ASSESSMENT AND IDENTIFICATION OF BEST PRACTICES FOR SCALING UP OF CBOs: CASE OF CBOs IN EMBU AND BUNGOMA COUNTIES, KENYA

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Abstract*: The objective of this study was to assess and identify best practices for scaling up CBOs. The research was based on case study research design. The target population was the project officers of the pilot projects, key informants from the CBOs and farmers in Embu and Bungoma counties. The study employed purposive sampling in selecting the CBOs and farmers who were the members of the organizations. Data collection was done through data triangulation whereby data was gathered through methods like, document analysis, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to ensure the validity of the information. The study concluded that, the youth should be encouraged to participate in group activities so that they can get more experience and can manage group activities as expected. The study recommended that, scaling up for CBOs should be done so that they can achieve their desired objective of improving livelihoods of members and community at large.*

Keywords: *Scaling up of CBOs, assessment, identification*

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INTRODUCTION

Background Information:

Scaling up involves expansion and replication of the activities of the organization to reach out to more targeted groups in wider areas to increase the level of project impacts (Catacutan, 2007). According to Uvin and Miller (1996), the types of scaling up are; quantitative, functional, political and organizational. Quantitative scaling up involves increase in the number of people into a program or organization while functional scaling up takes place when new activities are added to the programme by expanding its operations. Political scaling up refers to the deliberate building of a political powerbase through legal registration in the desire to reach higher goals of the organization whereas organizational scaling up comes about when organizational structure are made to ensure sustainability and diversified activities.

Statement of the Problem

Scaling up is the process of reaching out to a wider community through effectively adapting existing programmes or organizations to meet changing needs. However, In Embu and Bungoma Counties, the CBOs are localized within specific areas of the counties thereby limiting their performance and achievement of the targeted objectives to their members (IFAD, 2001). Hence, these hinders scaling up because the expansion and operations of programmes is affected negatively thus, don't increase beyond the current domain.

Objective of the Study

Assess and identify best practices for scaling up of CBOs.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Scaling up concept

Urvin and Miller (1996) state that scaling-up has been used in different sectors of the economy. It has varied meanings depending on where it is applied. It is equated with expansion, or, more precisely, the need to reach several times the actual number of members in the communities concerned. This definition of scaling-up as expansion of membership or target group is probably the most commonly used one. Fisher (2002) defines scaling up as the process of influencing policy; she uses the term "scaling out" to describe expansion. This involves the development of relationships with governments as well as international partnerships. For Korten (1994) and Fisher (2002) influencing politics is

considered to be an important form of scaling-up. Scaling-up is a matter of autonomy, self-reliance and independence.

How scaling-up occurs

Urvin and Miller (1996), Korten (1994) and Fisher (2002) agree that scaling up occurs by the way of quantitative, functional, political or organizational scaling up;

Quantitative scaling-up is whereby the organization seeks to expand its size by increasing its operations. It is done by spreading, replication, nurturing aggregation and integration. Organization members are given capacity building and encouraged to participate in the activities of the organization. New members are recruited, nurtured and integrated into the system.

Functional scaling-up is shown where organizations and their programme take on new activities because of clients demand. When funds are available, organizations grow in horizontal and vertical manner by expanding the component of their existing activities to different areas. This brings in an element of effectiveness and efficiency of the organizations in achieving their goals. This is crucial for the sustainability of the organizations.

This means that, whatever the objective and the ideology of the organization, if it is to survive it must undertake activities that improve its members' or clients' economic fate, and that increase its own capacity for self-financing. Those participatory organizations programs that fail to do so are doomed to cease to exist.

Political scaling-up is whereby there is deliberate building a political power base for furthering the goals of an organization or organizations through the political process. The organizations need to be registered and it's the state that does that. So the state acts as the point of reference to all the running of an organization. Before the organization creates public awareness to the communities, gets good networks, does advocacy, the government of that nation has to be aware of the running of the organization hence political scaling up is necessary in any given grassroots organization in fulfilment of their activities.

