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**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SELECTED NGOs`
INTERVENTIONS ON POVERTY ALLEVIATION: THE CASE OF MAFETENG AND
LERIBE DISTRICTS.**

BY

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**A RESEARCH SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE
DEGREE OF MASTER OF SOCIAL SCIENCE IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES ALICE CAMPUS (SOUTH AFRICA)

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DECEMBER 2011

DECLARATION

I, Hlompho Cynthia Ntobo-Letsie, hereby declare that the work contained in this research project is my original work and has not been previously been submitted at any educational institution for a similar or any other degree award.

Signature..... Date.....

Supervisor.....

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Hofisi my supervisor for his patience, endless assistance and guidance. He has always brought a great light in this study. Your availability for discussion sessions meant a lot to me and without you this document would have not been completed;

To Dr. *Nomathemba Faith Tlou*, I salute you for your kindness. Your love made me your true daughter. You have been my true mentor; you gave me courage, direction and hope in my studies. Your assistance in reading my drafts and your useful comments enriched my work. I thank God for bringing you into my life;

I strongly extend my appreciation to my family; my mother *Mahlompho Ntobo*, my husband *Mapoho Johnson Letsie* who has supported me all the way, and my daughter *Letsabisa Juliet Letsie* who has always been the pillar of my strength and finally to my siblings;

I would also like to thank the two families (*Ntobo and Letsie*), that supported me from the beginning of my studies till now; your sacrifices have always been highly appreciated;

To all the people who honestly and whole heartedly participated in this study whether directly or indirectly, your contribution has made a significant impact in this study and it is deeply appreciated. Mr. Maneya, Ms. Mohale, Ms. Mokhele, Mr. Modia, Mrs. Mathwasa, Mr. Taukeni, Mr. Mutopa;

To all friends in Lesotho , I truly express my gratitude to you;

Above all I would like to give my endless thanks to Almighty God, who protected me and the ones I love throughout my studies. He gave me strength to complete this document; he surrounded me with people who brought me very close to him, people who helped me in different ways. I appreciate and thank him for all that.

DEDICATION

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

LIST OF ABBRIVIATION

AENRC- Agriculture, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission

ARIJ- Applied Research Institute Jerusalem

BNP- Basotho National Party

CSO- Civil Society Organisation

DID- Department for International Development

DPSIR- Driving Force-Pressure, State Impact and Response

EES- Environmental Education System

ERDF-European Regional Development Fund

FGT- Foster Gree Thorbecke

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

GNP-Gross National Product

GoL-Government of Lesotho

HDI- Human Development Index

HPI- Human Poverty Indices

IAPVH-Improved Agriculture Production for Vulnerable Household

ICTD- Information Communication Technology Development

IFAD-International Fund for Agriculture Development

IUCN- International Union for Conservation of Nature

LCN- Lesotho Council of Non-Government Organisations

LIP-Lesotho Irrigation Project

LRAPs- Livelihoods Recovery through Agriculture Programmes

M&E- Monitoring and Evaluation

MAFs- Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

MAFT-Ministry of Agriculture and Forests

MDGSR- Millennium Development Goals Status Report

NGO- Non-Governmental Organisation

NSSD- National Strategies for Sustainable Development

ODI- Overseas Development Institution

OECE-Organisation of European Co-operation and Economic

OED- Operations Evaluation Department

PRS- Poverty Reduction Strategy

PSP- Priority Support Programme

PSR- Pressure, State, Response

PTF- Petroleum Trust Fund

PVOs- Private Voluntary Organisations

SADC-South African Development Community

Sis- Sustainability Indicators

SL- Sustainable Livelihoods

SUVs-Sport Utility Vehicles

UN- United Nations

TBL-Triple Bottom Line Model

UN-United Nations

UNCED-United Nation Conference on Environment and Development

UNCSD-United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development

UNDP-United Nation Development Program

UNEP-United Nation Environment Programs

UNESCO-United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organisation

WECD-World Commission on Environment and Development

WWFN- World-Wide Fund for Nature

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ABSTRACT

The escalating levels of poverty present a serious challenge of vulnerability to most citizens of Lesotho. The government of Lesotho and its Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) partners have been engaged in several programs aimed at alleviating poverty, whose persistence has threatened the current and future generations of the country. This study aimed at assessing the sustainability of NGO's poverty alleviation programmes established for selected beneficiaries in rural communities. The main participants in this study were beneficiaries of poverty alleviation projects, government officials and NGO project managers. Using a combination of empowerment, sustainable livelihood approach and the sustainable development theoretical frameworks, the study adopted the qualitative research methodology to investigate the pertinent issues. The research design was a case study which helped to direct the researcher in the process of collecting and analyzing data. The study revealed that the sustainability of these projects in poverty alleviation remains questionable due to a number of challenges. These challenges include; lack of participation of the beneficiaries, inadequate funding, natural disasters, lack of commitment of the beneficiaries and lack of government support to the project beneficiaries. Nevertheless, there are commendable efforts made by the NGOs involved to enhance the sustainability of these projects and these include; training the beneficiaries in crop production, marketing, natural resources management and disaster management. In light of the challenges faced by NGOs and participants in alleviating poverty, this study advocates, The three stakeholders are expected to work harmoniously together using communication channels that are open to all of them. That enables them to work with a singleness of purpose to attain the sustainability goals of the project. There is need also for NGOs to reconsider their targeting schemes, and to advance their training, monitoring and evaluation skills of their projects. It also recommended that the beneficiaries must be empowered in order for the sustainability of the projects to be realized.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study focuses on assessing the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho, especially in the light of interventions by NGOs. This is because poverty is one of the world's greatest and urgent challenges that causes untold suffering to people, mostly, in Africa. Poverty is one of the most debilitating human conditions which have been so torturing to masses that the devastation it causes has negative effects that remain for generations. In Lesotho, poverty at the scale of crisis levels has affected a lot of communities. Both governmental and non-governmental organizations have been fully engaged in alleviating this crisis. The government of Lesotho has made poverty alleviation one of its major priorities because 56.7% of the Basotho are living below the poverty datum line (louw, 2010). Additionally, NGOs have been working very hard to help the government of Lesotho to fight this scourge through their poverty alleviation community-based projects. Thus, this study identifies factors that impact on the sustainability of NGO poverty alleviation projects implemented in rural communities.

Although NGOs have been and still continue to be actively involved in poverty alleviation projects, in the past it has been noted that most projects collapse after the NGO's withdrawal and this has posed a serious challenge in sustainability (louw, 2010). Nonetheless, this factor does not minimise the contributions of NGOs in poverty alleviation. NGOs are considered to be among the most committed stakeholders in promoting sustainable development, as such the researcher focuses on two of their projects as case studies and these are located in Mafeteng and Leribe districts in Lesotho.

Lesotho is a Sub-Saharan land locked country which covers an area of 30,500 square kilometres. It has an estimated population of 1.88 million according to the 2006 census (Lesotho Bureau of Statistics, 2009). In 2006 the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita was US\$ 668 (BTI, 2010). The migrant remittances have been the main source of foreign exchange amounting to 25% of the GDP (Robbins, Chatterjee & Canada, 2006). The country is among the 50 least developed countries and it is ranked 138th out of 177 countries on the 2007-2008 Human Development Index (HDI) (Petrozziello, 2010). More than half of the country is highlands, with an altitude of 3 500 meters. The remaining one quarter is lowlands, with an altitude between 1 500 to 2000 meters. This shows that the arable land is limited and only less than 10% of the country is currently under cultivation (Millennium Development Goals Status Report, 2008).

The year 2003 saw the poverty situation of Lesotho deteriorate to unbearable levels as a result of unemployment and environmental degradation (Millennium Development Goals, 2008). Different strategies were used by both government and non-government organisations (NGOs) to try and assuage the terrible effects of poverty that were manifesting in diseases such as kwashiorkor, marasmus and hypertension that comes from worry. In the face of these challenges, NGOs attempted to come up with feasible solutions to the overwhelming problem of poverty, by initiating projects which were aimed at sustainable development. However, although these initiatives were undertaken to alleviate poverty, it seems their sustainability was and still is a problem. The main interest of this study therefore, is to shed light on the processes of project implementation that may

introduce interventions where beneficiaries encounter challenges when funding is withdrawn.

Lesotho`s economy depends on crop production, livestock production, manufacturing and the exportation of labourers to South Africa (Icon Group International, 2008). The number of migrant workers has declined over the past years, as a result of falling gold prices worldwide between 2003 and 2005. Furthermore, the restructuring process in the mines in South Africa has led to retrenchment of many people who have returned home and added 12% to the unemployment (Lall, 2005; Chaka 2011). The rate of unemployment in Lesotho is estimated to be 30% of the population (Louw, 2010). As such, agriculture has been an alternative for economic growth. Furthermore, the dramatic global climate change has led to low production in all levels of farming and life changed for the worse, while drought badly hurt the most vulnerable (Mphale and Rwambai, 2004). As a result of these factors, the level of poverty and vulnerability has increased particularly in rural areas more than in urban areas (Millennium Development Goals Report, 2004). Between 2002 and 2004 an estimated number of vulnerable people in need of emergency food aid rose from 448,000 to nearly 760,000 (Millennium Development Goals Report, 2004). One third of the people in need of food-aid were children under the age of 5 years (Millennium Development Goal Report, 2004). Moreover, there is a high rate of inequality in the distribution of income in Lesotho.

In a research done by the Development Policy Research Unit (2001) as well as another independent study by Ali (1996), it was revealed that in Africa 250 million people live in abject poverty of less than \$1 a day. In SADC, countries like Namibia, Zimbabwe, Malawi and South Africa there is extreme inequality of access to wealth

between the rich and the poor, represented by a Gini coefficient value of 0.70, 0.63, .062 and 0.59 respectively. Lesotho has the Gini coefficient of 0.63 and it is considered being among the highest in the world (World Bank, 2011; UNDP, 2011).

In Lesotho, the gap between the rich and the poor has largely grown not just in incomes but in education and health outcomes as well (World Bank, 2000). In Lesotho, 27 percent of the total expenditure is directed to the deprived that make up 50 percent of the population, while over 51.7 percent is controlled by 10 percent of the richest households. It has been noted that 80 percent of the poorest have distanced themselves from their extended families because of the cost of living. An increase in the Gini coefficient is said to be the result of inequality between the rural and urban areas (May, Rogerson and Vaughan, 2004). The Gini coefficient normally uses the Lorenz curve as a graphic tool to show the degree of inequality in the distribution of income. In order to make use of this curve, information on allocation of income to different homes; ranked from poorest to richest is used. The Gini normally ranges between 0.30 and 0.70 (Schultz, 1951).

In view of this, in 2004, the Government of Lesotho introduced a five year Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) Program which gave special attention to eight main issues namely job creation, food insecurity, agricultural infrastructure, governance, health care quality and access, education quality and access, environment and public service delivery, while the three cross-cutting matters are HIV and AIDS, gender and children and youth were also taken into consideration. The PRS Programme focuses on addressing directly issues such as food security, HIV and AIDS, and job creation (Millennium Development Goal Report, 2007).

Apart from the efforts of the Government of Lesotho, the NGOs under the Lesotho Council of NGOs (LCN) with its membership of about 110 NGOs have played a significant role in several poverty alleviation intervention programs (Matlosa, 1999). They have been involved in a variety of donor-aided projects ranging from social-welfare, emergency or disaster relief, environment, gender issues, employment generation through small scale-income generation activities, democracy and human rights (Matlosa, 1999).

LCN has grouped the NGOs according to commissions based on their area of interests. The Agriculture, Environmental and Natural Resource Commission (AENRC) have been committed to sustainable livelihoods and conservation of the natural environment in Lesotho (LCN, 2010). It is one of the 6 sector commissions of the LCN and it has 40 registered NGOs of which approximately 15 are international. It is in this particular group of NGOs that the study will focus its attention where two international NGOs namely; World Vision and Care international will be taken as a sample. They all work with the Lesotho Government to speed up the accessibility of food to the most vulnerable Basotho people (United Nation, 2006).

Despite several poverty alleviation intervention programs which were successful and sustainable such as Machobane Farming System and Moteng Small Farmers Association in Butha-Buthe by the NGOs, there have been some serious concerns about the sustainability of these projects. For instance, the rural development projects such as Thaba-Putsoa project in Leribe and Tsakholo project in Mafeteng collapsed due to allegations of corruption and mismanagement of aid funds (Ngqaleni, 1991). The major challenge for these projects was that the then ruling party, Basotho National Party (BNP), politicised development projects for political

gain (Matlosa, 1999). In addition, there were some enormous allegations of embezzlement of funds from Co-op Lesotho, where resources were used for personal use by state officials (Government of Lesotho, 1994). The corrupt officers got their hands into the project because BNP opened a door for them (Matlosa, 1999). Co-op Lesotho which was established in 1981 was a state-run co-operative tasked to boost agricultural production with the funding from government and external sources such as Taiwan, Germany and International Fund for Agricultural Development, World Bank and United States Agency for International Development.

Apparently, there are many problems relating to people in vulnerable circumstances in the developing countries which include mismanagement of funds, conflicting objectives of stakeholders (Government or NGOs) that are different from the objectives of the project, and corruption (World Bank, 1990; Mkandawire, 2007). The governments are not always serious about the intent of poverty alleviation. Most of the time, politicians pretend to have the interests of the poor at heart, while in reality; they know that they have ulterior motives. It is clear that the concept of poverty makes it handy for them to have a platform in every election (Mkandawire, 2007); because they know that the poor will always vote for them whenever they claim to improve their lives. Easterly (2007b) also argues that, some governments internationally do not improve the productive capability of the poor so that their lives become desperate and deprived. This becomes handy to politicians because they use it as their strategy in activism.

There are also some targeting errors in poverty projects. Dutrey (2007:2) observes that, "some of the poor are always excluded from identification exercise (the process of selecting program beneficiaries) while some non-poor are included." This shows

that the motive of the two groups is different; the non-poor could only be interested in the benefits but never have the sustainability desire at heart, while the poor could have such desire. This brings in the issue of lack of participation and cooperation on the side of the beneficiaries especially the non-poor on projects meant for the poor. When the motives of the donor contradicts those of the people targeted to be assisted, that becomes a recipe for failure because there will never be a common purpose (Dutrey, 2007).

As the larger part of the development debate has been on how to achieve poverty reduction in Africa, the World Bank (1990) indicated that targeting schemes have not been successful in creating resources for the poor in their regions. Targeting schemes according to Dutrey (2007) are the allocators of resources to a specific and selected sub-group of population who are poor, these schemes have been regressive, subjective and, most considerably, have not reached those they were intended to help. There are fundamental reasons why a targeted social program could be regressive. Dutrey (2007:2) argues that, “the targeting schemes include weak and incomplete identification processes of the poor, caste and class interests that influence the distribution of resources, wrong geographical distribution of targeted services and self-targeting type schemes that end up also being attractive to the non-poor.”

The issues raised in this background are relevant in the context of Lesotho, because several projects have collapsed prior due to similar and other additional reasons from the ones cited above. The following examples illustrate this point. The Taung Reclamation Scheme in Lesotho collapsed because people were not involved in the

initiation stage and rules and regulations that they found to be unreasonable and unrealistic were imposed on them. As a result they developed a negative attitude towards the whole project and it came to an end (MoE 1988).

The Tebe-tebeng project in Lesotho also collapsed because there was no communication between the project managers and the beneficiaries, the chiefs and the head man were used as the mediators but this made beneficiaries suspicious so they stopped cooperating (MoA, 1988). This meant that beneficiaries felt like they were being used for the benefit of those who are in control. Promises which are not delivered also demoralised the beneficiaries of some of the projects. The Woodlot project in Lesotho also failed because beneficiaries were promised 20% of the gross profit from their sales of the wood but the promise never materialised (MoA, 2000). It is clear that beneficiaries felt cheated and were demoralised as a result they pulled out.

Another project which was expected to bring self sufficiency in food was called Senqu River Agricultural extension project in Lesotho collapsed. This project had several problems which made local community feel like the project was unprofitable to them. Among these were; it did not consider their local knowledge and there was no form of communication between the project managers and the beneficiaries. Decisions were taken without the beneficiaries' input (MoA, 1999). From the information provided above, it is apparent that several projects have been established in Lesotho in an effort to alleviate poverty, however, in spite of these efforts poverty has worsened and most projects collapsed because there was no proper structure and strategies in place for sustainability. This proves that there is a

need for further research; hence the current study assesses the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects because there is a need to resolve issues that lead to the collapse of the project in order to ensure sustainability of these projects. At the end of this study, the researcher hopes to forward effective strategies based on understandable and reliable concepts and approaches so as to ensure the sustainability of the poverty alleviation projects.

1.2 Statement of the problem

This study investigates factors that impact on sustainability of NGOs' poverty alleviation projects. In (Matlameng village) Leribe and (Malea-lea) Mafeteng Districts there is a high level of poverty, despite efforts by NGOs of implementing poverty alleviation projects (MoA, 1999). The problem is that local communities appear to be challenged in sustainably maintaining projects once the donor subsidies such as external financial and expert human support are withdrawn. This implies that the target communities which are the focus of the poverty alleviation projects are unable to use resources mobilized and made available to them to meet their human needs.

In other words, while the project beneficiaries participate, they appear to make no effort to engage with ingenuity such that, not only do they fail to learn skills that capacitate and enrich their expertise to execute operations, but they also fail to show full application that comes from dedication of making the project a success in the true spirit of ownership. Furthermore, the target communities appear to be at dissonance with the economy and basic support system as well as the objective of the projects. Consequently, the project collapses as a mark of un-sustainability. This suggests that the long term continuity of the projects with lasting impact on the well-

being of the beneficiaries as well as the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects implemented by international NGOs could be the main challenge.

While the strategy of asking the international and regional communities to assist alleviate human suffering and poverty where survival is threatened has worked and saved lives, it also comes at the cost, with the supported people becoming unable to sustain their lives when the NGOs projects come to an end. The hidden effect of providing people with food is that people do not develop skills to help themselves out. As Nyerere once pointed out, if a man is given food, he learns nothing but if he is given survival skills, he learns to sustain himself and retains his dignity (Boddy-Evans, 2010).

1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:

- To assess the ongoing ability of NGOs' interventions in poverty alleviation programs in the rural communities.
- To identify factors that affects the ongoing ability of poverty alleviation projects.

1.4 Research questions

This study focuses on the following research questions:

- Are NGOs' interventions in poverty alleviation sustainable?
- What factors affect the sustainability of NGO poverty alleviation projects?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study explores critical issues surrounding the collapse of poverty alleviation projects especially in the aftermath of phasing out the financial support by NGOs. It unfolds interesting information which can help the funders, the beneficiaries as well as policy makers in closely looking at the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. The information has crucial implications for planning and implementation of the strategies for development projects.

In addition, this study encourages full and equal change and participation of all key players in the issue of sustainable development. The study will benefit policy makers who would make legislations which can tighten financial mismanagement, fraud and corruption both in private and public institutions. Finally, it can be of benefit to the Basotho communities to participate in projects' activities brought by NGOs so that the projects are sustainable.

Furthermore, the study looks at sustainability from a 3 pronged approach which entails empowerment, sustainable livelihood and sustainable development as theoretical frameworks. This approach aims at providing an understanding of sustainability and its challenges in poverty alleviation projects. This approach helped the researcher to look at all factors that affect sustainability of poverty alleviation projects.

Several studies have been carried out in Lesotho to address the issue of poverty alleviation but it seems so far nothing has been done towards the sustainability of poverty alleviation in Maseru and Berea districts, especially using this 3 pronged approaches. This study therefore sought to close this gap.

1.6 Summary

This chapter provided background data on challenges that exists in the area of poverty alleviation projects implemented in Lesotho. Factors that contributed to the downfall of the economy of the country which added to the existing poverty, the statement of the problem, the objectives of the study, research questions and significance of the study were also presented. The next chapter will review available and relevant literature on these issues as well as discuss the concepts of poverty, examining the sustainability and the role of NGOs in poverty alleviation projects as well as the challenges confronting them.

CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND NGOS

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on reviewing literature that is pertinent to the study and it is divided into three sections which consist of the conceptual, empirical and theoretical reviews. The researcher begins by unpacking relevant concepts to the study such as, sustainability, sustainable development and its benefits, poverty and poverty alleviation. It also covers the empirical review which includes the role of NGOs in development, NGOs and sustainable development, factors affecting the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. This factor includes training, corruption, accountability, targeting of beneficiaries and mismanagement of funds. This is followed by the theoretical framework which features the empowerment approaches, sustainable livelihoods, sustainable development, and models of sustainable development.

2.2 Conceptual review

2.2.1 Sustainability

Different scholars have different definitions of sustainability; that is, the term means different things to different people. Oakley (1991) defines sustainability as permanence of what the community has begun, while Honadle and Van Sant (1985) regard it as the ability to administer post project dynamics through the use of a lasting impact. Clayton and Radcliffe (1997) believe that sustainability is the capability to endure. This implies that it is the potential for long-term maintenance of well-being. While the definitions have valid aspects such as permanence which

suggests the quality of lasting for a long time they also have a weakness of being too general. They do not narrow the concept of sustainability to a specific situation so that it can be evaluated on the basis of a particular situation.

The study thus adopts the Brundtland's definition of sustainability. Brundtland at the world commission on environment and development in 1987 gave the term a different context by emphasising the importance of sustainable development. In his view, sustainability is an idea which works with mankind's impact through development, on the environment. It is considered as part of development which caters for the needs of the present while considering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is concerned about environmental protection, continuous economic growth and social equity (Brundtland, 1987).

