3	1	1	6
Focus group 2	0	3	2	1	6
Focus group 3	0	4	1	1	6

4. Head of family

	self	mother	brother	husband	total
Focus group 1	4	1	0	1	6
Focus group 2	5	1	0	0	6
Focus group 3	3	2	1	0	6

5. Size of the family

	2-4	5-7	8-10	other	total
Focus group 1	2	3	1		6
Focus group 2	1	4	1		6
Focus group 3	0	5	1		6

6. Educational level:

	illiterate	literate	primary	High school	graduate	total
Focus group 1	5	0	1	0	0	6
Focus group 2	2	2	1	0	1	6
Focus group 3	2	3	0	1	0	6

7. Occupation

	Self-employ	Farmers	Not working	House wife	total
Focus group 1	2	4	0	0	6
Focus group 2	1	3	2	0	6
Focus group 3	1	1	2	2	6

7.4 APPENDIX 4: COPY OF INDEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE WITH PROJECT COORDINATOR

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR FOCUS GROUP
Section 1: Personal characteristics
      1. Sexual Orientation
      2. Age
      3. Occupation
      4. Marital Status
Section 2: Method of communication
      5. How did you first hear about this project?
      6. How long have you known this project?
      7. Who calls meetings, through what?

      8. Do you have any communication challenges?

      9. Which language is normally used during meetings?
      10. Which Language would you prefer?
      11. Do you have equal opportunity to participate in project decision making?

Section 3: Participatory Communication
      12. What do you understand by the participation?

      13. Do you think participation is important in this project?

      14. Were you involved in the planning, and execution of this project?
      15. Do you participate in the project activities?
      16. How do you evaluate the benefits of communication in this project?
      17. Can communication help to ensure sustainability of the project?
      18. Have you benefited through communication in this project?
      19. How do you evaluate the benefits to you?
      20. Do the beneficiaries support and participate in the project?
      21. What is your role in this project?
      22. Do you think your participation in the project can enhance sustainability?

7.5 APPENDIX 5: ETHICAL CLEARENCE CERTIFICATE: ATTACHED

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE
REC-270710-028-RA Level 01

Certificate Reference Number: OSU201SNTO01

Project title: **Participatory development communication and the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho: The case of Lifajaneng**

Nature of Project: Masters

Principal Researcher: Hlompho Ntebo-Letsie
Sub-Investigator:

Supervisor: Dr OO Osunkulre
Co supervisor:

On behalf of the University of Fort Hare's Research Ethics Committee (UREC) I hereby give ethical approval in respect of the undertakings contained in the above mentioned project and research instrument(s). Should any other instruments be used, these require separate authorization. The Researcher may therefore commence with the research as from the date of this certificate, using the reference number indicated above.

Please note that the UREC must be informed immediately of

- Any material change in the conditions or undertakings mentioned in the document
- Any material breaches of ethical undertakings or events that impact upon the ethical conduct of the research

The Principal Researcher must report to the UREC in the prescribed format, where applicable, annually, and at the end of the project, in respect of ethical compliance.

Special conditions: Research that includes children as per the official regulations of the act must take the following into account:
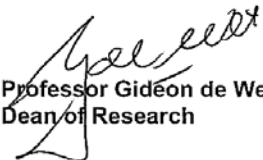
Note: The UREC is aware of the provisions of s71 of the National Health Act 61 of 2003 and that matters pertaining to obtaining the Minister's consent are under discussion and remain unresolved. Nonetheless, as was decided at a meeting between the National Health Research Ethics Committee and stakeholders on 6 June 2013, university ethics committees may continue to grant ethical clearance for research involving children without the Minister's consent, provided that the prescripts of the previous rules have been met. This certificate is granted in terms of this agreement.

The UREC retains the right to

- Withdraw or amend this Ethical Clearance Certificate if
  - Any unethical principal or practices are revealed or suspected
  - Relevant information has been withheld or misrepresented
  - Regulatory changes of whatsoever nature so require
  - The conditions contained in the Certificate have not been adhered to

- Request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project.

- In addition to the need to comply with the highest level of ethical conduct principle investigators must report back annually as an evaluation and monitoring mechanism on the progress being made by the research. Such a report must be sent to the Dean of Research's office

The Ethics Committee wished you well in your research.

Yours sincerely

Professor Gideon de Wet
Dean of Research

01 October 2015