Organizational scaling-up involves   addressing the issues of sustainability of the organization, assuring that when an organization grows, it is able to sustain its programme without complete dependence upon non-renewable resources This can be achieved when string management organizational framework exists that allows organizations to handle unanticipated consequences that are waiting to confound work for example, the creation of

structures that allow for flexibility, participation and accountability on a large scale, increased efficiency of self-financing, skills development, organizational learning and professionalism.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study was based on case study research design. Case study design is an approach to studying social phenomena through analysis of an individual case. The data collected from the selected CBOs were organized in terms of cases, where horticultural farmers CBOs, dairy farmers CBOs and river users association CBOs were intensively studied on the way they organize their leadership, manage their finances, how they design their projects, the nature of networking and their role in ensuring that there is sustainable land management. Data obtained was analysed to give information to be used in scaling up the CBOs. This was to provide an insight for expansion to other CBOs of the same nature for scaling up purposes. Descriptive analysis was provided to show the performance of the CBOs based on successes, challenges and interventions required. The descriptive provided generalizations which could be used for scaling up other CBOs based on the in depth information obtained. Target Population: The target population was 1000 civil servants in Eldoret town drawn from all public institutions.

Target population

The target population was the project officers of the pilot projects, key informants from the CBOs and farmers in Embu and Bungoma counties. These counties were selected because IFAD and Government of Kenya (GOK) has funded some CBOs which the researcher wanted to investigate good capacity that could be replicated to other areas and also to explore on the constraints which they face so that solutions can be sought for desired impacts to farmers.

Sampling Size and Techniques

The study employed purposive sampling in selecting the CBOs and farmers who were the members of the organizations. Purposive sampling involved focus on a particular characteristic of a population that are of interest to the researcher and for this case the CBOs involved in sustainable land management were the focus. CBOs were selected from the pilot projects which have been funded GoK and IFAD to evaluate their success and

challenges they face so that they can be replicated to others. Twenty nine (29) CBOs were selected based on the activities they do, like water resource users associations, dairy farmers and horticulture. Seven (7) key informants from each CBO were selected for the interview. Two (2) Focus Group Discussions were conducted in Embu and Bungoma comprising of farmers from the CBOs. Each FGD had 20 farmers who were members of the CBOs. Three (3) key informants from the three pilot projects were interviewed. Eight (8) GoK officials were also interviewed. This made the total number of people for the interview, two hundred and Twenty (220). Since this was a case study design, the chosen cases gave a representative number from the total population from the CBOs for scaling up of the activities rather than studying all CBOs in Embu and Bungoma which are involved in sustainable land management.

Data Collection tools and procedures

Data collection was done through data triangulation. According to O'Donoghue and Punch (2003), triangulation is a "method of cross-checking data from multiple sources to search for regularities in the research data. In this study, it involved using more than one method to gather data like, the use of document analysis, key informant interviews and focus group discussions to ensure the validity of the information. This involved asking the key informant and FGD participants on how the organization operates its success and constraints it faces in the management of their operations. The researcher was also concerned with views, attitudes, feelings and perceptions of informants hence such information was best collected through FGDs. (Bell, 1993; Touliatos & Compton, 1988).

a)   Key Informant Interviews

According to Carter (1992), key informant interviews are qualitative in-depth interviews with people who know what is going on in the community. The purpose of key informant interviews is to collect information from a wide range of people—including community leaders, professionals, or residents who have first-hand knowledge about the community. These community experts, with their particular knowledge and understanding, can provide insight on the nature of problems and give recommendations for solutions. The researcher prepared an interview schedule which was administered to the contact persons of the CBOs who was either the chairman, secretary or any other official who was in charge of the CBOs at the time of data collection. The questions asked guided the respondents and the

researcher on activities undertaken by the CBOs, organizational management, and finances, ownership of the project and project development and design.

b) Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The focus group discussion (FGD) is a rapid assessment, semi-structured data gathering method in which a purposively selected set of participants gather to discuss issues and concerns based on a list of key themes drawn up by the researcher/facilitator (Kumar 1987).This involved exploring the perceptions, experiences and understanding of the CBOs members on the capacity, finance, monitoring and evaluation and technical assistance pertaining to the organization. Two (2) FGDs from the selected CBOs, one from Bungoma and one in Embu were conducted.