2.2.2 Sustainable development

According to the United Nations (1992), sustainable development is defined as the ability of the present generation to live decent lives while benefiting from the natural resources, without compromising the ability of the future generation to get the same benefits from the same natural resources.

Other institutions like World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987) see 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. This definition emphasizes that for development to be sustainable, it should benefit the present generation the same way as the future generation. That is, development should be the same now and in the future. The definitions acknowledge that both generations have the same rights over the natural resources. Ijeoma (2008) confirms that, the definition is adopted

globally and it is categorized into two groups, classical and contemporary generations, and these will be explained in the next paragraph. The definition is based on the belief that every generation is affected by the same challenge of using the natural resources with caution for the benefit of others.

Classical generation is a special phrase used to show how particular communities treat the environment based on their values, norms and beliefs which they acquire from their elders. People look at nature in different ways influenced by the “desire to dominate and control nature, acquisitive materialism, a blind faith in science and technology and finally unconstrained growth ethic in a limited world” (Dwivedi, 1988: 9). The *contemporary generation*, besides fostering the environmental protection, they strongly bring other crucial dimensions such as economic, social, political and cultural dimensions. The social dimension point of view appears to be the most important aspect championed by the current pro environmental activists which was thoroughly discussed at the Agenda 21 (UN, 1992).

The study thus is also guided by the UN definition of sustainable development because the UN has been engaged in several programmes which defined the concept. It has put down some plan of action such as general framework for the implementation of sustainable development. This definition was also discussed among the world leaders and they have agreed upon it. The definition is relevant to the study because it serves as a guide to determine whether the projects are sustainable. It gives a clear picture of what is meant by a sustainable project, as it emphasizes the lasting effects of the project without harming the environment so that others will also benefit the same way.

2.2.2.1 The benefits of sustainable development

When sustainable development is achieved according to Goodland and Ledoc, (1987) people will be able to attain a comfortable level of adequate fairly distributed economic resources that can be upheld for many human generations. This implies that the resources will be used in a conservative way rather than vanquishing them carelessly. Sustainable activity can be continued for the predictable future, with three dimensions, of not unreasonably exhausting natural resources, not producing waste products that significantly change natural systems, and not undermining social stability (Lowe, 1990). If beneficiaries use the resources they have acquired adequately from the project, they can sustain the benefits they are getting from the natural resources. This can help them to be in a position to continuously sustain their lives and those of the future generation. Barboza (2000) argues that when people support sustainable development ideas, they can determine and pursue a reasonable approach to economic policies, in respect of the future generations by taking into consideration the environmental protection and gradually progressing towards the full participation of all concerned parties.

Sustainable development appears to be different from other forms of development because development only gives people chance to have a wide choice on well being. It is about advancing from one stage to the next. It also enables people to be better than they were before, but it may not last long (UN Development Program, 1994), while sustainable development emphasizes the permanence of the development. The development is expected to last for a long period of time so that all generations can benefit from it. The issue of time is the one which makes sustainable development different from other kinds of development (UN, 2008).

In the study, sustainability depends on the kind of development put in place; the development must be in line with the needs of a particular community, because sustainability will depend on the well being of that community. If the development corresponds with the well being of the community, the project can be sustainable (UN, 2008).

2.2.3 Poverty

Poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon, which has been defined differently by different scholars according to political, social and economical contexts (Chambers, 1997). According to IFAD (2008), poverty in rural communities is defined in terms of agricultural development. It is defined as lack of investment in agriculture, the declining agricultural production; lack of resources, lack of income and the lack of natural resources which affect people negatively. Agriculture is considered to be the major source of income in rural communities because it encourages growth in the food production (ECA, 2005).

The World Bank (2000) explains poverty as a lack of well-being, while well-being is regarded as having control over commodities in general, so people are better off when they have a good hold on resources. Middleman and Tambe (2000:17) prefer to describe poverty as “the experience and perception of marginalisation that have been locked in through structural pressures.” Clayton and Radcliffe (1997) in turn define poverty as the state of not having the means to have the funds for basic human needs such as clean water, nutrition, health care, education and information. It also includes lack of clothing, sanitation, and shelter which create poverty regardless of a community’s income. These definitions are important and define poverty in terms of well being and basic human needs. They also inform the study.

Durfee and Rosenau (1996) enrich their definition by stating it as realities and fears of unsatisfactory living conditions that embrace the possibility of social division along ethnic and cultural lines. Scholars like Haughton and Khandker (2009) concur that the poor are people who do not have enough income or consumption to put their lives above the adequate minimum threshold. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) (1998) elaborates and explains poverty in six categories, because of its different dimensions.

- Human poverty - being short of necessary human capabilities such as education or being effectively encouraged towards it.
- Income poverty - lack of sustainable sufficient income
- Extreme poverty - failure to satisfy even minimum food needs.
- Overall poverty - a less harsh situation of poverty which refers to being unable to satisfy vital non- food as well as food needs.
- Relative poverty – it is living below fundamentals of the poverty threshold.
- Absolute poverty – is distinguished by the fixed international standard of less than US\$ 1 per day, this is a poverty line which is made to compare the degree of poverty across different countries.

From the above definitions it is clear that poverty is a difficult concept to define. According to Bradshaw and Sainsbury (2000), the definition of poverty is highly contested and hence scholars use different measures and approaches to define it.

Poverty in one circumstance can be measured by utility or resources which are the reflection of monetary approach. While in another context it can also be measured in terms of freedom to live a desirable life, which reflects the capability approach

(Bradshaw and Sainsbury, 2000). The monetary approach uses the poverty datum line as a measure of the extent of deprivation. It puts value on different items consumed on a market price to identify their value, and those who cannot purchase basic are identified and valued as the poor (Grosh and Glewwe, 2000). However, the universality of this approach as well as those of the other approaches is a problem because poverty means different levels of dispossession in different countries or societies (Grosh and Glewwe, 2000).

Burkey (1993) provides other various types of measure of poverty and he believes that it can be measured in three different ways: Firstly, through the gross national product (GNP) of the countries. Secondly, through life indices such as: literacy rate, high life expectation and low child mortality to present an indication of the standard of living for a normal person. Thirdly, through the basic needs approach which covers the essential provision of services that includes sanitation, public transport, health and educational facilities. Burkey (1993) upholds that, there are many problems involved in efforts to classify and qualify poverty and that there is no one set of measurements which will give a complete picture.

According to Dao (2004) the clear, complete and transparent measures of poverty are necessary because they can capture various dimensions. Poverty estimates the trends that influence economic and social policies. Multiple measures based on indicators form various Human Poverty Indices, (HPI) are required to determine poverty. The percentage of the rural population living below the poverty line was estimated to be 61 percent in Latin America and the Caribbean while 60 percent is in sub-Saharan Africa (Dao, 2004). It is obvious that, each society has its own standard

of lifestyles that determines whether their lifestyle is considered admirable or not. When a person cannot have a valuable lifestyle due to lack of sufficient economic capacities, that person is said to be poor. The idea of poverty shows a standard of living that is below what is said to be appropriately human in a particular society (Dao, 2004).

Townsend (1979) argues that poverty can be seen when individuals, families, and groups in the population lack resources to have a particular type of diet. He goes on to write that, the lack of participation in activities and lack of living conditions and facilities which are normal are also seen as poverty indicators. The above definitions of poverty put emphasis on the fact that people need basics to sustain and live decent lives. The definitions are influenced by different concepts, but in the context of this study, a specific definition of poverty is adopted because it underpins the arguments of the study. In the current study, the adopted definition of poverty is from the point of view of the rural community, because the study specifically is about poverty within rural communities of Lesotho. Rural communities consist of smallholder farmers who depend on subsistence farming. Most of people in rural communities live in extreme poverty (IFAD, 2008).

2.2.4 Poverty alleviation

Poverty alleviation is a process which is aimed at reducing the level of poverty in a community, or among a particular group of people or countries (Information Communication Technology for Development (ICTD), 2008). This can be done through education, economic development and income redistribution (ICTD, 2008). As poverty seems to be the greatest challenge for the global society, the UN

concentrated on sustainable development strategies. The UN members also agreed to the proposed strategies which were raised to make the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 (World Bank, 2000). The main goal of the MDGs is to get rid of extreme poverty and hunger. To achieve this goal, a target has been set to reduce by half the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by 2015. If the target can be realized, there will be an opportunity to end extreme poverty by 2025 (Sach, 2005).

The Millennium Development Goal Report (MDGR) (2008) shows that, the Government of Lesotho has been giving great attention to the challenge of chronic poverty since the beginning of this millennium. Their hard work has ended with the proposal of a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) document which stated eight priority areas (job creation, food security, infrastructure, governance, health care quality and access, education quality and access, environment and public services) which were to be addressed by the government. This policy made NGOs aware of what the government of Lesotho has been doing to alleviate poverty for its people. That made the NGO partners the government in poverty alleviation projects. The NGOs' role of promoting development was vividly stipulated to be a solution to poverty alleviation hence they enthusiastically engage in poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho.

Furthermore, as a way of alleviating poverty in Lesotho, environment Policy of 1998 regulates the natural resources environment. This policy addresses Lesotho's national development priorities and these include; social and economic dimensions, the management and conservation of the natural resources, and the promotion of

community participation. Development initiatives under the Social and Economic dimension include fighting poverty (Government of Lesotho, 2004).

The Government of Lesotho (2004:8) affirms its view and argues that, “This is one of the priority programme areas, whose objective is to achieve sustainable development through an integrated programme of human resource development and poverty reduction.” In Lesotho, some economic development attempts have been made to alleviate poverty by increasing the level of income of households (Government of Lesotho, 2008).

Additionally, more efforts have been made to alleviate poverty in Lesotho at macro-economic level in terms of sustainable economic growth, facilities of job creation by improving the performance of labour market, provision of high quality health and education services. This includes the provision of infrastructural facilities and safety nets in terms of natural and financial crisis (Government of Lesotho, 2008). However, least emphasis has been placed at micro or regional level of poverty alleviation (Government of Lesotho, 2008).

2.3 The Role of NGOs in Development

World Bank (2002:1) defines NGOs as “private organisations that pursue activities to relieve suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or undertake community development.” Various sources use different names for NGOs such as: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), Private Voluntary Organizations (PVOs), charities, non-profits charities or charitable organizations, third sector organizations (Anup, 2005). The study will not use the names interchangeably but it will adopt the acronym NGO`s.

NGOs are not part of government; they are normally voluntarily formed and are not for profit making purposes (Stoskop, 2010). They work with people to advance their social, economic situation and their ambitions (Johnson and Stoskopf, 2010). They are in most cases referred to as organisations that are formally recognized, controlled by employed staffs who are usually the urban professionals or expatriates; they are normally supported by domestic or international funding, and are often comparatively large and well-equipped. NGOs may be international or national or regional organisations (Mercer, 2002). Willetts (1996) posits that NGOs appeared after the formation of the UN in 1945. They grew massively between 1960 and 70. In the 1980s there were around 12500 but in 2000 they increased to 45000 in the UN system. The UN categorised them into two groups namely; the Northern and the Southern NGOs. The latter specifically work in the third world countries.

The World Bank (2002) classified NGOs into two sections; namely; (i) Operational NGOs: which are NGOs which design and implement development related projects. (ii) Advocacy NGOs: these are NGOs that define or promote specific causes and influence policies and practices. However both operational and advocacy NGOs are classified in 3 main groups by the World Bank: (i) Community based organisations which serve a specific population in a narrow geographic area. This classification is important and relevant to the NGO under study. (ii) National NGOs which operate in developing countries, (iii) International NGOs which have headquarters in developed countries and carry out operations in more than one developing country (World Bank, 2002). The researcher adopts the World Bank definition of NGOs because it is relevant to the interest and the context of the study. The definition clearly explains the role of NGOs in relation to poverty alleviation, hence its adoption.

NGOs are private agencies that support international development, or indigenous or religious groups organised internationally or regionally. In the context of developing countries these can be made up of a group of community members who aim at raising awareness to the public and to the government. UN bodies recognise the following characteristics as a reflection of NGOs: non-commercial organisations, organisations which are not engaged in violence or advocating violence as a political strategy, organisations that do not have specific goals to replace the existing government and an organisation which is not controlled by government (Willets, 1996).

NGOs came in to fill in the gaps with poverty alleviation projects where the government had no capacity to implement such projects (Mercer, 2002). They continue to take the role of assisting government in providing for basic necessities, by ensuring food security among the poor. They also motivate the rural poor to be organized and initiate necessary action towards their poverty alleviation (Kadzamira and Kunje, 2002). The NGOs also motivate the poor to improve their agricultural production by making use of available resources. The poor are equipped to store their food grains, either grown by them or secured during the harvesting season. In mobilizing the rural poor, NGOs need a dedicated team of volunteers who can have confidence in the organization and help to organize themselves and assist in building a planned future (Mercer, 2002). Furthermore, NGOs are lauded for encouraging community self-reliance and empowerment through supporting community-based groups and banking on participatory processes (Korten, 1990).

The NGO's main objective is to support the people at the grassroots, and improve their ability to identify and solve problems in order to meet their own basic needs

(Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005). NGOs adopted participatory methodology as their main tool of development; as a result, their staff has to work in the field so that they can closely monitor the situation on the ground and integrate projects for local communities (Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005). Moreover, NGOs are regarded as the main source of innovation in development unlike government agencies or ministries. They are not affected by government bureaucratic constraints like government corporations. Their independence from government helps them to contribute to improved effectiveness in rural communities (Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005).

NGOs' work is reflected in several activities which include, funding projects, engaging in service provision, capacity building, contributing to awareness, and promoting the self-organisation of various groups (Baccaro, 2001). Their main purposes are: service delivery on the following: food relief, welfare, educational provision on basic skills and significant scrutiny of social environments and public policy advocacy (Stromquist, 2002). It is imperative to argue that if these roles were effectively accomplished there would be effective poverty alleviation in rural communities.

In Lesotho, NGOs also engage in activities that further development such as food provision and welfare and education and they are grouped by the Lesotho council of NGOs in six categories. The categories which are relevant to the study are the agriculture sector, environment and natural resources commission. The main objectives of these NGOs are to help the poor to have sustainable agriculture, food security, and sustainable livelihoods and to protect the natural resources (LCN, 2010). Mercer (2002) claims that there are three arguments in favour of NGOs; firstly

NGOs are said to strengthen institutional grounds. They enable the public to have a voice in the developmental issues. This encourages independent organisations to closely look at the role of the government and to put pressure on the state. Secondly, NGOs normally work with grassroots organisations that frequently comprise the poor and the marginalized groups. They also stand for the interests of marginalised groups within the broader public sphere and battle on their behalf to influence public policy. Thirdly, NGOs ensure state power by challenging its independence at both national and local levels, advocating for change and developing possible options on government policies.

Compared to government agencies, NGOs are more eager to take on risks and promote new ideas (Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005). While sustaining the poverty alleviation projects, NGOs are often willing to take risks especially in terms of looking for sufficient funding for their projects. A number of their projects are challenged by factors such as poor timing of funding, mishandling of funds and this shows that this role is not always easy for NGOs as key players (Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005). Porter (2003) states that, NGOs are considered by donors to be the most effective route to poverty alleviation in low-income countries than state governments. They are the main channel for donor investment and possibly one of the vital sources of information and expertise on poverty and poverty alleviation. The fact that donors are favouring NGOs and are always directing their funding to NGOs may compel NGOs to be more answerable to donor than the community.

The process of channelling aid to NGOs in Lesotho has been very important as it reduces the bureaucratic power of the state; like the privatization process. However, the process does not do this to the extent that the state actually fades away in the

eyes of clients, but only that the state functions within tight political and economic plans. This process and many other processes are connected to the poverty alleviation adjustment program and they have contributed to the World Bank's deliberate process of 'rolling back the state'. In Lesotho the states' role in economic development is complemented by the private sector and autonomous social movements (Matlosa, 1999).

NGOs are said to be more dedicated in their work and have a professional attitude to their work; than government agencies (Turner, 2009). This is supported by Masoni (1985) who believes that the existence of NGOs within the local community and their special commitment makes the lives of vulnerable groups easy. This appears to be just the right way of making the NGOs to have practicable link between large-scale investments and the farmers or the city dwellers to whom the investments are directed. However, their finances tend to be unreliable and their sustainability is often questionable. They can often make a positive difference to food security and other programmes, but the issue is how long can their service last.

Despite the financial challenges that are faced by NGOs, another distinguished role that they play in offering long-term hope and practical assistance is to make sure that sustainable development takes place. Beckmann, Carmin and Hicks (2002) state that, NGOs working together with local residents and elected officials have made enormous responsibility in promoting economic development, environmental, social and cultural identity and in providing supervision and technical support to the community. Thus, NGOs are able to deliver high quality services than government to the very poorest sector of society, while remaining cost-effective.

The empowerment and participatory nature of NGOs' work and their ability to encourage the poorest to articulate their political and social needs and efficiently are simultaneously regarded as important elements and strong pillars for civil society (Mercer, 1999). Conversely, as much as beneficiaries are empowered and given chance to participate in their projects, it does not look like they utilize this opportunity because their participation is not promoting sustainability of their projects. In order to confront this challenge, Masoni (1985) suggested that the vulnerable groups must be attended in such a way that will make a difference to their lives. Although the participation of the beneficiaries still remains an issue in poverty alleviation programs, the warmth of NGOs to such concerns and their local knowledge and operations usually cannot be matched by government departments. Hence, NGOs have to take pleasure in their considerable success over the last three decades; as they are now universally accepted as having an effective role to play in poverty alleviation.

NGO efforts should be seen as a complement to government extension capacity and not a replacement for it. Lesotho need to develop strong working relations and effective coordination between government and NGO extension programmes (Turner, 2009). The challenge is to influence MAFS (Ministry of Food Security) or Government of Lesotho (GoL) more generally to use domestic funds to contract NGOs' services. This needs a fundamental change of mindset in government, a change that has never happened before (Turner, 2009).

The NGO sector differs from country to country. In Lesotho, in spite of the good work and status of some organisations, the sector is not lively. They have significant roles to play in promoting food security, but there are no satisfactory results. NGOs are

sometimes poorly resourced and co-ordinated. There are challenges in their effort to deliver extension services (Turner, 2009).

2.4 NGOs in poverty alleviation: A critique

A study undertaken in Bangladesh on an NGO poverty alleviation project, revealed that the economic condition of the poor in that study areas has not improved much when evaluated against some selected indicators, namely, income, food and non-food expenditure, productive and non-productive asset, food security, and employment creation (Ullah and Routray, 2007). The results shows that the majority of the NGO beneficiaries stayed below the poverty line in terms of income and a sizable number of them remained below the under-employment line (Ullah and Routray, 2007).

Bebbington (1997) also on the other hand claimed that, NGOs normally make their own relationships with popular sectors for their legality; their culture and structure are normally criticized due to the following reasons, their failure to present transparency and habits of personalizing the control of the projects and resources. Another weakness is that they leave out popular organisations from positions of power and forum of policy dialogue. In addition, they have the right to maintain and represent the popular sector, and in the end they are people with the same social origins as those who have always dominated the poor (Bebbington, 1997).

It was observed that a small part of NGOs funds reach the field, while the NGOs staff earns a lot, yet they are technically weak. Due to those reasons Campesino organization in Bolivia ended up taking control of a livestock project from NGOs and

implementing it and began receiving the funds directly from the European financing agency (Bebbington, 1997).

Nalinakumari and MacLean, (2005) claim that many NGOs also do not have internal organisational communication and coordination, for this reason, some undertake their chosen causes without a clear understanding of the broader social and economic context. Most of the staff members of NGOs seem to be unable to work and cooperate the way they are expected because of their background.

In Ghana, most of the NGOs office staff and field staff take turns to enlighten their class of the urban-based educated elite, which mostly turn to view beneficiaries as beggars rather than normal people (Brett, 1993). In Lesotho, Ferguson (1990) reported that, the kind of relationship between representation and intervention has shown some changes over time. In the early up to the mid-1990s, important ideas in the aid chain highlighted more politicised interpretations of rural development, serving certain types of politically oriented peasant organisations.

Some NGO staff does not have experience of living in poor communities and where the conditions are bad such as off-roads villages which do not have proper water facilities, electricity, health services, good schools and sanitation (Porter, 2002). Kyei, (1999) supports the above claim that it is difficult for them to understand the realities of poverty in such places. Kyei (1999) goes on to observe that NGOs may visit such places occasionally but their concentration is mostly on accessible places which are normally chosen by their funders. Their limited fund for transport and the lack of public transport to some of the remote areas also contributes to the ineffectiveness of the NGOs. The staff does not really have good contact with the

poorest sector of the communities they are working with; they sometimes work with the selected representatives of the communities (Nyamugasira, 1998).

Most of the NGOs depend heavily on their donors for funding, their donors can either be government or private institutions, which can put some conditions on their funds and this restricts them in approaching problems their way and this normally leads to low self- sustainability in the NGOs (Nalinakumari and MacLean, 2005).

In Ghana NGOs, local personnel's experiences are often influenced by their contact with the international NGOs. They interact face-to-face with overseas colleagues in exchange of useful information and infrastructure for the benefit of the communities, but at the same time in both cases their interaction could mean the transfer of western codes and fashion (Flowler, 2000a). Some NGOs officials concentrate mostly on influencing policy processes and forget about the innovation that they should undertake in order to help the poor (Mphale and Rwambali, 2004).

