

Achieving Project Sustainability Through Community Participation

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ABSTRACT Rural communities have over the years lived together and do things in common. They eat and sleep together; they go to their farms together, help the weak on the farm, during marriage and in home construction. In fact, the way their houses are built gives room for the sharing of ideas and for consultation. They have for their common benefits constructed roads, schools, health centres and also made bridges through manual labour and personal contributions. Having lived a life of togetherness and of sharing of ideas over a long period of time, it sounds strange, if not unacceptable to some of them that they will find projects in their communities without the slightest idea about it either in conception or in implementation. They therefore do not see the projects as part of them. The projects in most cases, therefore suffer abandonment or at best low maintenance. For projects to be sustained, the communities must be carried along during conception and implementation. More importantly, however there must be government support either in cash or in kind. Community leaders must also accept the challenge for project sustainability.