The researcher developed broad discussion points and discussed them on the selected members of the CBOs. The FGD members expressed their opinions on the issues discussed and responses recorded by the enumerators.

c) Document analysis

Document analysis is a social research method and is an important research tool in its own right and is an invaluable part of most schemes of triangulation. Documentary work involves reading lots of written material (it helps to scan the documents onto a computer and use a qualitative analysis package). A document is something that we can read and which relates to some aspect of the social world. Official documents are intended to be read as objective statements of fact but they are themselves socially produced (Heffernan, 2001). This study collected data from documents like brochures, pamphlets and magazines obtained from the organization based on activities they have initiated. The CBO officials gave the researcher the relevant documents like the constitution and bylaws which provided information regarding the structure and functions of the organization. Close analysis of these documents gave an in depth information that members could not relay during the interviews.

Validity and Reliability

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (1999), the reliability of an instrument is the measure of the degree to which a research instrument yields consistent results or data after repeated trials. To test the reliability of interview schedule for key informants and FGD schedule to be used in the study, a pilot study was conducted in Embu on a CBO which was not sampled for the study to test the reliability of the instruments to be used. After the pilot study, the

instruments to be used were tested and adjusted so that they could be used for the actual research. Pilot study helped in adjusting the structure of the schedules and arranging questions for the preparation of the actual study.

Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires was keyed into the computer in the excel format. It was then exported to SPSS for quantitative analysis. Qualitative data was obtained from the notes recorded from the field. The field notes were was recorded in verbatim. The analysis was done inform of frequencies, percentages which presented in terms of graphs, pie charts and tables. Descriptive analysis was given to explain the activities, challenges and successes of the CBOs.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Best Practices for Scaling up CBOs

The objective was on assessing and identifying best practices for scaling up CBOs. According to the study, the CBOs have been motivating their members through exchange programs, awarding hardworking members, organizing social events, proving trainings and sharing accrued profits. Most of the organizations provide trainings to their members on farming techniques, group dynamics, rural livelihoods, animal husbandry and banana production among other.

FDAC and DCAC indicated that they liase with the pilot project so that they can provide the required training for the groups which they coordinated.FGD from women groups, youth groups and self-help groups concurred that they have been motivating their members though exchange tours, team building activities and sharing of accrued profits.

Two self-help groups shared their experiences and said they have not motivated their members since they were started recently and have not much involved in the intensive part of motivating members. They said that they will be prepared to motivate their members in any way that can encourage them to be active and participate in the activities and achievements of the organization.

Table 1 Members of CBOs motivation

How are members motivated	No. respondents from the CBOs
Trainings	84
Exchange programs	56
Team building activities	14
Occasional meetings for lesson learning	7
Sharing accrued profits	21
Awarding hardworking members	7
No motivation	14
Total	**203**

The result of the study indicates that for scaling up to be done, more training is required for the group members on administration of the identified projects. More funding is also required. For the office operations, office space and equipment should be provided. Table 2 shows the nature of improvement required by the organizations.