2.5 NGOs and Sustainable development

Lipschutz (2005) claims that, NGOs play an important role in sustainable development. This statement is true because, there has been a huge contribution from NGOs in developmental issues. This increase came as a result of the fact that the donors were intolerant towards the failure of government to promote growth and alleviate poverty. Governments are now developing partnerships with NGOs because donors fund NGOs as they believe that they have public interests at heart (Barr and Fafchamps, 2006; Van Rooy, 1998). The following examples substantiate this point.

The Applied Research Institute in Jerusalem (ARIJ) is an NGO that supports sustainable development in the occupied Palestinian territory and the self-reliance of the Palestinian people by taking a very good care of their natural resources. ARIJ came with a much organised way of using resources and it equipped people with improved skills and appropriate technology (ARIJ, 2010). ARIJ was engaged in a project where 1800 people in 18 villages were to benefit by using improved wastewater treatment for irrigation. The equipment was installed in the households with proper irrigation networks which are connected to the treated wastewater. The household were also provided with seeds and seedlings. The expectation of this project is to improve security, health and income of the households (ARIJ, 2010).

Beckmann, Carmin and Hicks (2002) state that there were several rural sustainable development projects in the Czech Republic, where NGOs were working together with local communities to promote economic development, environmental quality, social and cultural identity. Beckmann et al., (2002) gave an example of the white Carpathian where several activities such as encouraging landscape stewardship, developing a model sustainable community and the establishment of the Carpathian Eurovision contributed to regional sustainability. The end results of these efforts show that the local economy is benefitting from tourism and sales of the wine.

There are some NGOs like World Vision which are religious organization; they also help in building social capital in communities (Swilling and Russel, 2002). They shape the quality of society and their interaction, which helps them to improve their economic well being through development activities with significant sustainable results (Putnam, 1993). Some of the NGOs and civil societies are similar to churches in terms of morals and they are highly committed towards the alleviation of poverty.

The role of NGOs in Lesotho is not different from other countries. In Lesotho because of the decline in agricultural sector for a long time, FAO launched a project which was to improve the food security of the vulnerable farming families. NGOs were funded to establish such projects in mostly vulnerable communities (EC, 2010). This is because in most villages, fields were abandoned because people were not able to plough due to financial constraints and drought. This led to most vulnerable people to rent their fields. The funding from FAO enabled World Vision to start up the Improved Agricultural Production for Vulnerable Households. The main objective of the project was to improve household food production and nutrition in the context of people living with HIV/AIDS (IFAD, 2008).

While trying to control the same situation, Care another international organisation provided people with irrigation tools and helped them to build tanks for the sake of controlling draught. Care also provided people with agricultural skills. As a result, people were again engaged in farming and their lives change, but the change was not sustainable (Care, 2010).

2.6 Factors affecting sustainability of poverty alleviation projects

Several factors are affecting the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. Some of these factors are NGO Approaches to poverty alleviation, training, corruption, accountability of NGOs and funding, and mismanagement of funds.

2.6.1 Training

Training is the process that helps people to improve their skills, it facilitate knowledge that brightens people's lives (Palmer, 2007). It enables them to develop their human resources. When people are well trained they can reach their goals and

sustain their lives (Palmer, 2007). There are several types of training which people and companies offer for different purposes. Beneficiaries' training is in the form of short courses at specific villages (IFAD, 2007). There is a link between skills and poverty alleviation. When people are equipped with skills they can change their conditions of poverty. The human capital theory also emphasizes that when people's agricultural skills are improved so does their productivity (Atchoarena et al., 2003; Fuitman, 2002).

2.6.2 Corruption

According to Clayton and Bass (2002), a number of countries in the sub-Saharan Africa are in slow economic growth due to different reasons such as corruption, violent conflict and food insecurity. Their ability to develop their possible economy is prohibited by different reasons such as lack of access to resources, climate change, natural resource deterioration and many other factors. Due to these reasons, NGOs have always been involved in trying to help out in meeting and sustaining the basic needs of the rural poor but no avail.

In Kenya the allegations of corruption made the government to dissolve the NGO council and replaced it with caretaker committees that preside over the election within sixty days. There were serious claims that the money from donors that was intended to go into helping HIV/AIDS victims for long time had been embezzled (Munene, 2005). Nienaber (2005) agrees with Munene's (2005) argument that there is a long list of false, corrupt NGOs, stories of embezzlement and lost funds that never reached the beneficiaries. Nienaber (2005) gives an example of Rwanda where villagers have to walk long distances to the markets due to lack of infrastructure, while NGOs were given some money to develop the infrastructure but

the money was not used for that purpose. Rather the money was used to buy big land Rovers and SUVs. The foreigners, who came in Rwanda to work for NGOs to help the poor, lived luxuriously while the local communities lived in abject poverty.

Renzaho (2006) reported that the food aid programs in Lesotho have been very helpful to the beneficiaries, but bureaucracy in the government has affected the effectiveness of the programs, by using them for their political gain because they used aid to campaign in politics. Pradip and Ghosh (1984) maintain that, the beneficiaries are responsive to economic opportunities, but the problems in the poor countries are more likely to be the powerful elites who are living in developed cities. They are normally involved in the formulation of the policies from the government, which normally prevent the NGOs from fulfilling the expectation of their beneficiaries. Consequently, it becomes more difficult for NGOs to strike at the economic roots of the social problem. Thus, NGO efforts fail to create self-sustaining processes of development managed by the beneficiaries.

2.6.3 Accountability and funding

NGOs are regularly challenged by the authority and democratic governance practices. The challenge usually come in the form of specific questions to NGOs, such as: to whom are they accountable? Who elects them? How participatory and democratic are they (Zedek, 2003). Zedek (2003) explains that reflecting on the demand for accountability is a clear indication that the responsibility comes in waves, rolling across society's emotional response and weaving its way across topics, geography and institutions.

The accountability of NGOs is an important issue in society. The demand for partnerships with NGOs had gone beyond the connivance of keen and able partners. Current studies by UK's overseas development institution (ODI) in Zimbabwe, India and Bangladesh have shown that NGOs have not been successful in benefiting the poorest households, women and ensuring the sustainability of local NGOs (Buturo, 1994). In some cases the experience is different, donors influence and dominates the priorities of the NGO programmes. The most common priorities are normally, poverty, environment, gender, good governance, human rights and some cases the rule of law (Africa World Review, 1994). Due to this dominance most NGOs Gakunga, (1994:22) "are using poverty alleviation as their entry point, to get financial support from donors."

The most common limitations faced by NGOs are that they are at the mercy of donors for funding. Donors are normally in different forms such as private parties or government agencies. NGOs usually do not discriminate and differentiate between government funding and other funding when asking for donations; they just accept funds from any willing funders (Nalinakumari and MaCLean, 2005). So this makes them to be an easy target which can be used to push the agenda of the funder especially in cases where there is foreign government is funding.

Increasing interest and support for NGOs among official donor agencies may create a tendency or promote a shift, towards operational and organisational expansion. This motivation need to be treated carefully, because decisions to expand with official finance may have various unwelcome consequences such as making NGOs feel more answerable to their official donor than to their proposed beneficiaries or

imply support for policies of wholesale economic liberalization (Eade, 2004). Bebbington (2005:945) posits that, “NGOs directors give personal assistance to poor rural families in their effort to put their children through secondary school in urban areas, but organizational strategies for poverty reduction in rural area prioritized agricultural development over and above other forms of livelihood enhancement in part because the NGO believed that was where donor interest lay.” It is important to note that beneficiaries have their own priorities, so for the project to be successful and sustainable, the project should first help them to attain their priority, then let the other things follow.

According to Ezeoha (2006) there is need for a practice to enhance good governance and sustainable development. He observes that the financial practices of most of the African NGOs seem very unreliable and need to be monitored so as to support and facilitate the delivery of aid to the poor, without bureaucratic and fraudulent hindrances. This can be achieved by making sure that the financial activities of those organizations are properly reported, by following the national and international standards. Beneficiaries should also be fully involved in finances so as to clear their doubtful minds. Ezeoha (2006) in contrast observed that, NGOs take advantage of public friendliness and adopt their structures for their own legitimacy and yet they do not give full service to the people they claim to help. They also gather resources in the name of the public whereas they are the ones who are benefiting. He clarifies that, it is expected that NGOs should be accountable to the public. Presently, NGOs are not obliged to publicize their accounts, only international NGOs make their accounts available to the public while local NGOs do not. Ezeoha (2006) claimed that the best way to ensure proper accountability would be to have

national legislation that forces NGOs to publish their annual accounts and statements at the end of the year.

2.6.4 Mismanagement of funds

Several reports have been made from developing African countries about NGOs mismanagement of funds. Mundell (2009) reported several incidents from Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria and Ghana. In Kenya some NGOs and other ministries which were involved in HIV/AIDS and medical services project were alleged to have misused the funds amounting to US\$ 166 Million which was donated by Global Fund for the project. While in Uganda money amounting to US\$ 1.6 Million donated by Global fund which was for grants was also misused. In Nigeria, an NGO for Children Rights Network (CHARNET) was allegedly reported to have misused about US\$ 2 Billion. The fund seemed to have been used for something other than what it was intended for (Mundell, 2009).

The above evidence shows that although NGOs are involved in poverty alleviation and other life relieving projects, they are still not fully committed to the communities they are helping. They always make blunders that leave beneficiaries suspicious of their activities in poverty alleviation projects, especially on their distribution of assets. Beneficiaries sometimes have doubts in the efforts of NGOs and suspect that they sometimes use donor funds for their own benefit. This perception that beneficiaries have in their mind about NGOs makes them to have a negative attitude and not to mean fully participate in their projects. They feel like the NGO officials do not respect their objective of having long-term development (CDA, 2007).

2.7 Theoretical Framework

This study adopted a three pronged approach: which includes empowerment, sustainable livelihoods and sustainable development. Empowerment puts more emphasizes on equipping people with skills so that they will be self-sustained (Robbins, Chatterjee and Canda, 1989). Sustainable livelihood approach stresses the accessibility of assets to people, which will enable them to excise their skills and to sustain their livelihoods (Ashley and Carney, 1999). On the other hand, the sustainable development approach is considered to be strong in yielding sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. In this study, this approach helped in examining how the projects achieve their main objective of creating sustainable well-being of the poor, based on sound management of development (Goodland and Ledoc, 1987). It has emerged over the past few decades as an important paradigm for community development (Nikkhah and Redzua, 2010). The foregoing three frameworks are discussed in detail below.

2.7.1 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. In doing so, they gain capabilities to achieve their highest personal and collective ambitions and goals (Robbin et al., 1989).

Empowerment is also 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 (Cornell Empowerment group, 1998). When beneficiaries are empowered it is clear that they will be in a position to make some informed decisions about their lives.

The mainstay of empowerment concept according to Bailey (1992) is based on the issue of power because power can change and can develop lives. Williams, Suzanne, Seed, Janet, and Mwau, (1994) also confirm by indicating that there are 4 aspects of power in empowerment. The first of these involves power assets which puts a lot of emphasis on economic power which considers material assets such as income, land, tools or technology. Secondly, it includes better health, access to services 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 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). This is very strong in building in the sustainability as well as resolve of the beneficiaries. Empowerment is about making one's own choices, considering ones 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 their 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 ones' own sake (Williams et al., 1994).

However, (Bailey, 1992) is of the view that empowerment is a multi-dimensional, social and a process that takes place in different discipline such as sociological, psychological, economical and other discipline. It can happen in different levels at individual, group and community level. It is considered to be a social process as it happens in relationships with others.

While on the other hand, Mcwihither (1991:222) defines empowerment in the context of development, his definition pointed out that, “empowerment is the process by which people, organisation or groups which are powerless become aware of the power dynamics at work in their life context, develop the skills and capacity for gaining some reasonable control over their lives, exercise this control without infringing upon the rights of others and support the empowerment of others in the community.” While Narayan-Parker, (2002) sees empowerment as a development of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives.

Though the concept of empowerment is multi-dimensional, experience has shown that there are some elements which are common where empowerment is present. These elements strengthen the institutional change, namely: access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability and local organisational capacity (Narayan-Parker, 2002). These elements are discussed separately below.

- Access to information: in order for people to be empowered there is a need for a two way communication between the government and its citizens because the well informed citizens are in a better position to make well informed decision. They see opportunities which come their way and utilize them, they also can access services, excise their rights and hold state and non state

actors accountable. The information can be disseminated through the use of means of communication which can be accessible to all citizens.

- Inclusion and participation of the poor people in the activities which affect their lives is very crucial. They need to be included in their poverty alleviation activities and should be given chance to take part in decision making so that they can decide how to use their scarce resources, through the use of their indigenous knowledge. They should be given chance to identify their priorities and to commit themselves.
- Accountability: poor people have always been frustrated by the extensive corruption. (2002:21) “state officials, public employees, private provider, employer and politicians must be held to account and answerable for their policies and issues that affect the wellbeing of the citizens.”
- Local organisation and capacity: this aspect of empowerment refers to the ability of societies, groups in working together towards their common goal. The organisations should be in a position to organise their activities, resources and be in a position to solve their own organisational problems collectively. Communities need to be well organised, because when they are not organised they lack solutions and may not link to social capital and other resourceful groups like civil society or the state. The unity in local organisation can give such organisations chance and power to influence the government decision.

Empowerment appears to be a critical strategy to use in poverty alleviation programs because in the case of this study, the concerned beneficiaries definitely have a survival interest in solving their deprived conditions (Dowla, 2006). 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 (Bernasek, 2003). 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.

2.7.2 Sustainable livelihoods approach

According to Chambers and Conway as cited by Carney (1999), livelihood comprises the capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources) and activities required for a means of living. Carney, (1999:2) is of the opinion that "A livelihood is sustainable when it can cope with and recover from stresses and shocks maintain or enhance its capabilities and assets, while not undermining the natural resource base." Livelihoods approaches' are used to describe people and help them to build their own strengths and realise their potential, while at the same time considering the effects of policies and institutions, external shocks and trends (Ashley and Carney, 1999). It is expected that refocusing of the poor will make a significant difference to the achievement of poverty eradication (Carney, 1999). Scoones (1998) observes that people's resources and livelihood assets are fundamental, especially their access to the resources and their use. These can include natural resources, technologies, their skills, knowledge and capacity. In addition their health, access to education, sources of credit, or their networks of social support also need to be well aligned.

Success can only be attained if a good understanding of the household economy is combined with attention to the policy context. Sustainable livelihood approaches try to address all these concerns and then improve the effectiveness of development spending. The implementation of a sustainable livelihoods (SL) approach requires the vigorous participation of all sectors which have a high interest in increasing the capital assets of communities, in other, to build on the existing assets of the poor, both at the village level, and individuals (Fauracre, 2001). However, the livelihoods approach does not aim to establish integrated programmes in rural areas, but targets a few core building blocks like agricultural production, income diversification and infrastructure, which it keeps controllable with the help of thorough analysis of existing livelihoods and a bottom-up planning process (Carney, 1999).

Carney as in Cahn (2002) argues that, one of the major fears is that the Sustainable Livelihood approach is too complex. It is considered by others as over ambitious and offers inadequate practical guidance on the way forward. The difficulty in the holistic understanding of complex livelihood systems is also a major challenge. Carney in Cahn (2002) further argues that the SL approach is not a plan for rural development; rather, it is an analytical framework which guides the thinking behind development planning and intervention. Murray, (2001) adds that the SL approach does not attach enough importance to the vulnerability context. The vulnerability context has to be clearly explained so that the approach can be evaluated on the basis of the specific vulnerability situation the people find themselves in. This is because there are different levels of vulnerabilities which need to be treated differently. The approach also as explained by Murray (2001), does not solve the issue of the ongoing tension

which exists within bottom-up and top-down participation. For beneficiaries to work effectively in all poverty alleviation projects, they need to be engaged in all the processes made to solve their problems. This can help them to participate positively having the sense of ownership of the project. Cahn (2002:4) opines that “One of the dangers of this type of approach is that by representing the reality and complexity of a livelihood system in a simple and logical way, the relative importance of some factors and the relationships between the factors are lost.” The approach therefore has to be kept simple.

In the long run because the interest to survive never ends for those affected, the sustainable livelihood aspects are also paramount to the beneficiaries because communities need to build tangible assets which can sustain their lives. This approach is very flexible and allows people to adapt to all situations and levels of livelihood because people’s strength changes overtime (Drinkwater and Rusion, 1999).

In the current study, the SL approach has been considered to be extremely important to the project stakeholders because it has poverty alleviation as one of its objectives. It also offers a suitable basis for evaluating the socio economic impact of the projects (Drinkwater and Rusion, 1999). Moreover, it forwards a strong point that the capabilities of the poor should be made to endure and pull through stresses and shocks in order for beneficiaries to secure their livelihoods (Cahn, 2002). The approach also complements the empowerment approach because in order for people to make their livelihood to be well provided for they need to acquire empowerment strategies which help people to gain confidence and skills to overcome constraints.

2.7.3 The Sustainable Development approach

The concept of Sustainable development was originally, drafted and presented to the world's leaders and the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) at Stockholm in 1972, after that several international conferences followed and were concluded in the Rio De Janeiro Conference in 1992 at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the Earth Summit. The (UNCED) agreed on Agenda 21, which entails a plan of action that serves as a general framework for the implementation of sustainable development. The major objective of Agenda 21 is to help communities and governments in creating programs and policies that would achieve social, economic and environmental sustainability through development of national strategies, plans, policies and processes. Agenda 21 also alerts all governments to produce National Strategies for Sustainable Development (NSSD) by 2002 (International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2004). Sustainable development is at the centre of population management that has stabilised the globe in the last twenty-five years (Anderson, 2002). As a result of these, Lesotho also produced a national strategy for sustainable development.

This framework is based on how people in this planet conserve, keep, and sustain the environment while maintaining the benefits that accrue out of the environment, 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 patterns, population growth, health and human settlement, the need for conservation, and good management of all natural resources. In partnership with governments, it emphasized the vigorous

participation of major groups such as women, children and youth, civil society organizations and business in taking care of the environment while benefitting from it (UN, 1992).

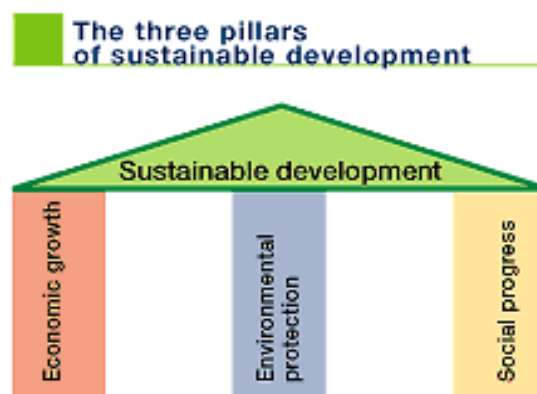
The UN has been concerned about the excessive depreciation of the human environment and natural resources which resulted in the deterioration of economic and social development (United Nations, 1987). Sustainability was one of eight goals, linked with 18 targets and 48 indicators proposed to be a guide for measuring improvements in people's lives (UN, 1987).

2.8 Models of sustainable development

2.8.1 Three pillars of sustainable development

The figure below is one of the models of sustainable development. The study adopted this model as it presents an interactive scope where human activity blends well with natural phenomena as the economy; environment and social aspects interface to promote the interests of humans.

Fig.2.2: Three pillars of sustainable development



Source: Adams (2006)

According to this model the concept of sustainable development has three pillars which were developed by Brundtland (1987) who 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).

The above figure shows the relationship between the three concepts of sustainable development. The first pillar focuses on the economic concept. This 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 society to control changes in the economic goods or value (Adams, 2006). The second 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 the significance of putting together environmental protection and conservation values into the development process and upholding the long-term capability of supporting eco-systems (Department for International Development, 1999). 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 (WCED, 1987).

The environment supports both society and economy concepts. The resources available on earth are limited to human activity. Effective limits are often much more

exact and framed, in that the capacity of the biosphere to absorb pollutants, provide resources and services are clearly limited in space and time (Adams, 2006). Environmental sustainability, stresses on individual behaviour in all societies that it impacts on our ability to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs (Cooke and Fielding, 2010). The three dimensions of this concept cleverly capture two primary issues, the problem of the environmental degradation which goes together with economic growth, the growth that leads to alleviation of poverty (Lélé, 1991). Signh and Titi (1995) put more emphasis on ensuring 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 find a balance between three pillars - social, economic and environmental of communities (Sneddon, 2000). More focus is on improving the value of life for all of the earth's populace while not increasing the use of natural resources in such a way that the environment cannot afford to supply them indefinitely. It needs an understanding of the consequences and that people must find some innovative ways to change institutional structures and influence individual behaviour. This implies responsibility in verifying policy and practice at all points, from the individual to the international sectors (WCED, 1987).

2.8.2 Triple Bottom line Model (TBL)

The study also adopted the Triple Bottom Line model (TBL) which stresses the relationship between the business and environment. The model however

emphasises that, even though the businesses help people to meet their needs the environment should not be sacrifices in that process. The model is also in accordance with the three pillars model of sustainable development as it considers the economical impact of the business on the environment and the society.

Triple Bottom Line Model (TBL) was coined and used to give ties to the business and ethic aspect to business. It evaluates what the business does to add value to the environment or devaluation to the environment if it has negative aspects (Hayward, 2003). The TBL focuses on the economic values that a company or project adds or destroy on the environment. It is also a framework used to measure and report corporate performance against economic, social and environmental limits. The model includes all values, issues and processes a company must consider in order to maximize the harm resulting from their activities and to generate, economic, social and environmental values. It also considers the needs of all the relevant stakeholders and the integration in the model between the three primary areas which are environment, social and economic (Hayward, 2003). The continuation of sustainable development needs that, special attention be given to the interactions between the environment, society and the economy (Gagnier, 2007).

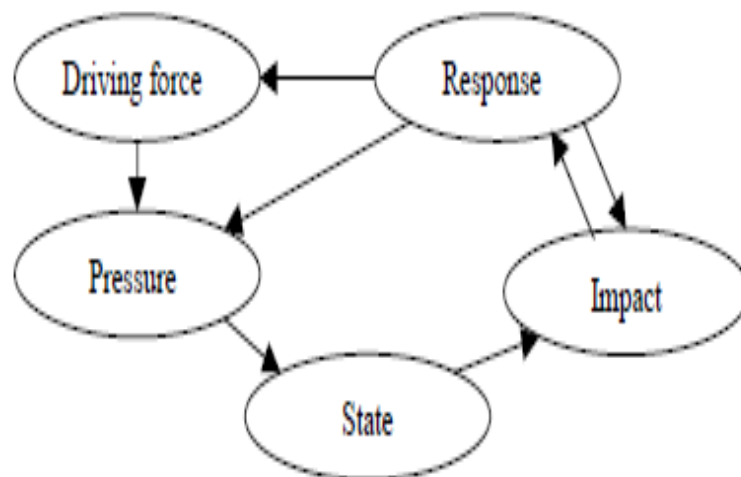
This model is important in the study because it serves as a basis for project founders to act, add or avoid destroying the environment. No matter how much projects positively change people`s lives, the beneficiaries do not have to sacrifice any aspect of environment in order to make a difference. This model helps to measure what the project is offering in terms of its impact on economy, society and environment.

2.8.3 Pressure, State, Response (PSR) and Driving Force-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) models

The Pressure State Response (PSR) or Driving Force-Pressure-State-Impact-Response (DPSIR) models were originally developed by the organisation for Economic cooperation and development (Vander-Meulen,1998). Their objectives are to clarify multi-sectoral relationships and to highlight the dynamic characteristics of the eco-system and social-economic changes (Eliot, 2002).

The PSR framework was developed for the purpose of organising the environmental directorate work on environmental indicators. Its main concern is causality, concerning the pressure that human actions put on the environment which changes the state of the natural resources. The society responds to the changes through environmental, general economic and sectoral policies (OECE,1997).

Fig 2.3 : DPSIR MODEL



Source: Eurostat,1997

The “pressure, state, response” model is also an innovation of the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development (UNCSD) framework of sustainable development indicators. It has been modified by the European Environment Agency into the “DPSIR” model which is made up of driving force, pressures, state, impact, and responses (Eurostat, 1997). The DPSIR model on the other hand, is a framework that deals with the idea of analysing environmental problems. The Driving forces are fundamental factors that influence relevant-variables. While pressure refers to variables which may cause environmental problems. State shows the conditions of the environment whereas impact describes the results of changes of the state. Response on the other hand, shows the effort of the society in trying to solve the problems (OECE,1997). The models were developed mainly to help in understanding the interactions between the economy and the environment so that they are entirely appropriate for dealing with sustainable development. It is the people’s desire to have access to goods and services, to work, to socialize and create a leisure opportunity which is the fundamental driving force. Therefore, a sustainable development model has to also consider increasing the improved access to welfare.

In addition the PSR and DPSIR models do not readily explain the social issues like education. The professionals felt that the DPSIR model was a practical logical tool, especially in developing indicators reflected in the environmental impacts of a particular sector, but majority of the non-technical users would find it confusing for the model to be used openly in presenting the indicators. It does not completely merge with the ordering of the Strategy framework (Eurostat, 1997).

For the study the models above touch on factors that are the mainstay and preoccupation of poverty alleviation development projects. They are justified because socially, people try economic interplay but find the environment impoverished and unyielding in terms of food sustainability. In the end the government has a duty to pull together stakeholders to help sustain the nation which is its prime responsible hence the involvement of NGOs.

2.8.4 Sustainability indicators

The Brundtland (1987) report wanted new ways for measuring and assessing progress towards sustainable development which was later documented in the Agenda 21. The UN, (1992) highlighted sustainability indicators (SIs) as tools that aim to make the concept measurable by quantifying trends in society and attempt to address the key question such as: “Are we, or are we not, moving towards sustainability?” The aim of SIs is to guide decision makers at various levels so that they can contribute to the development of society towards sustainability (UN, 1992).

An indicator is used in the sense of a piece of information which has an extensive significance unlike its direct meaning (Bakkes, van der Born, Helder, Swart, Hope, and Parker, 1994). The choice and design of SIs ought to be based on the purpose of the use of information with consideration to the needs of different target groups (UN, 1992). An indicator can be useful and interesting in decision-making. It normally simplifies or summarizes important properties, imagines phenomena of interest and quantifies, measures and enhances communication of relevant information (Gallopín, 1997). Some indicators are hard to categorize and sometimes overlap. An indicator can be either qualitative or quantitative, though in practice the quantification is very useful.

There are some supplementary relevant functions of indicators (Gallopín, 1997) which include; assessing conditions and trends sometimes in relation to goals and targets, providing information for spatial comparisons. The provision of early warning information projects the anticipated future conditions and trends.

In the context of this study the sustainability of poverty alleviation project in rural communities were measured in terms of whether beneficiaries are able to produce enough food from their fields, and the nutrient inputs from their home gardens. They were also measured in terms of whether beneficiaries were able to participate in development decisions so that they can be able to take over after the NGO has left.

2.9 Sustainable development perspectives

The sustainable development notion lies under different perspectives, especially those that reflect major concepts. These include: the access to productive resources, empowering the rural poor, ensuring social rights, working together and new collaboration. These ideas form part of the concepts of the three pillar model of sustainable development.

2.9.1 Access to productive resources

Tibaijuka (2009) posits that access to resources such as land can make sustainable development possible. She, however, observes that land governance affects the rules, processes and structures through which decisions are made about access to and use of land, the manner in which the decisions are implemented and enforced, and most significantly, the way that competing interests in land are managed. Tibaijuka (2009) further believes that land governance is about control and the political economy of land:

Who has access, hence She, challenges who does not? Whose rights are secure, whose are not? Who participates in decision making? How are conflicting interests resolved? How are agreements enforced? Who gets to use the land and who gets the revenue streams from its use? And what is the role of cities in driving the agricultural production and distribution systems? (Tibaijuka, 2009:25).

Morser et al., (2001) indicate that making the human rights content stronger in their public policies can make it tighter and equitable to the public, civil and community institutions. It also increases the capacity to prepare for, and deal with, shocks and enables the poor to have a clear and guaranteed food security.

United Nations has also searched for solutions to poverty and sustainable development and it found that the succeeding plan of action would be one that increases access to productive resources for the poor, as it would close the gaps in the distribution of wealth and also improving the participation of the poor in decision-making processes and reforming macroeconomic policies which are affecting them badly (Women's Environment and Development Organization, 2001). Resources are connected to sustainability of projects. In this study it is important to consider whether beneficiaries have resources because if they do not have resources they will not be in a position to sustain their projects because resources are fundamentally essential to a project.

2.9.2 Empowering the rural poor

Sustainable development works well where there is an access to assets. IFAD (2007) reported several times that poor people from rural areas lack assets, are

vulnerable to agricultural and economic shocks, and do not have skills and information that can enable them to take part in the planning and execution of issues affecting their lives. International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD) (2007) suggests that it would be good if the rural women are given an opportunity to have their own productive resources like field for agricultural purposes as this would add value to the food security.

When there is an improvement of the access of rural female farmers to productive resources such as land and water, their finance can play a significant role in enhancing female farmers' productivity, food security and sustainable development (Ogato, Boon and Subramani, 2009). People may have resources and assets but if they do not know how to use them, they become useless. It is important that people are equipped with resources and trained on how to use the resources effectively because the end results can be sustainable.

2.9.3 Ensuring social rights

Poverty is now seen as a lack of human rights no longer only in the perspective of incomes. If the problem of poverty is not addressed, there will be inadequate sustainable development. It is equally true that sustainable development needs environmental protection and that environmental degradation leads directly and ultimately to violations of human rights. A lot has been done in describing the content of specific social and economic rights, such as food, health and education, as well as the instrumental role of civil and political rights in their understanding and protection. The two categories of rights are very important in the design of effective strategies to achieve sustainable development (United Nations commission on Human Rights, 1948).

2.9.4 Working together

According to the World Bank (1994:78), “participation is a process through which the stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, and the decisions and resources that affect them.” Participation denotes the involvement of individual, families and communities in some part of development process of projects. The beneficiaries are expected to be vigorously involved in interventions that promote development and reduce poverty. Their participation normally assists them in building their own capacity hence they get empowered through skills transfer as they are in the centre of the development process (UNDP, 2000). In this study participation of beneficiaries is considered to be very crucial because beneficiaries need to be fully involved in order to build their skills which they will use after the NGO withdraw from the project. The effective participation encourages sustainability. However, participation at times is used as a means to turn stakeholder`s situation, into one of adequate provision. Also, governments train local people to help themselves, as a form of welfare improvement strategy (McCutcheon, 1995). Nonetheless, in order to render local knowledge and effective participation in the local development issues effectively, the local people should have access to decentralised institutions at local level that will honour their priorities. Their priorities should be addressed as soon as possible to ensure that locals do not lose faith in the capacity of local institutions (De Beer and Swanepoel, 2000).

2.9.5 New collaboration (Public-Private Sector Partnerships)

The collaboration between governments, local governments and NGOs is important in human development and poverty alleviation the world over. Such collaboration should be based on cooperation and goodwill, for promoting participation of people

in poverty alleviation programs. At international level, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (2007), the Conference on Hunger and Poverty and different kinds of stakeholders, together with intergovernmental organisations, citizen organisations, NGOs, government officials, bilateral agencies and international financial institutions produced a combined analysis of the limitations on sustainable human development. They asked for a quick action to empower the rural poor by increasing their access to productive assets, especially land, water and common-property resources, and by mounting their direct participation in decision-making processes in issues that are affecting their lives systems. With regards to Lesotho, Rahman (2000) revealed that a friendly social set-up, democratic political environment and good governance are also needed for the cause of poverty alleviation in the country

The above statement is supported by Kenward (2009) who argues that in Lesotho, the government with its Priority Support Program (PSP) worked with some non-governmental partners in the creation of sub-grants and implementation of the homestead food security extension activities. The programme made sub-grants ranging from 11 to 19 months to a total of six NGOs. Kenward, (2009:6) observes that; "The PSP beneficiary assessment found that 49% of direct beneficiaries had been contacted by neighbours, friends or family about the techniques they had been taught and that an average of five people then went on to copy them. Thirty-two per cent of direct beneficiaries had advised other members of their communities about these techniques, with an average of eight people then copying them."

In the study sustainability should also be measured against the collaboration of the beneficiaries in the project. The work load becomes easy at all times when people

work together. When people are working together they complement each other. Sustainability of poverty alleviation should be a continuous process which needs time and endurance because when people work together they can encourage each other.

2.10 Critique of the sustainable development approach

Sustainable development has been cognisant of population growth, population control policies which become the superseding approach to development, and this became a major device used to support economic development in developing countries and to protect the environment (Aguirre, 2002). This is its strength, but if one considers the Brundtland definition, obvious weaknesses emerge. For example, it has a definition which is cautious but inaccurate. According to Aguirre (2002), the concept is holistic, attractive and elastic though not specific. The idea possibly will bring people together but it does not necessarily help them to agree on goals. In essence, what sustainable development is debating ends up being meaningless (Adams, 2006). In addition, sustainable development puts a lot of emphasis on environmental issues such as pollution. It also stresses the significance of putting together environmental security and preservation values into the development process as argued by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, United Nations Environment Programs and World Wide Fund for Nature (IUCN, UNEP, WWFN, 1991).

Despite its limitations, sustainable development seems to be the most appropriate framework for development, as it covers almost all aspects which are in both the empowerment and sustainable livelihood approaches. In addition, the empowerment approach puts a lot emphasis on reducing inequality and requires distribution of

visible assets which can also be taken on board as it also aims at participation and bottom up development objectives (Wilkinson, 1998).

Finally the study incorporates the sustainable livelihood approach which is covered under the environmental concept of sustainable development as it puts emphasis on the fact that livelihood is sustained when people pull through from stresses and shocks and improve their capabilities while avoiding undermining the natural resources (Department for International Development, 1999).

2.11 Summary

This chapter dwelt on the strategies that have been put in place by different institutions to fight poverty. Poverty is currently a big global challenge, with Governments partnering with NGOs in reducing the level of poverty. However sustainability has been a major challenge in poverty alleviation projects. NGOs' efforts in trying to get rid of poverty are useless if they are not sustained. Hence, the issue of sustainability and the role played by NGOs in the alleviation process was very much given more priority in this study.

The study adopted a three pronged approach, which examined the issues of empowerment, sustainable livelihood and sustainable development frameworks. This chapter also highlighted the models of sustainable development and the sustainability indicators. Different perspectives on sustainability, the benefits of using sustainable development were also discussed. The issue of sustainability was key in the study, as it was the researchers' intention to assess the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects.

The next chapter focuses on the methodology and methods adopted in the study. It includes the research design, population and sampling as well as data collection procedures.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter three present the research methodology, design, population, and sample and sampling, data collection instruments, analysis, pilot study, ethical considerations, and delimitation of the study. All the concepts will be explained in the later sections, including their strengths and weaknesses in the context of the study.

3.1 Research methodology

The study adopted the interpretive approach to assess the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects. In the study, the researcher sought to construct detailed descriptions of social reality (De vos et al., (2007). Drew, Hardman and Hosp (2008) explain that qualitative methods are appropriate where there is a need to explain, describe and illustrate behaviour interaction as well as revealing inadequately understood variables. The qualitative methodology is more applicable where variables are discovered because they can later be tested quantitatively or where the researcher observes that quantitative measures cannot effectively describe or interpret the situation (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Kalof, Dan and Dietz (2008) observe that the objective of the qualitative research method is to comprehend the processes; experiences and meaning people give to phenomena. This helped the researcher through the personal experiences of the beneficiaries. The qualitative approach is said to have assembled rich descriptive data in reference to a particular phenomenon with the intention of developing an understanding of what is being observed (Silverman, 2001). Qualitative research helped to unfold information for understanding phenomenon where not much is

known about them, it also provided a chance for new views on things and on what was already known. Qualitative research also provides in-depth information that may be difficult to express quantitatively (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

As the study was on people, this method was very appropriate as it emphasized people's own understanding of their experiences and what they said and did in detail (Kolof at al., 2008). The qualitative method always has in mind the complexity and dynamic quality of the world in all analysis (Hoepfl, 1997). The cultural context which motivates different behavioural patterns was taken as a crucial issue and the qualitative method was typically resonant with exploring the why question of the research (Silverman, 2001).

3.1.1 Strengths of the qualitative research methodology

- The emphasis of the method is based on the quality and the depth of information not on the scope and breadth of the information (Maree, 2007). The depth of information and its descriptiveness in writing, gives clear details which enable the reader to understand the habits of the interviewees (Merriam, 1988).
- The method emphasis on understanding the phenomena in its natural setting for the sake of understanding the meaning imparted by the respondents in terms of their own meaning. The method enabled the researcher to see through the eye of the participant (Maree, 2007). The researcher was given an opportunity to be in the site, setting to see and record the people behavior directly as it was taking place (Merriam, 1988).
- The method helped in getting important and relevant information by bringing out new meanings and improving understanding of the existing situation

(Strauss and Corbin, 1990). Their write ups are descriptive and use meaningful language (Eisner, 1991).

- The instruments used to collect and analyze data liaise within human instrument rather than by inventory of questionnaires or machines (Merriam, 1988).
- The theory, hypothesis and details are built from an idea; this shows that it used inductive processes (Merriam, 1988).

3.1.2 Weakness of qualitative research methodology

- The qualitative approach is criticized as a non- numerical method, with small sample sizes which cannot be generalized (Myers, 2000). The research findings may only be generalised to a particular setting or to a group of people who were included in the study, findings may be different in different cases (Burke and Chistensen, 2007).
- The in-depth, comprehensive approach to data gathering limits scope because individuals have different experiences over time making replicability very difficult (Burke and Christensen, 2007).
- Qualitative studies claim to understand and describe the world through the human experiences. As human beings, we cannot easily separate our humanity from the research, so qualitative research cannot escape subjective experience, since our experiences always affect the research one way or the other (Myers, 2000).

- The approach was not interested in any statistical procedures or quantification it was interested in understanding the reasons behind the action of the beneficiaries (Maree, 2007).
- Usually it takes more time to collect data when it is weighed against quantitative research, at the same time its data analysis is always time consuming (Burke and Chistensen, 2007).

The whole idea of qualitative research was never set to generalize as its major objective. Therefore, the approach cannot be judged with regard to generalization, so the above does not count as a weakness (Myers, 2000). In relation to subjectivity the researcher has recorded the interviews, observed the attitudes, took notes and used the interview guide to stick on the objective of the research in an attempt to minimise the negative impact of subjectivity.

3.2 Research design

The study adopted a case study research design while triangulating both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The quantitative data was used to interpret the beneficiaries' demographical data which appeared to have affected the sustainability of their poverty alleviation projects. The interpretations were in percentages because quantitative uses numeric to define phenomena. However, quantitative data was only complimenting the qualitative data since the study was predominantly qualitative. This was not a comparative study but it sought to assess the sustainability of poverty alleviation projects in two different projects.

Case study research is a type of qualitative research that puts special attention on giving a full account of one or more cases (Burke and chistensen, 2007). When choosing this particular design, the researcher`s interest was to understand meaning from the beneficiaries` view in a non-controversial and open way (Patton, 2002). This was appropriate for eliciting qualitative data because the study had provided the researcher with real life situations, which helped to explain the existing situation in poverty alleviation projects. Gillhim (2001:1) offers a succinct definition of a case study when he argues that, it is “a unit of human activity embedded in the real world which can only be studied or understood in context.”

The issue of context here was a crucial factor that is why this design is seen as appropriate for this study. Case study has helped the researcher in this study to obtain an apparent understanding knowledge about the factors which led to the collapse of the poverty alleviation projects. Maree, (2007:77) argued that, “from an interpretive point of view, case studies strive towards a comprehensive understanding of how participants relate and interact with each other in a specific situation and how they understand the meaning of the phenomenon.” The case study has enabled the researcher to understand the relationship and form of interaction between the NGOs and their beneficiaries on their poverty alleviation projects.

3.2.1 Strength of case study

- A case study helps to study a single case in-depth (Kalof et al., 2008) and develops rich and comprehensive understanding about people (Maree, 2007). The assessment of the data is mainly carried out within the context of its use (Yin, 2003).

- It allows various sources and techniques in the gathering of data (Maree, 2007). In this study the tools to collect data will include documents from the Lesotho Council of Non-governmental organisation, Ministry of Agriculture and interviews with officials from NGOs and Ministry of agriculture.

3.2.2 Weaknesses of a case study

- Case studies are not strict, Yin (1984:21) argues that, “too many times, the case study investigator has been sloppy, and has allowed unequivocal evidence or biased views to influence the direction of the findings and conclusions.”
- The data is collected from a very small sample and is used to generalize about similar cases and data here cannot be used to the conventional empirical techniques because of its small size (David, 2007).
- A case study is always criticized because of its dependency on a single case which lacks generalization conclusion (Maree, 2007).
- Case studies frequently are said to be too long, hard to do and produce massive documentation (Yin, 1984).

The researcher was fully aware of the limitations of this approach but as Maree (2007) claims; generalization is not the purpose of the case study. The intention is to get better insight and understanding of the acceptance of a single case, which is also the main aim of this research. However, Wimmer and Dominick (2000) justify that the issue of lack of generalization is considered as a characteristic of the interpretivist studies so it should not be

regarded as a limitation. The question guide will help the researcher to reduce personal feelings to affect the process of data collection.

3.3 Population

According to Robson (2002) population is all the cases that the researcher is going to study; it entails the total quantity of the cases which are the subject of the study. In the context of this study, the total population entails the total number of beneficiaries' of the two selected NGOs projects. The first project is called Lesotho irrigation Project (LIP) which is found in Mafeteng district at Malea-lea village. The village is one of the smallest villages in Lesotho. It has about 100 households, while the district has the population of about 193,682 (Lesotho Bureau of statistics, 2004). The second project is called the Improved Agricultural Production for Vulnerable Households (IAPVH), in Leribe district in village called Matlameng. The village has a population of about 10,238, while the whole district has about 298,352 people (Lesotho Bureau of statistics, 2004). The beneficiaries in both projects were all members of these two specific communities; both projects had beneficiaries who are men and women of different ages.

3.4 Sample and sampling

3.4.1 Sample

The sample in this study entailed 21 beneficiaries who were selected from each of the projects who were the source of information, including 2 project managers and 2 government officials. The 21 participants from each of the 2 projects constituted a manageable number considering there were two organisations. The principle

followed was to get enough respondents from the bounded case to give adequate information but still remain manageable.