Table 2 Improving administration

What can be done to improve administration of organization	Number of respondents from CBOs
More training and funding	21
Provision of office space and equipments	182
Total	**203**

Monitoring and evaluation of the group activities in the group studied was done by making follow ups of the activities. Group members also made visitation of the projects to ensure that they are to the expected standard and. The members indicated that, for the process of Monitoring and evaluation (M& E) to be improved, members should be trained on how to carry out M&E as shown in the table 3

Table 3 Improving Monitoring and Evaluation

How can M&E process be improved	Number of Respondents from the CBOs
Get a means of transport to make moving around easy	28
Get stores at the market so that movement of products can be closely monitored	7
Liaise with water companies on water rationing	7
More trainings on M&E	154
Motivate members of sub committees	7
Total	**203**

The networking of the groups of the groups was done by working with other groups within the counties. Networking covers the informal linking communication that goes between

people and organizations, at a local, national, or international level (Eade, 1997). FDAC and WRUA should be structured in away such that they can be umbrella organizations which will help in guiding, coordinating and monitoring of activities of other grass root CBOs. Problems were experienced when groups try to network with other groups. Members expressed that different ways should be used to make sure that groups operate in harmony without suspecting each other. The members said that more training should be conducted among members on how to operate mutually and share the available resources as shown in figure 1.
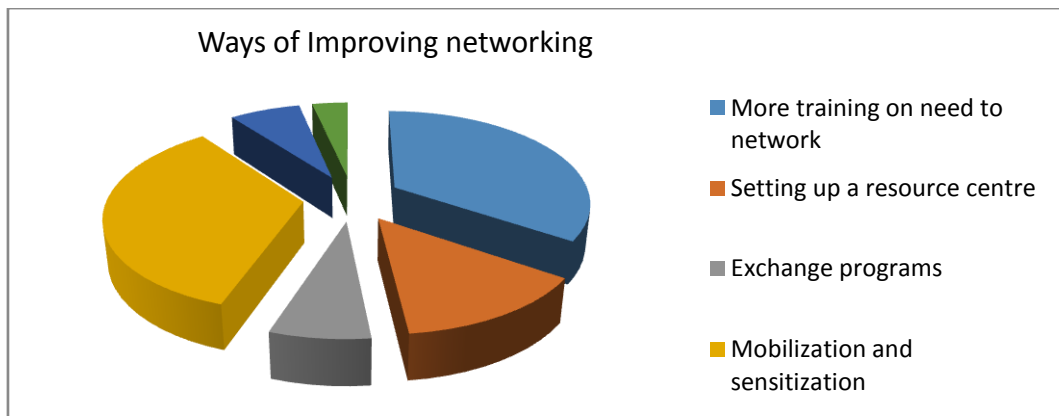

Fig 1 Improving networking of organizations

The results from the study indicated that to improve and curb challenges experienced by the groups, more trainings should be provided so that members learn on how to do group activities by themselves and explore other initiatives that will be of any help to other members through networking. Mulwa (2000,36) highlights that the centrality of autonomous rural organizations lies on the way they network, but further argues that such organizations would need some supra village linkages as support framework, with additional support from like-minded development agencies or any other established organizations. Community assessment should be done so that when community action plans are prepared, the take considerations of all the group members concern. Table 4 shows suggestions on what can be done about the challenges in the groups.

Table 4 Curbing challenges in CBOs

What can be done about t challenges	Number of CBOs
Creating awareness and mobilizing people to participate in group activities	21
Doing a need assessment	14
Get more funds for the projects	14
More training and exchange programs	154
Total	**203**

Members of the group have ownership of the group and have control over its operations and conducts of activities. They assume the whole ownership of the group such that they do not want other people who they regard as outsiders to influence the operations. The group is then characterized as other peoples group who are not ready to intermingle with others for new knowledge and technology. The group might remain in the original state after its formation since it does not accommodate other people's viewpoints. The group localizes is membership to the people they know and lock others away. This brings in challenges like breakdown of relationships in groups, group disintegration and lack of cooperation. External influences like politics affect the way the group conducts its activities. Other challenges experienced during ownership of the group are shown in Table 5.

Table 5 Challenges in ownership of projects

Challenges experienced when you own the project	Number of respondents from the CBOs
Conflict of interests	14
Cultural beliefs	7
External influences e.g. politics	21
Individualization of projects	63
Lack of cooperation from all members	7
Lack of patience	7
Lack of training and funds	42
Members drop out especially when projects incur losses	14
Members expect to be given money when they go for meetings	7
Mobilization of community	7
No challenges	14
Total	**203**

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that, the youth should be encouraged to participate in group activities so that they can get more experience and can manage group activities as expected. This is a way of motivating youth so that they can realize their potentials and direct their energies to productive activities rather than engaging in illegal activities like drug abuse.