Three beneficiaries were interviewed face to face, while the other remaining 18 beneficiaries in both projects participated in three focus groups making a total of 21 participants. Project managers and government officials were interviewed face to face.

The sampling of this study was also proven by the sample size which was chosen by Kgadima (2009) on his study titled: *The understanding of Poverty by Poverty alleviation Project Participants*. He used qualitative research methods in his study and sampled 5 participants for the three poverty alleviation projects he choose, his total sample was 15 beneficiaries for all the poverty alleviation projects.

3.4.2 Purposive sampling

A sample is a specific part of the statistical population under study; it is studied in order to have information about a particular case (Engel and Schtt, 2010). The study used purposive sampling in order to get the relevant and appropriate participants with the needed information about the sustainability of NGO interventions. The main purpose of purposive sampling is to allow the selection of participants who are able to provide relevant information about the phenomenon under investigation (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007). According to Engel and Schtt (2010:97-102) in purposive sampling, 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 made decisions on picking participants whom he saw as relevant in the project circumstances.

Qualitative sampling typically works with small samples of people in their own context and are studied in-depth (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Merriam (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 order to get the richest possible source of information to answer the research questions.” In this case those people who were actually involved in poverty alleviation projects were chosen. Purposive sampling and qualitative research methods are able to spot, “common patterns that emerge from variation and are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspect or impacts of a program” (Patton, 1990:172).

According to Patton (1990) there are 16 types of purposeful sampling, but the highly important idea for the naturalistic approach is maximum variation sampling which is the selected type of purposive sampling in this research. The approach is mainly interested in capturing and describing the central themes or principal results that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation (Patton, 1990). Patton (1990:172) claims that, “the maximum variation sampling strategy turns that apparent weakness into strength by applying the following logic: Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects or impacts of a program.”

The selection of NGOs was based on the fact that both NGOs have a common interest of alleviating poverty through the use of agricultural projects, and in both projects the main objective was sustainable development. They both aimed at giving people skill, assets which were supposed to help them to sustain their lives. As

suggested by Cohen et al., (2006) a researcher should handpick respondents who are typically suitable for the research as concerned highly relevant people. This applied to the selection of the beneficiary participants, NGO officials and government officials in the study.

3.5 Pilot study

According to Jariath, Nalini, Hogerney, Mary and Parsons (2000) pilot study has a very small sized sample study which is conducted with the purpose of evaluating the methods and the ideas, to see if they will really work in the main research. It was necessary to do piloting because, it gave the researcher the chance to determine whether there was a need to make some adjustments in the methodological aspects of the main research (Perry, 2001).

In this study, the researcher piloted in order to evaluate whether the interviews and observation procedures are acceptable (Holloway, 1997). The piloting helped in finding out whether all respondents understood the questions in the same way. It also looked at the questions asked whether they connect with what the study wanted to assess and if they were not a repetition (Collins, 2003). Before the interview guide items were finalized, all questions were pilot tested to all three categories of respondents which were approached. The government officer in the Ministry of Agriculture, an NGO project Manager and a group of beneficiaries were asked questions. All the participants in the pilot study were selected purposively because of their experiences in the subject field. As a result of the pilot study some modification and clarifications were made in the interview guide to avoid repetition and to get the necessary information.

3.6 Data collection instruments

3.6.1 Focus groups

Before setting up a focus group, the researcher made an effort to establish conditions that were suitable for group interviews. This was necessary because one can only obtain the best from the participants if they feel valued, free and comfortable (Kruger & Casey, 2009). Focus group interviews are based on the assumption that group interviews will be more productive than one-on-one interview. The data in this kind of interview is said to be richer as participants produce a range of responses, examples and are also able to activate forgotten information (Maree, 2008). According to Hennick and Diamond (1999) the main purpose of focus group discussions is not to collect information about individuals like the in-depth interview, but to obtain experiences of the community members in a particular topic. As a result, focus group discussions allow group members to contribute their experience in relation to the burning issue. The focus group technique was employed as a means of capitalizing on group interaction to facilitate collection of rich responses to questions posed (Kenny, 2005).

The size was made small enough to allow participants to get opportunity to share experiences, but the group was large enough to allow for diversity. In each group there were six beneficiaries who participated and this number was manageable. A tape recorder was also used in order to transcribe the data verbatim. The focus group interviews were carried out through the use of pre-set questions which provided an easy flow of questioning (Krueger and Casey, 2009).

The purpose of focus groups in the study was to select people who were cooperative and willing to say their opinions, experiences, feelings and thoughts. This required a manageable number and the environment which was stress-free and as near natural as possible. Typically focus groups are composed of 5 to 10 people that is why the two focus groups consisted of six members each (Kruger and Casey, 2009).

3.6.1.1 Strengths of Focus groups

It encourages interaction between participants, improves the quality of the data and was useful for eliciting the beneficiaries' perspective (Barbour, 2005; Patton, 2002).

3.6.1.2 Weaknesses of a focus group

- In a focus group, it is very difficult to read individual non-verbal communications of the participants (Sim, 1998), especially when the researcher does not have full control over the discussion unlike in a one to one interview (Bender and Ewbank, 1994).
- In most cases huge focus groups may prevent other participants a chance to have a say in the discussion (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007).

In order to overcome the above weaknesses, the researcher had to take notes during the group discussion such that there was a smooth synchronization of the non-verbal and verbal interaction (Rea and Cochrane, 2008). The size of the group is normally between 5 or 6 participants because this is a very manageable number which allows a flowing participation of the participants. The questions are asked by the researcher in their order form and individuals are given chance to

speak while others are listening, so that the discussion was in her full control (Rea and Cochrane, 2008).

3.6.2 Interviews

An interview is an important source of data in a case study, Bell (2005) observes that interviews are a more reliable and sufficient form of data collection. He continues to claim that the way in which a response is made such as; tone of the voice, facial expression and hesitation can provide information that a written response would conceal (Bell, 2005). Since the design of the study is a case study, interviews were conducted to collect data. Case study interviews are normally open ended in nature this enabled the researcher to ask for the facts of the matter and opinion of the respondents (Yin, 1984).

According to Brown and Schulze (2007) a semi - structured interview schedule can be adopted to maintain a degree of consistency in the questions while allowing some flexibility with room to probe the participants during the interview. The researcher in this case had a number of key words, themes, issues and questions to address. Some interview questions on the interview guide were changed due to reasons such as the interviewees needing clarification of the question. Follow up questions were at times asked leading to the number of questions increasing (Corbetta, 2003).

The researcher brought in pre-determined questions on an interview schedule. Of special note was the fact that the questions were not pre-cast fixed or sequenced, they were considered a guide to frame or shape the terrain but allow both the interviewer and respondent flexibility (Holstein and Gubrium, 1995). This was

suitable for the study as the nature of the subject being investigated lied in the abstract and was hidden even from the respondents' immediate awareness and may require probing to unravel it (De Vos et al., 2005). This type of interview allowed probing so that interesting avenues that emerge were followed (De Vos et al., 2005). Questions were mostly open ended and the participants were considered the expert to be allowed to talk most. It summarises and amplifies material and explores avenues previously unanticipated during design (Wilkinson and McNeil, 1995).

Cohen et al., (2006) pointed out that, interviews are used to elicit data from respondents; an interview may be used as a main method of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives. For the study, individual face to face interviews were carried out and they were semi-structured. The interviews selected allowed for questioning while retaining some order in terms of consistency (De vos, Strydom, Fouche and Delpont, 2007). The face to face interviews involved two project participants as well as two NGO managers per project and finally the two government officials who covered the two projects.

3.6.2.1 Strengths of interviews

- Advantages of interviews over questionnaires are that, from an interview it is possible that all questions can be answered; because where clarification is needed it can be immediately provided by the interviewer (Leedy, 1980).
- Interviews also give the interviewer an instant opportunity to ask follow up question while the participants are giving their opinion (Leedy, 1980).

- Interviews give a chance to free interaction which can bring about new ideas from the participants (Carbetta, 2003).
- Interviewees are in a position to express their views and interpretations in relation to their given situation; they express their views from their understanding of events (Cohen et al., 2000).
- Gray (2004) gives the following reasons as advantage of using interview:
 - It enables the interviewer to get highly personalized information.
 - Respondents are not forced to write anything.

3.6.2.2 Weaknesses of interviews

- Some interviewees may feel uncomfortable when highly sensitive and emotional question are asked. They may try to avoid or not comment but rather prefer writing them down anonymously (Leedy, 1980). To counter this, the respondents can be asked to fill in an interview guide sheet themselves.
- Interviewees may not recall important information and may lack self-awareness (Yin, 2009). This may be solved by giving the respondents cue and reminder anecdotes.
- Data analysis can be time consuming for open-ended items (Yin, 2009) but to overcome this, the researcher can get the help of an assistant.

3.7 Document analysis

Documents are very important sources of information for the study, as they helped in finding out respondents' access information or values they are expected to practice. It was also imperative to understand what kind of information was put in places by

the government for the benefit of the implementing organization (Briggs and Coleman, 2007).

The main documents that were used in the study were taken from the Ministry of Agriculture as well as Lesotho Council of NGOs document which govern the NGOs under the Agriculture, Environmental and Natural Resource Commission (AENRC). This commission deals with food security issues and their sustainability as well as environmental issues. The policy documents provided information related to food projects and the motives and operations of the service providers.

3.8 Analysis

Mayen (2001:21) states that, “data analysis is the process of observing patterns in data, asking questions of those patterns, constructing conjectures, deliberately collecting data from specifically selecting individuals on targeted topics, confirming or refuting those conjectures, then continuing analysis, asking additional questions, seeking moderate, furthering the analysis by sorting, questioning, thinking, constructing and testing conjectures.” The method of data analysis was thematic content analysis. Thematic Content Analysis suggested by Burnard (1991) was employed as the method of analysing the focus group transcripts to ensure that the thoughts, experiences and feelings of the participants were represented in an honest way. Burnard (1991) suggests that, this also involves making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of data to build themes (Babble & Mouton, 2005). The main documents for analysis were taken from Lesotho Council of Non-Government Organization which guides the NGO under Agriculture, Environmental and Natural Resource Commission (AENRC) the group under which the sampled NGOs belong to. This document provided information

related to poverty alleviation projects and the motives and operations of the service providers.

The data analysis needed the researcher's full involvement in the raw data by listening to the tapes and reading the transcripts (Speziale and Carpenter, 2003). The researcher had to make some notes to try to make sense of the data which was crucial on understanding what was going on the ground (Polit and Beck, 2006). The researcher studied the transcripts and highlighted extracts of narrative which appear to describe the participants' perception over the collapse of the projects in the student's perspective (Hsieh and Shannon, 2005).

3.9 Ethical considerations

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, Dan and Dretz, 2008). Drew et al., (2008) define ethics as established guidelines that encourage responsibility research practices and ensure protection of human participants. According to Suter (2006) the rights, needs and values of the participants in a research have to be seriously taken care of because it was highly possible that sensitive information about the participants could have been revealed and tarnish individuals' reputation if it was not well taken care of. The researcher clearly stipulated the purpose of the study to the participants and what the study entails.

In this study, ethical considerations were guided by guidelines as spelt out in the University handbook of postgraduate qualifications policies and procedures 2010.

The participants' rights were highly respected for both beneficiaries and officials. This also meant their privacy and confidentiality had to be preserved so that they would be availed total protection from harm. The respondents were also asked to freely give their consent and a chance to opt for voluntary participation which was guaranteed.

In this study, the participants were fully informed about the purpose of the research and the processes involved. It was clear that their understanding of everything enabled them to participate voluntarily 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, NGO and government officials were also made aware of that fact. It is unethical to force people into participating in a research because participation has to be voluntary (Neuman, 2003).

Cournoyer and Klein (2000) claim that the researcher has a responsibility to protect the identity of their sources, mostly by maintaining their anonymity. In this study the researcher used a common idea from the collected data rather than using the information about individuals which could have been easily obvious to everyone. Discussing specific details would make the subjects to be exposed to both physical and emotional harm. It was the responsibility of the researcher to protect her subjects, within reasonable limits, from any kind of physical discomfort that may crop up from the research project (De Vos et al., 2007).

3.10 Delimitation of the study

This study was limited to two NGOs which were purposively chosen because they were involved in alleviating poverty, one in Maseru district and the other one in

Leribe district namely World Vision and Care International respectively. The study focused on the beneficiaries of the two selected NGOs which are under AENRC of Lesotho Council Non-government organisation (LCN) and government officials who work with NGOs in poverty alleviation issues as well as the NGOs officials who are specifically taking part in the projects. The study sampled World Vision project called Improved Agricultural Production for Vulnerable Households (IAPVH) in Leribe at Matlemeng centre. Care international on the other hand had a project which was called Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP) at Melea-Lea village in Mafeteng. The documents from LCN were used as guide to examine sustainability of poverty alleviation projects under AENRC. Policy documents from relevant ministries were also examined.

3.11 Summary

This chapter outlined the research methodology and method used. The design used was the case study, and the research participants were purposively sampled. The data was collected through the use of focus group discussions and face to face interviews and some additional information was collected from documents. The ethical consideration has also been highlighted in the chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

Chapter three presented the research methodology of the study. This chapter presents the data collected from the field and patterned to fall into thematic categories based on research objectives and research questions. Data were collected from two projects run by two different NGOs, each project has been assessed separately and their findings were not compared. Both of the NGOs sponsoring these different projects were responding to the issues of food insecurity. The themes subsumed were (i) assessment of sustainability of NGO poverty alleviation programs in rural communities (ii) Factors which contribute to the collapse of development projects. The presentation will start with the biographical data, followed by the data obtained from the field as presented by each project. Data from documents will be integrated with data obtained by interviews.

The biographical data of the participants entails crucial personal information which contributes to their behaviour as key stakeholders and thus will be presented in each case.

4.2 The Improved Agricultural Production for Vulnerable Households (IAPVH) project

This project is located in Leribe district which is the third among the bigger districts in Lesotho. Its capital town is called Hlotse while the other smaller town in the same district is called Maputsoe. Leribe covers an area of about 2,828 km² with an estimated population of about 450 000 (Lesotho Bureau of statistics, 2004). The district is divided into 13 community villages run by councils. Matlameng is one of the

local community councils. The location of project IAPVH which is also where the interviews and focus group discussions were held was at Matlameng community village. The village is located on the northern part of the district. In this place, farming is a key source of livelihood. The village covers about 50 square kilometres. It also has a large expanse of agricultural land which covers about 120 hectares which is used for planting maize, sorghum, beans and potatoes.

The project has 266 participating households in the village. This project came about as a solution to an outcry of the increase of food prices which occurred as a result of the response of the business community to the world economic financial crisis which gripped the world in 2007. The government of Lesotho and its development partners, the NGOs, came to help the communities which were threatened by starvation. The main objective of this project was to help improve the food production and nutrition in the poor households. Since farming was their main strategy for survival, the NGO used resources that were already in place to improve their agricultural skills and production and thus change the situation for the better.

The NGO identified beneficiaries through the use of the already existing structures on the ground such as the village chief, the village support groups and the district councils. The beneficiaries ranged from orphans, people with TB and other terminal diseases to aged people and the sickly that were visibly, the most vulnerable people.

4.2.1 Demographical data of the sample

The biographical data of the participants was considered to be relevant in this study as it gives a vivid picture of the participants' vulnerability in their households. In order to understand how the beneficiaries are affected by food insecurity, issues such as

age, gender, marital status, size of the family, educational level and occupation, biographic background were necessary to reveal some very critical causal details. Each item was discussed separately with relevance to the study.

4.2.1.1 Age of the beneficiaries

The study found out that the highest percentage of the beneficiaries is very old people of which 29% of them are aged between 65 and 70. While 19% are in the age range of 60 to 65.

4.2.1.2 Gender of the beneficiaries

Women make the biggest number of vulnerable participants compared to men as they constitute 57% of the beneficiaries in this project. The women are often left unsupported to take care of children. They also make dedicated beneficiaries because they live under the conditions of poverty and need the alleviation.

4.2.1.3 Marital status

The numbers of beneficiaries who are married constituted 48%. The expectation normally is that families with both parents are better off than ones with a single parent. The idea usually is that both partners work together to sustain the family, however, most of the families had people who were not formally employed hence their inclusion in the project.

4.2.1.4 Educational level

The data revealed that, 38% of the participants attended primary school but most of them did not complete it. Similarly, 29% of the respondents attended high school and none of them completed it. Indications were that 33% of the people have never been to school before. The level of education poses a huge challenge on the project

because beneficiaries are expected to understand some strategies, jargon and technology employed to sustain their livelihoods within a limited time.

4.2.1.4 Occupation

It was observed that most participants in the project were not working, with an average of 43%, while 24% were house wives who are not doing anything to bring cash in their families. The researcher established that 19% of the participants were farmers but their farming did not produce enough to feed their families. The smallest proportion (14%) of the beneficiaries were self employed doing other small scale jobs like vending in the streets, but with income which seemed not enough to cater for their daily needs.

4.2.1.5 Sizes of the families

In this study, the majority of the participants were living in families of about 5-6 members that constituted about 53% of the participants. In relation to the fact that the beneficiaries were employed and did not have a stable source of income these families were too big and difficult to provide with basic needs. The picture is worsened by the fact that 33% of the beneficiaries lived in families ranging from 8-10 members of with most of them being dependents, with the added challenge of looking after their extended families and HIV/AIDS orphans.

4.3 Sustainability Improved Agricultural Production for Vulnerable Households (IAPVH)

It appears that respondents were generally aware of the goals of the projects such as: improving their agricultural skills, increasing productivity, increasing adoption of small scale irrigation and increasing household revenue from marketed farm produce. The goals were meant to have long-term aspects of continuity, which ensures that beneficiaries preserved reserves for later generations and environmental maintenance which minimises degradation. The project manager had also explicitly affirmed their understanding of the goals of the project. They added that, it entails the development that addresses the future but not compromising the present. In other words, sustainable development that is meant to benefit future as well as the present needs of promoting food security.

They also revealed that in order for food to be secure, there is a need to take care of the resources and the environment. The resources now and in the future should be in a position to yield the same results. Environment is said to be crucial to development and its sustainability. To demonstrate these, one of the NGO officials responded that:

...If we found a well in a village, we cannot make it dysfunctional because we still expect the future generation to get the same benefit as the present generation.

Most of the beneficiaries agreed that the project encourage sustainability, especially through its training in agricultural activities using minimum resources that can be maintained. Beneficiaries were advised and expected to practice proper gardening which will provide them with adequate nutrition. Their training included, watering gardens using used water, making the “key whole gardening” which keeps crops

moist for a longer time. All these activities were just adding value to what beneficiaries have been doing for years; which was putting emphasis on the sustainability of their agricultural life. The Project Manager also commented that the production of own seeds by beneficiaries' also guarantees the sustainability of the project as they will be able to use them in the next season.

Beneficiaries were also provided with skills on small gardening, which were expected to produce radish throughout the whole year. The Project Manager indicated that, it is not difficult to maintain these small gardens; even a sick person can maintain it as it is not strenuous. Moreover, field farming skills, capacity building skills and conservational agriculture skills were provided. The assets which were provided included gardening tools like hand forks, watering cans and digging forks to be used for their sustainable agriculture now and for the future generation. They also indicated that, their living conditions and their nutrition were improved because of their knowledge, capabilities and agricultural practices were improved. This is indicated below:

We are being taught how to take care of our crops, how to use used water in our gardens so that we get food. We are also given skill on how to make our own seeds. This can help us to sustain our farming.

The government officials also explained that the objectives of the project helped them to steer and energise the people who work on the projects in an attempt to solve community challenges permanently. They also added that there are government policies, acts and laws which guard the supervision on environment, such as conservation and sustainable consumption of natural resources in Lesotho.

The policies and acts included the following; (i) Lesotho`s Environmental Act of 2001 which encourages the total protection and planning for the environment. (ii) The land use policy and agriculture food security. They claimed that all the relevant stakeholders interested in sustainable development are governed by these policies. The beneficiaries, the project managers and two government officials also confirmed that sustainability aspects were manifested in the project. Beneficiaries in a focus group substantiated this view point by saying that; the goal of the project is to equip people with skills and sufficient assets to help them to sustain their livelihoods. The project also encourages longevity in enterprises. It is clear in this regard that the project activities show the elements of sustainability.

On the same issue, the project manager confirmed that the goals of the project are in-line with those of sustainable development because they teach the beneficiaries how to take care of resources like water, and the environment. They also equip them with business skills which they can use to maintain book records to safeguard their money for the future. However, one of the government officials was not aware of the objectives of the project. He made reference to some other projects that he knew but not specifically this one. He confirmed that the aim of poverty alleviation projects is long term. The government officer agreed that: he was not sure about the objectives of this particular project. He also added that most projects that he knows of which are on food security, have sustainability as their main objective. The fact that the government official was not conversant with the project was rather disturbing and can lead to low level of sustainability as they are trusted to help beneficiaries to maintain the projects after the withdrawal of funds.

Respondents were also asked to evaluate the project in terms of whether it was worthwhile and whether it had served to satisfy the needs of the people it had been set up to serve. Data obtained from the respondents shows that, 80% of the beneficiaries especially those who have been equipped with skills and resources agreed that, the project is necessary and is very helpful to them. Reacting to the same question one of the beneficiaries explained that the project has answered their needs and was necessary. In the previous years before the project was initiated most people had stopped ploughing their fields as they did not have resources. They had been forced by circumstances to rent out their fields to the rich people who were giving them R700 once a year. With the onset of the project the people began generating income and profit.

The study sought to establish the steps that are taken to ensure sustainable implementation of the project programs. In order to ensure sustainability, respondents were asked to explain what they had done for sustainability. Beneficiaries claimed that for the sake of sustainability they take all activities of the project seriously and do their allocated tasks, though there are others who cannot participate because of ill-health. They also rotate operations so that all members are familiar with all the processes of gardening performed on the project. Beneficiaries share their experiences especially in agricultural activities for the sake of cooperation and sustainability. They also appreciate the kinds of training they are given, by taking notes to record some of the knowledge they have been given so that it stays with them for years and for generations to come.

The project managers are said to be the ones who are playing a major role in the implementation of the project. The managers had to motivate, push and cajole the

beneficiaries to work consistently. They train some of the beneficiaries to hold office as extension officers who will be the motivators of the whole team of beneficiaries. They also encourage the officers to up-hold qualities that they think a person who is an extension officer should have. The Project manager commented that, the project prioritises the improvement of livelihoods, income-flow, assets, nutrition, production and long term sustainability.

The government officials agreed that, they had not specifically done anything for this project. But it does not mean that they will abandon the project after the withdrawal of funders. They have some strategies lined up on taking care of such projects. For example they have officers who go to the field with NGOs so that they have adequate information about the project.

In terms of ensuring sustainability in the implementation of the projects; government provided the enabling paper work. However, the fact that they put in place legislation that allows NGOs to operate and also provide a safe politically stable working climate for them counts a lot towards making the projects sustainable. It was also indicated that, most of the times government officials tell the beneficiaries that the doors are open whenever they need any kind of help from them because it is important that they know where to go whenever they encounter any kind of problem.

Respondents were asked how they see the project in the future after the funders leave. What emerged from their responses is that the beneficiaries did get some support for the project but not all that they had been promised. The project sponsors had promised 5 chickens per person but only managed to supply three per household, which is too small to make a viable business.

The NGO tried to explain the shortages but it seems like beneficiaries were not convinced. This seemed to have demoralized beneficiaries somewhat though they continue to work. One of the beneficiaries sceptically pointed out that: *“We have been told that the supplier has a problem, and the demand is too high. But our productivity is still picking up; we at least have skills and tools.”*

4.4 Factors Affecting sustainability of the IAPVH Project

4.4.1 Involvement of Beneficiaries

The study also sought to establish the extent to which beneficiaries were involved in the planning and implementation of the project. Some of the beneficiaries said they were involved right from the initial stages of the project. Commenting on this, one beneficiary said, “Since she joined the project she has always been called for meetings in which she participated in shaping the project and was updated about the progress. In those meetings she used to suggest what she thinks or knows from experience as a farmer and citizen.”

Beneficiaries and project managers believe that the beneficiaries are part of decision making especially the execution part of the project. However, on the issue of planning, beneficiaries revealed their dissatisfaction especially on the choice of assets. They claimed that, they were never asked whether they wanted chickens or goats. This issue was not fully communicated to them because major decisions are taken at the NGOs head office.

The government officials revealed that NGOs are donor driven; hence their final decisions are not from the beneficiaries. Since the beneficiaries are very desperate for any kind of help, they are forced to compromise on some details as happened

with the chickens. One of the officers pointed out that, NGOs are normally the planners as they try by all means to work according to the needs of their donors. It was also indicated that, the beneficiaries are involved but their involvement is channelled by the needs of the donors whom the NGOs have to satisfy.

4.4.2 Training

The data showed that beneficiaries were provided with training in different areas which benefited most of them in improving their productivity. The beneficiaries said that trainings have helped them to change from dependency by improving their leadership ability. It has also increased their social values and encouraged self-confidence in rural communities. The trainings also helped in increasing their self-employment capacities because beneficiaries claim that, they are now able to multiply their own seeds. They have been trained in new methods to cultivate crops and conserving scarce resources like water. They were also taught such skills as bookkeeping and marketing of the products and adaptation to the impact of climate change, such as drought, floods, deforestation and soil degradation.

Some beneficiaries however complained about the intensity of the course which they found strenuous, hence, the information overload outcry. They also pointed out that it is impossible for people who are old, illiterate and sick to grasp entirely new concepts within a limited period of time.

Although the government has professionals especially in the ministry of agriculture who are expected to take over when NGOs leave or complement the training to beef it up; to date, they have not contributed in training the beneficiaries in this project. Thus it seems to the beneficiaries, that the government is not totally engaged in this

project. The government officials concur that NGOs are the major players in training the beneficiaries.

4.4.3 Lack of commitment of beneficiaries

Some beneficiaries indicated that among them there was lack of commitment which manifests in lack of communication and negative attitude. This demoralises others who are committed. The beneficiaries forget crucial information such as dates and venues for project meetings which is a demonstration of lack of commitment. There are also others who are selfish and do not want to communicate information with others. There was also bitterness that others collect packages of project inputs such as seeds, fertilisers that do not belong to them on distribution days. It is however appreciated that the NGO`s intervention made an enormous change in their fields.

Data revealed that when government officials who are supposed to guide beneficiaries are disorganized and cannot perform effectively because of their attitude, then sustainability hangs on the line. It seemed to be difficult to have tightly monitored operations on the part of the government officials to help beneficiaries to sustain their project, because of their attitude resulting in sustainability hanging in the balance.

4.4.3 Adequacy and timeliness of funding

In terms of timeliness and time allowed for the project, the data gathered from some participants revealed that time was adequate to bring successful results but it needed the enthusiasm of the beneficiaries. Still on the issue of adequate funding and its timeliness some beneficiaries indicated that, “the funding did not come on

time,” and proper arrangements could have been made for them to get the number of chicken which they were promised.

Similarly on the issue of funding, data showed that the funding was adequate to yield required results, but some respondents revealed that they got less than what they were promised. Since they had not been warned to expect less this made them suspect corruption among the NGO officials which made them feel cheated. On the poultry section of the project, beneficiaries were never clear if funding had been adequate or not because they were told that each household was going to be given five chickens but were given three which is grossly inadequate.

4.4.4 Challenges faced by the project

The study also sought to find out what respondents viewed to be challenges facing the project and a number of challenges were pinpointed. Firstly, the educational level of most of the beneficiaries posed a challenge as they could not understand concepts easily. It has become apparent that beneficiaries because of their educational level cannot internalise the knowledge delivered in training sessions. Secondly, animals and pests destroyed food in the fields making the project encounter drawbacks, especially at night animals and it was also reported that thieves also steal from the fields. One of the beneficiaries claimed that they experienced huge number of armyworm due to excess water because of climatic changes. Thirdly, people did not keep seeds for the next season because they consumed them. Beneficiaries elaborated by giving a case of a young man who was stealing potato seeds from his grandfather’s storeroom, and ate all of them. Some sell their seeds and come back for more. Others claim that they need more seeds as

they have several fields but eventually there will be no evidence of the expanse of land that is equivalent to the amount of seed sourced.

Fourthly, beneficiaries feel that, there is no convincing strategy for beneficiaries to fully participate while there is also an element of wrong targeting in appointing the beneficiaries. This emanates from wrongful classification of beneficiaries and their needs. There is for example an element of corruption and nepotism from leaders who are involved in appointing beneficiaries. Lastly, data showed that there is also lack of government support and proper infrastructure to allow easy movement from one place to the other. The project manager indicated that:

The topography of the country is also a challenge because if they are visiting the farmers at their homes it takes time for them to arrive or visit house by house because of the terrain which makes places inaccessible by car.

Most significantly the laziness of the beneficiaries reported by some of the beneficiaries and project managers is retarding the progress of the project. This is worrying because beneficiaries are key players in the project. This was confirmed when one official observed that: *moketa ho tsosoa o itekang (it's easy to help someone who is trying)*.

4.5 Lesotho irrigation project (LIP)

Care, like most NGOs responded to the highly challenging food situation of subsistence farmers in rural villages in Lesotho. It developed irrigation schemes in Mafeteng district which is in the southern part of the Lesotho, in a village called Malea-lea. The aim of the project was to add more value to the agriculture and food

security activities under the Lesotho Priority Support Program (PSP). Farmers in this project farm maize and vegetables for food security reasons. The village is approximately 70 kilometres from the capital town Maseru. The place is semi-urban and very mountainous, with limited access to the productive resources like water and land. The village is among other villages which are affected badly by food insecurity. It has in the past been supported by several food security projects from other NGOs and government.

The village has a very high level of vulnerability. The main challenge was their lack of household productive assets, apart from land for cultivation. The poor farmers have at least 1 to 1.5 acres of farming land per household. Farming in this village is a main source of food and income; with almost 70% of the villagers depending on agriculture.

The village has about 100 households which have about 160 people, of which 98 are females and 62 are males. More than half of the houses are made of mud and they do not have electricity. Most people in this village are not educated although there are government schools close by with both primary and high schools. The villagers are categorized as poor vulnerable farmers.

4.5.1 Demographical data

4.5.1.1 Age of the beneficiaries

14% of the participants' ages range from 30-35. The next age range was 40-45, which was 23% of the respondents. Those between the ages of 50-55 were 19% followed by 65 to 70 years age group which constituted 14%.

4.5.1.2 Gender of the beneficiaries

The dominating participants in the project were males at 57%, while the remaining 33% were females.

4.5.1.3 Educational level

A total of 57% of beneficiaries were illiterate. 29% of the beneficiaries had only been to primary school, of which the majority did not complete that level of education either. There were also indications that 9% had been to high school but also did not complete. Only one beneficiary managed to finish education. One participant had a degree but did not have much interest in the project as he had his energies focused on job hunting.

4.5.1.4 Marital status

Most participants were married and these constituted 38%. Their attendance was stable and consistent because they had partners to back them up by doing home tasks while they were at the project, whereas some of the participants were on their own. However, 29% of the participants were widowed, 19% have never been married while 14% were divorced.

4.5.1.5 Occupation

It was revealed that 62% of the beneficiaries of the projects were farmers; their livelihoods depended fully on farming. This information gave the researcher the impression that the strategies and procedures of the project were easily understood by the respondents. The other 4 participants representing 19% had opted to have small businesses which would help them to survive and add value to what they were getting from the project. The remaining 14% of the participants were house wives who were not formally employed but just taking care of the household on a daily basis.

4.5.1.6 Government and Project Managers

The study established the age, gender, positions and academic qualifications of all project managers and government officials. The main purpose being that, ages and qualification give a better understanding of the kind of experience officials have in their fields. Participants were mostly males still in the active age category of between 35 and 45; this is the age range with the most effective workers. Only one government official was over 60 years and with rich experience. The qualifications of the other respondents were very high ranging from diploma up to masters' level. The researcher had high expectations of positive results because of the qualification of the participants. This level of education shows that the decisions made in the project were informed and would help the beneficiaries to reap high yields from the project.

4.5 Sustainability of the Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP)

In reaction to the issue of sustainability, one project manager pointed out that: *they start by involving all relevant stakeholders especially the government ministries and*

beneficiaries. They do this in order to be in line with government strategies of sustainable livelihood. They also use government policies in their project to make sure that they are always on the right side of the law. He explained that the irrigation policy is controlled by the ministry of agriculture, with the department of crops coordinating all irrigation development in the country. On the basis of this, NGOs cannot talk about irrigation without the ministry knowing what they are doing. He went on to clarify that, all these contribute to sustainability because if NGOs are out of line, the government can call off their project. However, if it meets the requirements and standards put in place by the government, its success will be supported fully by the government and therefore there will be sustainability.

The project managers and government officials also agreed that the project exhibited the aspect of sustainable development. They claimed that their responsibility was to ensure that the project is adequate for the activities planned and that it is environmentally friendly. They also had to make sure that it did not interfere with the beneficiaries` day to day lives. Additionally, in this project, the concerned NGO ensured that sustainability was possible through the availability of water from the river. Thus, the only thing which could stop the functioning of the project is when the river has no water. As such, the rest is in the beneficiaries` hands to make sure that they sustain the project with the skills they have been given.

When one of the government officials was asked the same question on sustainability, he elucidated that: *people are given access to assets like tools, and are trained to use and take of them. They are trained towards sustainable development and to be self reliant.* So if they use all the skills and resources that they have been given, they can sustain the project after withdrawal of funding.

The government officials and project managers also confirmed that the NGO provided infrastructure, built on basic marketing principles and taught sustainable agricultural techniques. It also gives continuous training to strengthen the community's ability to develop and adhere to operations and maintenance plans.

The beneficiaries said that, they attended trainings that the NGO holds for them and then put what they have learned in practice. They also pointed out that they do the tasks given to them to implement and sustain the project after the withdrawal of NGOs funding. Beneficiaries claimed that they participated passionately in the project by collecting stones, carrying pipes to the project site while some of them were building the water tank. The beneficiary participants added that they cooperated fully with the project workers to ensure that the project succeeds. Beneficiaries attended NGO's public gathering where they were advised about proper irrigation. As a step forward, beneficiaries decided to have a representative committee which will always communicate with the NGO and set meeting dates to discuss the way forward.

Beneficiaries went on to say that after having a representative committee, they decided on their working schedule and chose what to do first. Building a tank was the main idea, so they divided responsibility that men will collect the stones to the identified area and do the building, while women collected water to the same area. However, 30% of beneficiaries were not clear on how the project will be like after the funding had stopped. On the other hand Project Managers explained that a feasibility study was undertaken at the project site to identify potential water points, the risks to implementation and sustainability. All the relevant stakeholders were involved such as irrigation engineers and relevant ministries to ensure that the design and systems

adheres to government standards and policies. Participants were also involved from the onset so all these are the signs that the project will still be sustainable.

The government official stated that, the NGOs comes up with the strategies and the proposals of what they want to do, and then the ministry looks at it and suggests a few ideas from their background knowledge. The government does not altogether change what they have proposed. It can suggest certain modifications just to align the project to policy. From there, the government can decide if the proposal falls under the sustainable development or food security sector so that the officials can be able to look at the project based on its sector which is governed by a particular policy. *“...But the funder plays the major role, we only may intervene where they need experts.”*

He also pointed out that, in most projects they collaborate with the NGOs. But in some cases they give the NGO a chance to work with the community so that they do not confuse them. One of the government officials said that the ministry has the responsibility to make sure that there is a smooth relationship between the NGOs and the community. Another government officer added that, the ministry has extension officers in different districts that help in the project when they are needed. After the withdrawal of the NGOs the ministry visits the site of the project to hold workshops, motivate the beneficiaries and assure them of government support when it is needed. But unfortunately this had not yet happened in this project.

The study also sought to establish what the respondents had planned in terms of sustainability of the project in the future. Most beneficiaries and project managers thought that self determination can be the solution to sustainability of the project after funding had stopped. They argued that the project can be sustained through hard

work, use of the knowledge and skills they have acquired from training and dedication to the project. They also pointed out that it is possible to sustain the project if people can do away with laziness, negative attitudes towards the projects and have a positive outlook. The project will likely be sustainable even when the NGO pulls out. But others pointed out that not everyone is interested in the sustainability of the project especially those who have other means of living. The targeting problem needed to be solved so that it will never negatively affect the project.

The Project Managers elaborated that: they try as much as possible to build from what the beneficiaries know, to what they don't know so that the project can become sustainable. This is one of the difficult issues because one cannot measure whether a person is committed to ensure sustainability but managers can only assume. The climatic aspects are also contributing factors as one cannot predict what will happen in future. Another manager said that: "from what the NGO has ensured that there will always be sustainability because there will be water from the river at all times. What can stop them is when the river has no water, so the rest is in the hands of the beneficiaries to make sure that they sustain the project with the skills they have been given. However, the government officials felt that the community should claim ownership of the project, working hard and not wait for free-handouts. The NGOs were urged to reconsider their strategies as they seem to bring an element of dependency than independence."

The government official also argued that sustainability cannot be guaranteed, because NGOs are providing people with everything. They give them everything. If beneficiaries were expected to pay a certain amount or produce a certain percentage

of their crops after harvesting to the NGO, maybe this could have helped to pick the most serious and determined beneficiaries. It was difficult to select those who are committed from those who are not. If a percentage payment was introduced perhaps those who are not serious would not have not been involved.

With regard to the benefits of the project, the beneficiaries claimed that, the project will not only benefit one individual but the whole community and it will add value to the economy of the country. Furthermore, the goals of the project have been achieved to some extent because people have been given some survival means. People have also been equipped with skills to implement and take control of their assets. In line with this topic, government and NGO officials added that the goals of the project have been achieved and they will not only benefit the present generation but the future generations as well. They also clarified that beneficiaries were also equipped with environmental protection skills to yield the desired benefits. They consider it as a means of poverty alleviation since it gives them the skills for survival. Finally, the government official was brief and to the point when explaining the point saying that, the project is providing people with what they need so that they cannot misuse the natural resources.

The same question was put to the managers and in response one of them reported that, the environment must be used in such a way that beneficiaries would not compromise what the future generation will be getting from it. Each and every benefit should benefit the same now as in the future.

4.6 Factors affecting the sustainability of Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP)

The study also sought to establish how this project was initiated since this is important in determining the sustainability of the project. In order to bring this to light the respondents were asked if they were involved in initiating the project. 65% of the beneficiaries stated that the project was initiated by the NGO while others claimed that both the NGO and the community initiated the project. The project managers were asked how the project was initiated. One manager elucidated that, they did a baseline study, in addition to the study it became apparent that because of the availability of water the project can be sustained at that particular village. This idea was then discussed and agreed with the villagers. The NGO supplied the beneficiaries with pipes to pump water from the river to the tank which the NGO had helped them to build. The water is used to irrigate the fields. The main purpose of the project is to have sustainable agriculture that will improve and sustain the lives of the beneficiaries.

In relation to the same question another government official observed that most of the projects are initiated by the NGOs, they normally write proposals to the donors to ask for funding. The same proposals are the ones they use to implement the projects in the fields. Most of the proposals are done in offices without any thorough research; they are mostly based on speculations.

4.6.1 Involvement of Beneficiaries

The respondents exposed the fact that they did not have a say in the project. The NGO did all the planning. They revealed that they only participated in it because they are poor and they feel they need to appreciate the privileges given to them. They also pointed out that they are only involved in the execution part of the project.

One beneficiary complained that:

We registered because they wanted to be helped. The NGO did everything from planning till the last stage. We were involved only when it comes to the hard working.

In addition, they claimed that there is no transparency as they do not know how much money was allocated to the project and how it is used. They indicated that they were afraid to ask about finances because they felt that the project might be withdrawn from them if they ask too many questions. One beneficiary from the focus group explained that:

The funding issues were not so clear to us as how much the donor has given to the project. The transparency in planning and setting out objectives from our point of view was clear but they were not so clear on finances.

The NGO thus did all the planning, what the beneficiaries did was work. It seems the concerned NGO in this district never asked if this is the kind of project people wanted. In light of this, the beneficiaries' involvements are determined by the needs of the donor.

The Project Manager disclosed that, the proposals are done without involving the beneficiaries. The proposed idea is introduced to them and it is then, they get involved in the planning for the implementation of the idea. Managers put together schedules and work plans of the projects. Beneficiaries communicate their knowledge of their seasonal calendars which makes the work much easier.

4.6.2 Training

The study also sought to establish the nature of training that was carried out to empower the beneficiaries. Reacting to this question, the beneficiaries agreed that, they have been in one of the training sessions which were very short and they did not totally understand what they should do. Beneficiaries' revealed that they were trained, in bookkeeping, constitution making, plan of action, ways of borrowing money and fund rising. Moreover, the beneficiaries revealed that they were trained when to plant the seeds, where to use available infrastructure and resources and how to get their products in to the market and how to take a very good care of the environment. They were also taught disaster risk reduction, environmental management, livelihoods/income generation, natural resource management. In addition the project manager pointed out that during training they give the beneficiaries a chance to take full control of the project while they are just overseeing and evaluating.

The same question was directed to government officials and in response they said that most training entails active skills development which allows the beneficiaries to fully take part in the execution of the project. He also disclosed that, they have workshops with farmers, but so far they have not done anything specifically for this project.

4.6.3 Adequacy and timeliness of funding

The study also endeavoured to obtain information on whether the project had adequate and timely funding. The respondents were not sure of the funding, since they do not know whether the funding was appropriately allocated to the project. But they confirmed that, the funding came on time because they never had to wait for it.

However, beneficiaries feel that the funding was not adequate because the NGOs lack enough resources and infrastructure, for example irrigation pipes did not cover the place they were intended to cover. The tank is also smaller than they had anticipated. They had managed to build the tank which only can take 400 000 litres of water while they had estimated they needed one that holds 1000 000 litres. They are only told by the project staff that funding is not enough as a result; the project did not yield results as expected.

The project manager pointed out that the project funding was not adequate because they did not finish what they had targeted; some of the equipment which was supposed to be replaced before they phased out was not replaced due to financial problems.

4.6.4 Challenges faced by the project

As an attempt to establish the challenges facing the project, respondents were asked what they considered these to be. The main problem facing the project is that people participate to receive extrinsic rewards. For example, when beneficiaries were asked to participate in building their tank they were asking the project managers if they were going to give them something for their participation, as if the tank was for the NGO yet it was meant to irrigate their fields. Generally, they do not see the long term benefits of sustained self reliance.