RECOMMENDATION

The study recommends and approaches for scaling up of CBOs to increase their impacts beyond their current domain. According to Narayan et al, (2000), poor, remote communities learn to innovate and change strategies in order to survive, but any new idea is generally

welcomed. For the sake of improving and organization, existing potentials need to be utilized. This can be achieved through scaling up. Scaling up for CBOs should be done so that they can achieve their desired objective of improving livelihoods of members and community at large.

Model for scaling up CBOs

The CBOs need to expand their activities to reach a larger group. To achieve this, CBOs are required to understand the operations, vision, assess factors in scaling up and establish the factors prerequisite for extending the project activities to reach a larger population.
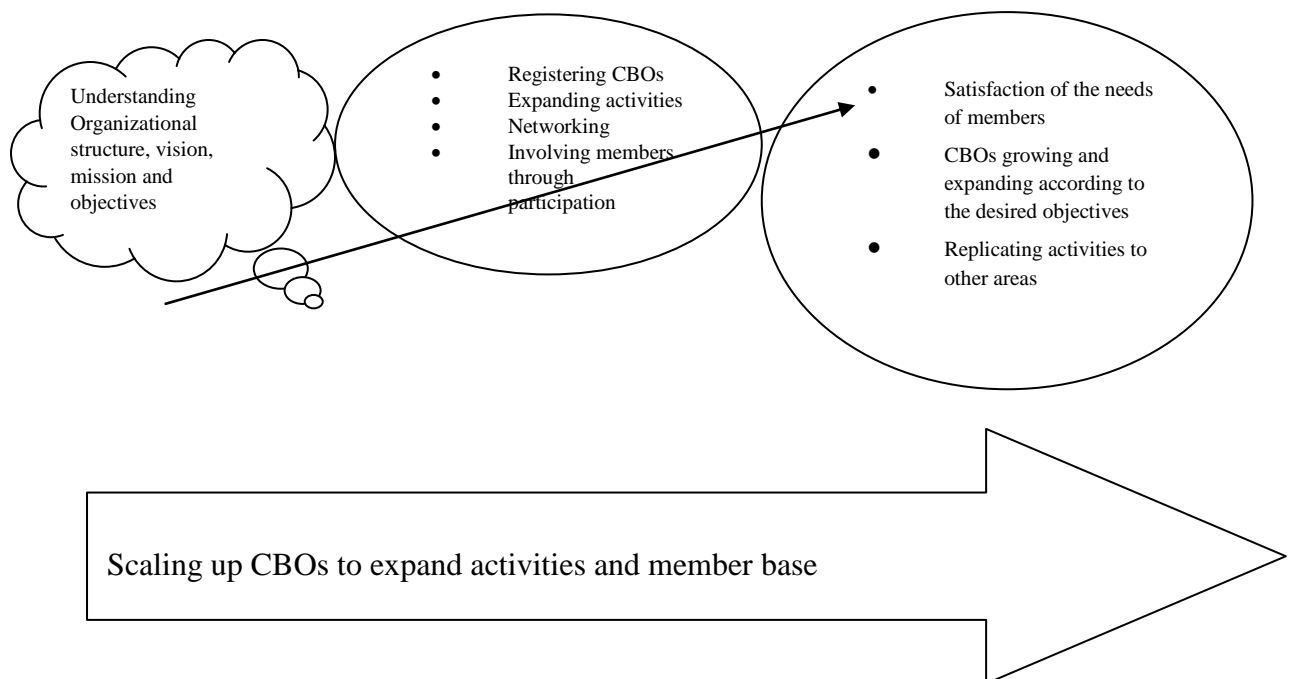
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