It has also been observed to be a challenge that some beneficiaries are sickly and at times fail to report for duties. The illnesses are related to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. This results in further complications when those who attend regularly complain of working for others. As a result, sometimes participants end up not committed and

turn their backs on the project. Furthermore, there were some challenges such as destructive cyclonic rains which destroy crops. In this case what happened was that there was too much rain that destroyed the crops in the fields and it never gave people a chance to remove the weeds.

Another challenge in this particular village is the attractive tourist industry which attracts young men who are potential farmers to offer their services as horseback guides thus competing with the project. They claim that it is better to be at the lodge because tourists give them some money every day. In addition to these challenges, the project manager narrated the problems they encounter in the field saying that they are pinned down by transport challenges for visits, and for general funding of equipment. They feel it is important that the government assists especially in transport. The project managers added that the educational level of the beneficiaries also became a great challenge as most of the beneficiaries could not easily grasp concepts in training as quickly as expected. When concepts were communicated fast due to time, the beneficiaries became frustrated and felt demoralized and finally could lose hope in the whole project.

Moreover managers were challenged by beneficiaries who are not committed to the project, who disappear during the time for intensive labour on the project but when the project was up and running they came back in great numbers. This disturbed the planning. Additionally, the government had other schemes in the same area such as food for work or money projects. Since people wanted short term yields they ran to the government project and neglected the other one. Some people reportedly said they could not be on this project where they are asked to collect stones for building the tank, but would rather be on the one which gave them direct and ready food.

4.7 Summary

This chapter presented data collected from the field; the data was collected from two different projects run by different NGOs through the use of face to face interviews and focus groups. The participants were beneficiaries, government officials and the project managers.

Beneficiaries acknowledged that there has been helpful training offered by NGO officials, but they added that training without enough funding is not enough. Data has also revealed several challenges faced by the project such as participants' low level of education, negative attitude of the some beneficiaries, animals and worms destroying the crops, people eating their seeds, wrong targeting of the beneficiaries and lack of government support. In addition there was the challenge that most beneficiaries were showing an element of laziness in active participation of tasks of the project and had a high interest in freebies.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the findings presented in the previous chapter; the data presented was collected from two different Non Governmental Organisation Projects in two districts in Lesotho. Both projects aim at alleviating poverty through sustainable agriculture. The discussion is based on the two major main themes of the study, namely: assessing the sustainability of NGOs interventions in poverty alleviation programs in the rural communities, and unravelling issues and factors which contribute to the collapse of development projects. The main thrust of the chapter was to reconcile findings to existing knowledge bringing to fold the insights learned from the research process in respect of the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to interrogate whether or not poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho are sustainable.

5.2 Demographics

It was evident from the data obtained from respondents of the two projects that both male and female beneficiaries were involved in food security matters because they are the bedrock of livelihood. Females constituted the higher percentage in Improved Agricultural Project for Vulnerable Households (IAPVH). This was similar to the observation by International Labour Organisation (1997) which revealed that beneficiaries in most cases are women because of their higher number in the population. Women are also particularly affected by the unemployment problem in developing countries. It also emerged from data that women are the ones who care for the children and have direct responsibility to the children's' welfare. As a result it is women who are stressed when children have no food resources (Gregory and

Hunter, 1995; Mahammed, 2006; Ogunlela and Makhtar, 2009). The situation was different in Lesotho Irrigation Project (LIP) where the majority of the beneficiaries were men. However what was striking was that most of these were over the age of 65 to 70 and were married. It was possible that these were men beyond the employable age range and thus could only find solace in this self help projects. Related literature confirms that old people work few hours than the younger ones so they cannot easily be employed (Smeaton and McKay, 2003). Büsch (2004) added that, young people are faster and more effective than the older ones. Older people refuse to do some of the tasks given to them due to their lack of self-confidence (Phillipson and Smith, 2005).

The study revealed that the majority of beneficiaries in both projects were illiterate. Very few had finished their primary school, while others had never been to school at all. Fritschel and Mohan (2001) revealed that lack of education of the beneficiaries resulted in having millions of agricultural development and food security projects in developing countries getting defunct. Reports from previous studies also confirmed that, there is a connectedness between poverty and education. Further it was observed that better education of the beneficiaries can yield positive results on poverty alleviation projects (Vally 1998; Preece 2005; Akoojee & McGrath, 2006).

Walingo (2006) noted that strong background of education and poverty reduction strategies can help individuals to choose and expand their resources in order to improve their livelihoods. It has been confirmed that there is a need for adult education and for those who never went to school to be educated to enable them to participate effectively and efficiently in development projects (Appleton, 2001). Fields (1999); Teal, (2001) concluded that, the most effective tool to reduce poverty is a

powerful education because it helps people to become optimistic, empowers them with different skills and gives them control over their lives in terms of having several options (UNESCO, 1997).

On the same issue, it is also important to note that the government officials and project managers have high qualifications in terms of education with the majority of them having post graduate degrees. It is, therefore, clear that people involved in poverty alleviation projects have the minimum qualifications set for recruitment. Mmabengwa, Gundidza, Groenewald and Van Schalkwyk (2009) confirm that level of education can have an effect on service delivery. Given that the project managers and the government monitoring officers' educational level is very high, one may conclude that their service delivery is expected to be effective during the project implementation up to the last stage.

Research carried out by Kganyago (2008) confirms that educated people understand much better and faster than the uneducated and can easily adopt concepts. Education forms an important part of the poverty alleviation projects as it helps people to see and utilize possible opportunities which will enable them to alleviate their poverty (Agenor, Bayraktar and Aynaoui 2004: UNDP, 2006). Cloete (2009:4) reports that "there are significant returns to education as reflected in average earnings". He shows that individuals who complete metric (grade 12) have earnings that which, at the mean, are between 40% and 70% higher than individuals with less schooling.

5.3 The goals of Poverty Alleviation Programs

The concept of poverty alleviation was clarified by World Bank (2001) that the major objective of poverty alleviation projects is to achieve a sustainable development which depends on the decision that the present generations take in relation to the environment, social and economic outlook. The consideration of the needs of the future generation can enable the sustainability as the resources will be used effectively. The European Commission Agriculture Directorate-General (2001:4) confirmed that,

Sustainable development is about ensuring that a certain welfare level can be sustained over time. This requires that combinations of various forms of capital stocks are available for production and consumption: natural, human and man-made capital.

Proper strategies and policies should be put in place, community potentials should be improved and all relevant stakeholders should take part in decision making in the context of sustainable development (Sen, 1999: Barboza, 2000). Based on the above thinking, it is therefore important to note that improvement of people's skills form an integral part of sustainable development as it has been emphasised as the anchor in livelihood approaches.

The study also observed that the majority of the beneficiaries were aware of the concept of sustainable development especially the fact that, the project had an impact in their lives. It was also evident from both projects' beneficiaries that both present and future generations should get the same benefits from the environment. Similarly, Young and Hamshire (2000) observed that sustainable development in the

perspective of poverty alleviation projects is the prolonging of the project after the withdrawal of donors support. This is a view that supports efforts by all stakeholders who engage in poverty alleviation. It is not workable in terms of future projections to create projects that cannot be maintained and nations have to repeatedly respond to emergency calls from the same region or country.

In a study carried out by Asieda in (2000) on poverty reduction among urban poor in Accra, Ghana titled: *A Comparative Study of the Role of the Community based Organisation*, it was confirmed that, there is a possibility of sustainability in poverty alleviation project. The results showed that 85% of his respondents were keen on sustaining the project, while 15% strongly believed that sustainability depended on the community determination and was therefore a worthwhile endeavour. These results are in line with the concept of new collaboration discussed in the previous chapter which emphasises the need for collaboration among relevant stakeholders in poverty alleviation issues.

Another study conducted by Mayakiso, Barr and Makhalane (2009) revealed that most beneficiaries of a sustainable projects have said that there is a high possibility of projects being sustainable. Their conclusion was based on the fact that beneficiaries were equipped with skills, knowledge and resources. Similarly, the community and stakeholders support can help them to maintain the project. The idea of equipping people with skills, knowledge and resources so that they can sustain their livelihoods are in line with the sustainable livelihoods approach. This is also supported by data on previous chapter about working together in projects.

European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (2010) indicated that it is the responsibility of the beneficiaries to make sure that they include sustainability in

everything they plan for the project. They should structure the project in such a way that it has sustainability as its anchor in all the stages of the project. This is very powerful for the study because when beneficiaries have sustainability as a philosophical orientation, their ideas will be in tandem with the other stakeholder partners who are the NGOs and government officers. This kind of thinking makes a singleness of purpose that makes a formidable team bound to succeed in all its endeavours.

The orientation and foundational philosophy of sustainability which the beneficiaries were taught and had a tight grip of was in line with the sustainability theory. The theory spells out the necessity for communities to strive for income generating enterprises that not only sustain families but do so for generations to come. Adam (2006) claims sustainable development theory concentrate on three major aspects which are inseparable. The three aspects are; (i) the economic needs which relate to the necessity that people ought to have reliable, consistent and adequate sources of income, (ii) the social which entails people having stable lives where they can maintain their cultural values and norms without upheaval or threat, (iii) the environment should be kept intact and maintained in such a way that it remains productive for many years so that future generations can benefit from it.

The basic needs can be provided by the project enterprises - the people who are in need engage in. That means in terms of the economic factor, the project has to give the beneficiaries enough revenue to survive on. Socially the beneficiaries have to be able to live uninterrupted lives with a social network of supportive people they choose to associate with. The environment on the other hand is expected to yield resources the beneficiaries require for a balanced fulfilled livelihood. It is important to

understand that in order to achieve total sustainability, especially in terms of the economic growth; this can be achieved through income generation.

It can, therefore, be deduced from the data collected that the possibility of success for the beneficiaries in these two projects was in step with the goals and targets set by all the tripartite partners. It was therefore reasonable to expect the projects to proceed as planned by the project funders and that the sustainability of the projects was definitely promising.

However, it is also important to note that both projects were not without challenges. An issue of concern was the incompatibility between the short and long term objectives of sustainable development. In short term objectives, sustainability becomes mostly unachievable because poor people who depend heavily on natural resources cannot have enough time for regeneration because of their poverty situation. Even though they know the importance of regeneration of resources, that it can bring better life for all generations but they cannot easily do it (World Bank, 2001). For example, when one considers resources such as water which if dammed or kept in tanks can last for many generations, because it gets renewed as rivers flow in and rains repeatedly fall. This is in line with what Mercer (2002) considers as the responsibility of the NGOs to teach and encourage the poor to store their food grain. It is possible to secure this resource if there is foresight and political willingness on the part of the beneficiaries. This is supported by (Devlet Planlama Orgutu, 2004).

It is also true that the environment can be maintained in a clean unpolluted state so that people breathe in air free from man-made industrial pollutants. However even from small economic enterprises like the self-help projects investigated in the study,

it is possible to pollute the environment by burning bush to clear the land. This does not only pollute the air but destroys trees that replenish oxygen and keep a balance of the eco system. It also destroys the animals in a reckless unproductive way. It is therefore important to teach beneficiaries about the benefits of keeping the environment clean and safe for the sake of sustainability. In these projects, a number of factors were put forward by participants to show that the projects exhibit some aspects of sustainability. It is clear that beneficiaries were trained in agricultural activities and how to use minimum resources at the same time maintaining and producing to capacity.

In terms of training, the majority of beneficiaries acknowledged that they had been taught how to take care of their environment for the sake of sustainability. Beneficiaries expected to pass on such values and skills to the next generations. These would be in the form of environment balancing efforts, such as when the eco-system was not unnecessarily disturbed and avoiding doing anything that makes the environment dysfunctional. The training gave the community some courage to adhere to sustainability fostering operations and maintain their agricultural activities.

The results of the study disclosed that, beneficiaries were equipped with some crucial basic skills and equipment. The skills included horticultural specialization such as compost-making, garden bed making, seedling and nursery tending, watering and harvesting techniques. It also included intense commercial farming training bookkeeping, marketing capacity building and conservational agriculture. In terms of assets, the following were made available; water tank, gardening tools such as; watering cans, hand and digging forks. What beneficiaries got from their trainings reflected aspects of sustainable development, empowerment and sustainable

livelihoods. Mudau, Mogorosi and Thabede (2005) confirmed that beneficiaries needed basic skills and expertise so that the project can succeed. These skills and expertise must be easy to foster within the communities that support the projects hence the need for training. The skills include the incorporation of the project management, fundraising, financial management and basic bookkeeping. Equipping people with skills is also a distinctive element of empowerment approach.

Above all, beneficiaries were taught how save money for the future and were equipped with some skills which if they used very well could help them to sustain their poverty alleviation project. The theory of empowerment emphasizes on the importance of skills and knowledge of the community in order to sustain their livelihoods. It also demonstrates they are effective in the creation of sustainable poverty alleviating enterprise (Williams et al., 1994). Another crucial aspect in the sustainability of these projects is monitoring.

Monitoring is an ongoing and continuous process that ensures that the implementation of the plan agreed on proceeds smoothly as intended. Support designers in the government departments and NGO experts in partnership keep an eye on the step by step development of the projects (Zepeda, 2006). The visits are constant so that if anything unexpected occurs it is curbed before it spreads. They introduce strategic modifications to the plan if it should become necessary. These officers actually make regular supervisory visits to the project sites and engage with the beneficiaries. Their supervisory activities include but are not limited to formative assessment. The formative aspect is made of in-service clinics that involve on-site demonstrations done and practised by beneficiaries. These update and enrich the co-operators elevating their knowledge from mere peasantry subsistence operations

to semi-commercial simple technology implementing enterprises (Kuseka and Rist, 2004).

Human capital theory urges organisations to invest in human capital like any other investment project. The theory compliments and cements the sustainability and empowerment theories. The theory works on the premise that educated or skill trained individuals contribute effectively to a project or organisation than untrained people (Shavit and Muller, 2000; Bell and Stevenson, 2006; Johansson & Adams, 2004). In light of this theory, training the project beneficiaries was an imperative to get the project to become viable as an economic investment. That is because the beneficiaries would be able to show commitment to the project, understand the reasoning behind the activities they are made to do and the philosophical orientations that are crucial such as sustainable development (Boninelli and Meyer, 2011). According to Lopez (2005) human capital assets are regarded as the most important feature of production and economic growth. Human capital is naturally said to increase the economies, if the human assets and physical assets are well balanced sustainability will possibly grow, especially in the context of social equality.

The livelihood approach also emphasises supporting people and improving their assets and their capabilities. The approach closely considers taking care of other external factors which may hold back the development, and encourages solutions rather than withdrawal (Carney, 1999). In the two projects it was found out that marketing principles were included in the training offered to the beneficiaries. The beneficiaries were expected to produce more in order to sustain their families' needs and if possible to venture into business of selling their surplus products. Their marketing skills were expected to help them. This is in line with Mayakiso, Barr and

Makhalane (2009) who pointed out that local market is sometimes not reliable so it can have a negative impact on sustainability of the projects if they relied on it.

The findings of the study have shown that the goals of both projects are in line with the goals of sustainable development. The project manager(s) indicated that projects were based on the framework of sustainable development with the hope that beneficiaries would be able to sustain their livelihoods after the NGOs withdrawal. It was also identified that sustainable development is about ensuring that things last long. It was observed in this study that the projects helped beneficiaries to increase their production and changed their lives for the better which is one of the objectives of sustainable development.

According to Robert, Kates, Thomas, Parris, Anthon, and Leiserowitz, (2005) one of the major objectives of sustainable development is to reduce poverty by half and to ensure worldwide primary school education by 2015. This was said to be possible because of official aid flows under UN to the developing countries. It is also relevant to demonstrate that the skills and knowledge offered also empowered people who were involved. It built on their capacity, enabled them to be self-managed and self-reliant in their own projects which is one of the objectives of empowerment theory.

It emerged from data gathered that beneficiaries were trained by NGO officials in several activities and were expected to put in practice what they have learned. Johnson, Lilja and Ashby (2003) noted that it is important to improve the skills of the farmers in order to have good results. Beneficiaries draw a timetable and allocate tasks according to individual capabilities so that they can sustain the projects. Similarly, from the perspective of the project managers, the results reflect that feasibility studies were undertaken at the project sites to identify potential

beneficiaries, water points and the risks to the implementation and sustainability. Throughout the whole process relevant stakeholders such as ministries were involved to ensure that the design and systems adhered to government standards and policies.

The findings of both projects show that beneficiaries participated wholeheartedly and were involved in the project tasks. It is important to note that the findings confirm the idea that community participation is an integral part of Non-Governmental Organization projects based on development of poor communities. Beneficiary participation is seen as a way of cutting unnecessary costs to projects. It is easy through community participation to get beneficiaries to commit to providing labour and free publicity of the project as beneficiaries can share information amongst themselves and community members (Arrossi, Bomborolo, Harday, Mitlin, Coscio and Satterthwaite, 1995). Even though, beneficiary participation is seen to be so crucial, it is not without challenges. There are some members of the project who failed to participate due to ill-health, care giving duties to vulnerable family members and old age. The findings of the study concurs with those of International Labour Organization (2004) which observed that, most workers are directly and indirectly affected by HIV and AIDS, many of them stop working because of being sick especially in developing countries. It is possible that the same number will not be able to work because of care duties (International Labour Organization, 2004).

Project Managers seemed to be convinced that they had provided all they could and had put reasonable precautions to help beneficiaries to sustain their projects after the withdrawal of funding. Based on this information, it may not be unreasonable to say that there seemed to be lack of convincing evidence to beneficiaries, which

could have given them enough courage to believe that the NGO had done enough for them. It emerged that, lack of communication was not only a problem between the project managers and beneficiaries, but even amongst beneficiaries. There was also lack of communication between beneficiaries because there were some with negative attitudes and this demoralised others who were passionately participating.

In this study, beneficiaries strongly agreed that the projects intervention especially training sections had contributed enormously to positive changes in their lives which they wanted to sustain. Research carried out by Makhalane (2009) on the Assessment of factors contributing to the sustainability of poverty relief projects in the Eastern Cape, confirmed that there is a need for resources like finance and assets to compliment skills and knowledge in order to have sustainable projects. In addition, it was discovered that NGOs for the sake of sustainability engaged several ministries especially the Ministry of agriculture in all their activities of poverty alleviation, with the purpose of making sure that beneficiaries work closely with the government extension officers whenever they encountered problems. They thus opened the eyes of the beneficiaries about the duties of extension officers and as well as how they could be accessed.

5.4 Contributing factors towards sustainability of the projects

Data obtained from respondents revealed that, beneficiaries were aware of how the projects came into being; they had been recruited as a response to government concern of high food prices and drought. In addition, government wanted to mitigate the adverse effects of HIV/AIDS pandemic on the vulnerable sections of society especially in the IAPVH project. It was evident that respondents also participated in the base line research which was conducted by NGOs before the implementation of

the project. There was also a public meeting where people were given a chance to participate and share their knowledge with the NGOs before the initial implementation. This shows that beneficiaries contributed to the initiation of the project.

Arrossi et al., (1995) noted that effective participation in development projects is the one which engages the beneficiaries of the project in the decision making process. This gives beneficiaries a chance to discuss how to use resources and how to choose them. Beneficiaries can be in a position to identify their roles and those of other stakeholders. If beneficiaries are consulted on how to solve their challenges they can be able to suggest how they want their challenges to be solved. They can for example gain capacity to solve their own problems and manage, execute, control as well as evaluate the projects that empowers them to improve livelihoods. It is clear that the community's participation improved the self-esteem of individuals and households.

Walingo (2006) noted that for a program to be successful it should involve its beneficiaries from planning to the implementation stage. He added that, In order for a project to achieve its objectives fully, it is necessary to make sure that beneficiaries are aware and understand the objectives. The beneficiaries should also be fully guided on how to achieve them. On the other hand, poverty alleviation projects are enthusiastically acknowledged when they address the basic needs of target communities. They are also accredited when they improve the living conditions of the villagers and allow them to participate in other planned activities (Tarayana Foundation and Ministry of Agriculture and Forests (TF, MAFT) 2010).

Data from the study revealed that the LIP project started with the intention to alleviate the effect of drought. The NGO supplied the beneficiaries with pipes to pump water from the river to a tank which the NGO had helped them to build. The water is used to irrigate the fields. The main purpose of the project was to have sustainable agriculture that would improve and sustain the lives of the beneficiaries.

5.4.1 Beneficiaries' involvement in the project

It appears that beneficiaries and project managers agreed that the beneficiaries are part of decision making especially as regards the execution of the project. This finding is highlighted in chapter two where Nalinakumari and MacLean (2005) put emphasis on the collaboration of stakeholders in decision making processes. However beneficiaries were not satisfied by the resources they were given because they claimed that this was not fully communicated to them and they were not given a chance to choose. The results of the study thus are contrary to the view of human rights approach discussed in chapter two (UN,2002) which indicates that, in order to uplift people there is a need to create a situation where they can freely express their feeling, so that they can productively engage in economic activities. This incident proves that policy becomes successful only when there is stakeholder ownership of initiatives and when the project reflects the needs and views of the participants (Ondrik, 1996).

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998) confirmed that donors have power over the decisions made by NGOs and beneficiaries, because of their financial muscle. Donors give conditions and spell out what should be done in projects. NGOs and beneficiaries have to abide by the choices and regulations set by the donors. This confirmed that, NGOs are donor driven; hence their final decisions are not from the

beneficiaries. The desperation of the beneficiaries makes them to accept any kind of help which comes their way even when their priorities are compromised. In both projects beneficiaries were not happy with the handling of resources because whatever they got was never their priority. This view is shared in chapter two where Nalinakumari and MacLean (2005) showed that NGOs are donor driven and sometimes donors' put conditions and restriction on their funds. This observation of disharmony on the ground is common and was also observed by Chambers and Conway (1992:4) who argue that "for many decades poverty has been defined and categorised by those who have never been affected by it. They apply top-down schemes to elicit data that fit into preset boxes."

Beneficiaries of Lesotho Irrigation project complained that the NGOs never considered their priorities while helping them. The rural people are the best judge of their experiences and the effective solutions to their problems, their priorities can best come from them. They can choose to implement projects according to their priority. This means the participants are the best people to change their own lives and ensure their sustainability (Korboe, 1998).

5.4.2 Training of the beneficiaries

According to Byars and Rue (2008:169) "training is a process that involves the acquisition of skills, concepts, rules or attitudes to enhance employee performance." Data from the respondents revealed that beneficiaries were trained in different areas which improved their productivity in both projects. However they complained that there was too much information in their training sections which they were expected to grasp within a very short period of time. The beneficiaries' indigenous knowledge and experience was taken into consideration by the project manager in their training

sessions. Beneficiaries were given a chance to explain which crops can be successful in which season and they also explained how they take care of weeds without using chemicals.

The government has professionals especially in the ministry of agriculture who were deployed to monitor the projects and sensitize the beneficiaries to follow the farming systems they had been taught. The officers were expected to take over when NGOs leave; but to date they have not contributed in follow up training of beneficiaries in these projects. This view is in line the views of Kyei (1999) discussed previously which state that lack of resources limits NGOs to do their work. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998) argued that, institutions like Department of Agriculture have serious responsibility to inject life to the projects by sending their front line workers to actively monitor the situation on the ground in the projects. However in this case, it seems like the government is totally disengaged in the projects. The findings of this study concur with the findings of Heymans (1998) who noted the there are problems which come as a result of incompetent government involvement in poverty projects, especially when it comes to the involvement of their professionals and their technical support. Most of this leads to deprived performances of projects. Newton's (2005:48) observations concur with the findings of the two projects on the fact that,

Poor management and a lack of appropriate methodologies to implement the projects may lead to extended periods of implementation before the desired outcomes are achieved. Also the development programmes and projects are impacted negatively by a lack of efficiency and effectiveness.

Rossown (2005) added that, training is part of empowerment as it enhances people's capabilities to improve their livelihoods. The improvements of the skills enable people to sustain and make the project successful. Ondrik (1996) on the other hand argued that, participation, planning and execution are one of the important mental goals which empower the participants. It also gives them chance to have a sense of ownership.

5.4.3 Adequacy and timeliness of funding

On the issue of funding, the data showed that in both projects the funding was not adequate because beneficiaries never got all they had been promised. Since they had not been warned to expect less input, this made them feel suspicious and cheated. This is in line with World Bank's (2001) which shows that several NGOs are involved in corruption and mismanagement of funds. However, Kwaw (2004) is of the view that information about issues which reveal the dissatisfaction of the beneficiaries on poverty alleviation projects is not published. That way the funding agents keep any scandals about funds secret. That is why not many people know about such issues and their impact to the beneficiaries.

In a study undertaken by Tshitangoni, Okorie and Francis (2010), in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province in South Africa, it was observed that 80% of the project participants indicated that they were not given enough funds. However, Kaw (2006) claims that it cannot be proven that inadequate funding can affect the performance of the project because the projects which were given enough funds have the same problems as those which have less funding.

5.5 Challenges encountered in the poverty alleviation project

The study revealed that the beneficiaries had different levels of understanding hence some could not use the knowledge acquired from training sessions because it was delivered fast within a short period of time. Some beneficiaries appeared to have been slow at appreciating new knowledge and would have needed more time to digest the new concepts. Furthermore, combining the old and the young to be in the same training sessions demoralised the youth who had to patiently wait for the old people to catch up. This is because the old and young had different paces of both physical and mental application. The young lost interest when one concept was repeated several times for the sake of the old. Tshitangoni, Okorie and Francis (2010), observed from their study that, the training which was conducted for beneficiaries seemed to have been very fast and inadequate. Due to this, the implementation of what they have been taught was difficult as they did not understand all of the concepts covered. Some of the participants were illiterate, and seemed to have promoted an element of dependency because they could not do anything on their own.

Another challenge that surfaced was the fact that animals and worms destroyed food in the fields making the project encounter drawbacks. Farmers were supposed to keep the plots under cultivation safe from threat of grazing animals as well as pests like the army worm. Unfortunately in one project cattle destroyed a whole field of crop. In yet another one, the army worm that moves on grass did not find a cleared patch round the field and so they attacked and wiped the plot out.

The study established that, some people do not keep seeds for next season but consume everything from previous season; this is because they do not have

sufficient income to sustain their lives. Related literature confirmed that the previous investigation by Surender and Van Niekerk (2008) who observed that project members' wanted funding to be made their individual income which they would not use to sustain the projects but rather use it for personal needs. The intention in such a case would be to completely rely on the start-up capital and not sustain projects hence the eventual collapse of the enterprise.

It was also evident from the findings that, there was an element of wrong targeting while appointing the beneficiaries, which resulted from a wrong classification of beneficiaries and their needs. It is important to note that when targeting of the beneficiaries is wrongly done, the project sustainability suffers (Hanson, Kara, Worrall, Eve and Wiseman, 2006). It is evident according to Cox, Healey, Hoebing, & Voipio (2000) that if a project has been planned properly, powerful targeting strategies will be employed. There is a need to make sure that all the parties involved are on the same level of understanding in order to avoid misunderstanding which may lead to early withdrawal of participants. Both parties should know what to expect from each other. If correct measures of selecting beneficiaries are not taken, wrong people may benefit from the project which is contrary to what intended. That means the resource meant for the poor will be wasted on rich people who have no intention and no reason to work on subsistence plots. In addition the sustainability of the project may be in danger because the wrong people netted may not have committed to the project. Hanson, Worrall, & Wiseman (2006) noted that right targeting can result in to effectiveness and efficiency of the use of funds, which may yield positive results of sustainability.

It is also true that the wrong targeting can be a deliberate move of the rural community elites who normally wants to serve their interests. Community leaders' politicians, chiefs also take advantage of the resources intended for the poor. They fictionalise beneficiaries and put the money or resources in their pockets or direct it to their relatives, friends and those who support them (Ali and Suleiman, 2009). The finding of the study also concurs with this data, which was also discussed in the previous chapter.

According to Walingo (2006) targeting includes the selection of those who are in need to benefit from the project; after their selection they should be part of all decision making of the project in order to be in a position to sustain it. That builds the commitment and enthusiasm of the beneficiaries. In cases where targeting schemes are used, there are some issues which are not straightened. In most of the schemes the issue of netting the correct bracket of beneficiary is not taken seriously. It is important to note that there are different categories of poverty, so when beneficiaries are selected they should be classified according to their categories, so that their needs will be properly and fairly met.

It is evident that if people of different categories are potential beneficiaries, they may not have the same aim towards the project. Those who are not really in need may not care about the sustainability of the project. At the same time the scheme may exclude those who are really in need, who in turn may feel cheated. When this happens people lose confidence in the project and to the NGOs as service providers (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005). When people feel cheated an element of corruption is usually involved and this concurs with the findings by Munene (2005) who found that part of funding never reached the intended beneficiaries.

On the same issues, beneficiaries feel like there is some kind of corruption and nepotism from officers who are involved in appointing beneficiaries. Tshitangoni, Okorie and Francis (2010) confirmed that there are several cases where there was an element of lack of transparency on the project management. However, financial issues seemed to be the most commonly mishandled but it was also difficult to control the situation because the beneficiaries are not always given chance to take part in decision making processes. This finding was confirmed by Bebbington (1997) who revealed that NGOs lack transparency especially in money related issues. Kganyago (2008:34) on the study titled, *The Impact of Poverty Alleviation Projects in Ga-Molepo area in Polokwane Municipality, Limpopo province* revealed that, “some projects fail not because the general recipients of assistance-financial or in-kind, from the government are incapable of sustaining the project, but fail due to the corruption of government officials who dispense this assistance.”

The data of the study confirmed findings of Social Surveys Africa (2006:31) that “a broad range of people appear to be involved in the planning and review of activities.” Data also showed that there is also lack of government support and proper infrastructure to allow easy movement from one place to the other. The finding is supported by Kaswamila and Masuruli, (2004) who claimed that over 72% of poverty alleviation beneficiaries do not have advisory services. They revealed that 90% of some beneficiaries in Tanzania, at Lunguza and Mbaramo villages never received services from agriculture extension services, and the extension officer was not regularly on duty.

Heymans (1998) also revealed that in Nigeria, Mali and Egypt there was not enough government support in terms of the services and proper planning to support the projects. All around the world governments are considered to be the back-bone of their countries and most of them aim at reducing poverty. However when a government is not supporting projects which aim at alleviating poverty, its capability remains questionable. On this issue Machete (2004) also claimed that in order for farming to be efficient, the government should strongly support the smallholders farmers through the services offered by well equipped extension officers who are specialists in that field. They should also provide, "*credit facilities, secure land tenure, modern technology, marketing and marketing infrastructure for the farmers* Machete (2004:7)." Nevertheless, Mmbengwa et al., (2009) explained that some of the extension officers never had perfect skills on marketing so it was difficult for them to equip the beneficiaries with such skills. This issue affected the beneficiaries badly because they needed those skills in order to sustain their products' marketing.

It was also clear that no matter how hard the extension officers try to work, there are always issues which frustrate them especially resources. The study carried by Kaswamila & Masuruli (2004) concurs with the findings of this study, which reflected that extension officers do not have sufficient transport to visit the agricultural sites.

Moreover there was evidence that laziness was the major problem among the beneficiaries. Some beneficiaries were missing during the execution, but later appeared from nowhere without valid explanations of why they had been away. This was more prevalent in the in LIP project, where most appeared after the tank was finished. Jensen and Dolberg (2003) noted that that it is often concluded that the poorest people are the laziest people in the world, who do not want to make an effort

to learn. They live under the shield of their status and make it the reason why they cannot change. Poorest people prefer living in poverty because there will always be an easy way out in donations Kyei (2000) in the study he conducted Ghana made the same discovery that people who are lazy do not care even if they have resources. Most of people who were found to be lazy were the alcoholics and drug addicts. Nonetheless, the findings from Bangladesh gave a different version of the whole idea of the poorest people. According Jensen and Dolberg (2003) the poorest people in that country are ready and positive about working hard to change their lives for the better. All they appeared to need was a chance to prove their determination.

Another major challenge in the findings of this study is that beneficiaries did not get all that they had been promised from the beginning of the project such as in the case OF (IAPVH) where chickens were not enough, while in the case of (LIP) project pipes were not enough to cover the estimated area and they had to build a smaller tank because of lack of resources. Beneficiaries felt they had been robbed and that they had every right to seek redress. They thus sought to find out where the money had gone since it had not purchased adequate chickens. Beneficiaries suspected foul play so they demanded information regarding their entitlements. Communication regarding resources seemed to have been badly managed by the NGO, because there was no arrangement made to convince the beneficiaries about the shortage.

Newton (2005) pointed out that incomplete development projects have a very negative effect on its beneficiaries. The shortage of resources seemed to have demoralized the beneficiaries even though others are continued to work hard. Among all beneficiaries, the shortage created confusion because beneficiaries did not understand how a project funder could not provide enough funds for the project.

The sustainable livelihood, empowerment and sustainable development approaches emphasise the development of the assets in order that peoples' lives to be sustained as discussed in the previous chapter. In this case the livelihoods of the beneficiaries can never be sustained and the skills they have been equipped with cannot be utilised. This is a sign of lack of sustainability in the project.

5.6 SUMMARY

This chapter discussed findings from the field on the sustainability of two projects implemented by the two NGOs. The analysis revealed that the sustainability of this project in poverty alleviation remains questionable due to a number of challenges. The challenges include, lack of the participation of the beneficiaries, inadequate funding, natural disasters, lack of commitment of the beneficiaries, lack of government support to the project beneficiaries. However, there are commendable efforts by the NGOs involved to enhance the sustainability of these projects such as training the beneficiaries in crop production, marketing, natural resources management and disaster management.

CHAPTER: SIX CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The study sought to establish the extent to which poverty alleviation projects in Lesotho are sustainable as well as factors that contribute to project collapse when NGOs withdraw. The findings of the study established that poverty alleviation projects were not sustainable. This lack of sustainability is attributable to number of factors which were mentioned in the previous chapter.

6.2 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to assess the sustainability of selected NGO`s interventions on poverty alleviation projects in Mafeteng and Leribe districts of Lesotho. In both projects the interventions seemed to have been extremely necessary to alleviate poverty, but were not sustainable. The projects were rendered unsustainable by an array of obstacles.

From the IAPVH project, it was evident that the project improved people`s lives through skills and assets which they were availed. However in terms of sustainability, the projects did not achieve this very crucial aspect. Such elements as the nature of training, poor participation of the beneficiaries in IAPVH project, inadequate funding made the project fail to achieve sustainability. It was apparent that people were too lazy to participate effectively and they had developed a dependency syndrome towards NGOs rather than using what they had obtained to build their skills to self-reliance. In this project beneficiaries were also discouraged by the fact that the resources were not enough and they were given less than what they had been promised.

On the other hand, the government was also not showing its full commitment to the sustainability of the projects. The government did not offer support especially the extension services which they had promised. It was also evident that there was a need for a common understanding between the three parties which were involved because they seemed to operate in a disjointed manner. In the case of the LIP project, very few beneficiaries participated. The project helped them to develop their capacities to sustain their families through its training sessions in agricultural activities and irrigation. They were also empowered and well informed about irrigation. However, the highest number of beneficiaries never took part in the implementation of the project although they also wanted to benefit from the tank.

The main objective of this project was to help people to irrigate their fields so that they could overcome drought and this was achieved to some extent. However, because the pipes which were to transmit water from the tank to the fields were not enough for the estimated area which was to be covered not all the fields could be irrigated. The main reason for this was that the funding was not adequate. In addition the fact that some people were no willing to work hard in the fields made sustainability to be jeopardized. Moreover, in this project government officials were expected to pay several visits to the project and encourage beneficiaries to continue working in their fields after the NGO had winded up its operations. Unfortunately they never visited the place, due to lack of resources from their ministry.

Against this background it is important to note that the sustainability of these projects was also confronted by additional challenges which include lack of participation of

the beneficiaries, inadequate funding, natural disasters, lack of commitment of the beneficiaries, lack of government support to the project beneficiaries. However, there are commendable efforts by the NGOs involved to enhance the sustainability of this project such as training the beneficiaries in crop production, marketing, natural resources management and disaster management.

6.3 Recommendations

On the basis of the above conclusion, the study makes the following recommendations.

- Training has been identified as the most important aspect that makes a work. It helps people to cope with the project. However due to time, the training was very fast and some people could not grip some of the important ideas. So it is wise for NGOs to reconsider their training and negotiate with the Ministry that they should continue with such training in order to refresh the beneficiaries.
- In order for beneficiaries to sustain these poverty alleviation projects, it is important from their point of view to first understand why the projects were established in the first place and for them to be empowered. Their understanding of the objectives of the project can help them to make the right choices and decisions when getting involved in the projects. That way they can decide freely to take part or not. If they understand the objectives and are committed as well as inspired, they can be energized to work towards the sustainability of the project and do away with their laziness.

- The ministry of agriculture should make sure that the agricultural projects funded by NGOs have strong systems and strong active agricultural extension officers so that the beneficiaries can get extension services.
- There is a strong recommendation of monitoring and evaluation teams which should be made up of the three parties (NGOs, Government and Beneficiaries). The teams will evaluate whether all project activities are carried out to meet the objectives of the project.
- There is a need for the involvement of relevant stakeholders from the first stage to the last one. The Ministry of Agriculture must be entirely involved to monitor the project, by ensuring visitations to the project by the officials. NGOs have to involve the Ministry of Agriculture, and provide them with all they had done so that they can easily take over and help the community.
- The NGOs must also take time to mobilise people and make them understand the importance of the project. The NGOs should have strong mobilisation strategies because people do not show an element of independence. In order for a project to be sustainable beneficiaries must be hard working and full of determination and ambition.

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LIST OF FIGURES

Fig 2.1: Poverty Reduction Strategy

Fig 2.2: Three Pillars of Sustainable Development

Fig 2.3: DPSIR Model

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: LETTER SEEKING FOR PERMISSION

University of Fort Hare
DEVELOPMENT STUDIES DEPARTMENT

Alice (main) Campus:
Private Bag X 1314, Alice, 5700
Ground Floor, Henderson Hall, Alice, 5700
Tel: +27 (0) 40 602 2562 • Fax: +27 (0) 86 627 4870
Email: cmanyonta@ufh.ac.za / pmonyai@ufh.ac.za



University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

29 March 2011

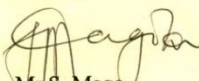
PERMISSION FOR MS NTOBO-LETSIE TO DO A PILOT RESEARCH

This is to certify that Ms Ntobo-Letsie is a registered student in the department of Development Studies doing her Masters studies. She is currently doing her field work. The topic of her research is “AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OF SELECTED NGOS’ INTERVENTIONS IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION IN LESOTHO”.

In order to complete this study Ms Ntobo-Letsie has to carry out field work for data collection. We are therefore requesting you to kindly assist our student to proceed with her research activities. The purpose of the study is purely academic and for scientific knowledge production as part of the research programme of the department of Development Studies.

Please feel free to contact the department at any business times should the need arise.


Thank you.


Mr S. Mago
(Acting HOD)

UNIVERSITY OF FORT HARE
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT AND COMMERCE
Private Bag 11314
ALICE

Signature: 
Date: 04/04/11

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APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I consent to being interviewed by Hlompho Ntobo-Letsie for her study in assessing the sustainability of the selected NGOs` interventions in poverty alleviation: a case study of Maseru and Beria districts in Lesotho.

I am fully aware that: my participation is voluntary and confidential. The interview will be tape recorded and I may withdraw from the interview any time when I feel uncomfortable.

My responses will at all times remain confidential, no information will be tied to me and all information presented will be used for analysis only.

Name:.....

Date:.....

Signature:.....

APPENDIX C: COVER LETTER FOR BENEFICIARIES, NGO AND GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

Dear Participant

Your voluntary participation in this study is highly appreciated.

The purpose of the study is to assess the sustainability of selected NGOs` poverty alleviation interventions in Maseru and Beria districts.

The information availed to the researcher during the study will be kept confidentially so that your name remains anonymous .Where it has to be used; a code will be in its place. You are also free to withdraw from the study at any point if you so wish.

The research entails conducting face to face interviews with government officials, NGO Project Managers and the beneficiaries of the projects. Further, relevant documents relating to the subject of the study will be examined. You are kindly requested to answer all questions as honestly as you can. With your permission the interview will be audio –tape recorded and disposed of upon completion of the study.

I can be contacted on: cell 00266 63086825 or 0783728281 E-mail hlompz@gmail.com

Thank you,

Hlompho Ntobo-Letsie

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR BENEFICIARIES

These research questions are designed to assess the sustainability of NGOs interventions on poverty alleviation projects in selected areas. The anonymity and confidentiality of the participants will be highly respected. The information gathered will only be used for academic purposes.

Interview schedule for beneficiaries

Section 1: demographics of respondents

1. Age:

15-25 25-35 36-4 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

6. Educational level:

Illiterate Literate Primary High school Graduate

7. Occupation

Self-employed Farmers Not working House wife

Section 2

Are poverty alleviation projects by NGOs sustainable?

QUESTIONS TO NGO BENEFICIARIES

- 8) Do you know the goal of this project?
- 9) Has the goals been achieved?
- 10) Has the project made difference in your life?
- 11) Is that difference long lasting?
- 12) How?

13) Specifically what steps do you take in the project implementation to ensure the sustainability of the project?

14) How do you envision this project after the funding has stopped?

15) What do you think can be the solution to the sustainability of the project?

Contributing factors

16) How was your project started?

17) Are the beneficiaries involved in the planning and execution of the project?

18) Has there been any form of training to empower the beneficiaries

19) Has the project received adequate and timely funding to allow it to mature and bear fruits?

20) What are the challenges faced by the project?

21) What do think can be done to overcome such challenges?

APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PROJECT MANAGERS AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

Your voluntary participation in this study is highly appreciated the purpose of the study is to assess the sustainability of selected NGOs` poverty alleviation interventions in Maseru and Beria districts. The information gathered will only be used for academic purposes. The information gathered will only be used for academic purposes.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Section: 1

Demographic information

- 1) Sex:
- 2) Age:
- 3) Position:
- 4) Qualification:

Section 2: QUESTIONS TO NGOS OFFICER AND GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

- 5) What are the objectives of this project?
- 6) Has the project achieved those goals?
- 7) Did the project changed peoples` lives?
- 8) Is that change long lasting? 9) How?
- 10) Specifically what steps does NGO take in the project implementation to ensure the sustainability of the project?
- 11) Please explain whether or not you think the project will be sustained when the Funding stops?
- 12) What do you think can be the solution to the sustainability of the project?

Contributing factors

- 13) Who initiated the project, why?
- 14) Are the beneficiaries involved in the planning and execution of the project?
- 15) Has there been any form of training to empower the beneficiaries?
- 16) Has the project received adequate and timely funding to allow it to mature and Bear fruits?
- 17) What are the challenges faced by the project?
- 18) How can such challenges be overcome?