

**AN APPRAISAL OF PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION IN  
GOVERNMENT COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES: A CASE STUDY OF  
TANA AND ATHI RIVER DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (TARDA), KENYA.**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that *An appraisal of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in government community development initiatives: A case study of Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA), Kenya* is my work, that has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any university, and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references

Erick Mariga

November, 2012

**SIGNATURE:**



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## **ABSTRACT**

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) is an integral part for the success of any government community development initiative as it helps foster a sense of ownership and at the same time promotes meaningful development at grass-root level. The Government of Kenya (GOK), through the Ministry of Regional Development has established Regional Development Authorities (RDA's) that are mandated to promote development within their areas of jurisdiction by implementing integrated programmes and enhancement of community participation. It is against this backdrop that this research investigation is using Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA) in Kenya as a case study in order to appraise how PME is applied in this process. The people-centred development theory constituted the theoretical grounding of the study, and in addition implementation approaches to PME were discussed in relation to the various project management areas of knowledge.

Qualitative methods of research were applied throughout the study in assessing the level of stakeholders' participation in monitoring and evaluation. A mix of interviews and focus group discussions were utilized. More specifically, individual interviews were conducted with the project beneficiaries/community, TARDA management, project management facilitators, as well as monitoring and evaluation specialists in an attempt to unravel how and to what extent Tana County residents are involved in the monitoring and evaluation process of TARDA projects. Empirical findings gathered from the study were reflected upon through concrete grounded discussions on the contribution of PME in increasing community participation, empowerment and decision-making in various development projects.

The research findings also indicated that PME plays a pivotal role in ensuring accountability and transparency of institutions thus creating investor confidence and promoting regional-balanced development. Furthermore, the findings also revealed that an effective PME system gives decision makers an additional public sector management tool, while at the same time building on the capacities of the beneficiaries. Finally, it is proposed that PME should be a standard practice among public sector institutions that embrace PME techniques, also in order to document and share PME experiences for purposes of information generation and future sustainable development.

## **ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ASK</b>	Agricultural Society of Kenya
<b>CDA</b>	Coast Development Authority
<b>CDF</b>	Constituency Development Fund
<b>ENNDA</b>	Ewaso Ng'iro North Development Authority
<b>ENSDA</b>	Ewaso Ng'iro South Development Authority
<b>GOK</b>	Government of Kenya
<b>ICT</b>	Information Communications & Technology
<b>ISD</b>	Institute of Social Development
<b>KVDA</b>	Kerio Valley Development Authority
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring & Evaluation
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PRA</b>	Participatory Rural Appraisal
<b>PMBOK</b>	Project Management Body of Knowledge
<b>PME</b>	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>RDA</b>	Regional Development Authority
<b>ROM</b>	Result-Oriented Monitoring
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats
<b>TARDA</b>	Tana and Athi River Development Authority
<b>TDIP</b>	Tana Delta Irrigation Programme

## CHAPTER ONE: GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Monitoring and Evaluation are common tools in public sector management and community development initiatives because they allow the community to assess whether they are taking the necessary steps towards the fulfilment of their goals and objectives. “The new realities of governance, globalization, aid lending and citizen expectation require an approach that is consultative, cooperative and committed to consensus building, meaning that the voices and views of stakeholders should be actively solicited” (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 58). There has been increasing pressure on governments, state corporations and organizations to become more accountable to their stakeholders in demonstrating participatory approaches in their operations. These among other factors have led to the emergence of new domain in the field of monitoring and evaluation referred to as Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME). According to Jackson & Kassam (1998:6), “PME is a process of self-assessment, knowledge generation and collective action in which stakeholders in a program or intervention collaboratively define the evaluation issues, collect and analyse data, and take action as a result of what they learn through this process”.

The concept of PME has been broadly documented and clearly defined, Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, (2003:61) indicate that, “...while there is yet arguments as to different ways through which PME meets the needs of project stakeholders, its integration into the project cycle has strengthened the empowerment, learning, accountability and effectiveness. This is in particular through the realization that what matters is not only what is monitored and evaluated, but also who does the monitoring and evaluation and for what purpose.” Community involvement in government development projects therefore helps to ensure that the M&E system is more relevant and realistic as communities themselves usually best define what matters, what is meaningful, and what kind of changes are necessary. Moreover, being involved in the development of M&E systems can also build and foster a sense of ownership over programme activities. The aim of this study was to undertake an assessment of participatory approach as a tool in monitoring and evaluation of government development projects in Kenya using the case study of TARDA in Tana County.

## **1.1 Introduction and background to the research**

### **1.1.1 General overview of Kenya**

Kenya is the largest economy in East Africa and is a regional financial and transportation hub. The country's economic expansion is fairly broad-based and its build on a stable macro-environment fostered by government (Bureau of African Affairs, US Department of State, 2010:262). However the country presents a situation where it has slide systematically into the abyss of underdevelopment and poverty, this has been attributed to corruption and bad governance. Mutua (2011:7) argues that, "Kenya's economy was estimated at US\$ 32 billion with an annual growth rate of 5.4 % in 2010, in addition the structure of the economy is represented by the following in terms of GDP percentages, services, 59.5%, industry and commerce 16.7% and agriculture 23.8%". That notwithstanding, majority of the Kenyans continue to languish in abject poverty. Over the past two decades, the rapid population growth and dwindling terms of trade, particularly for tea and coffee have contributed to weak economic growth and decline of living standards.

The Human Development Report (2004:48), classified Kenya under the low human development category and ranked it 148 out of the 177 countries in the World. It is also estimated that nearly half of the country's 30 million inhabitants live below the poverty line (UNESCO, 2005:6). The Kenyan Government through its vision 2030 blue-print is committed to alleviating the prevailing poverty and attain sustainable development. Agoya (2008:12), proposes that "...through the Ministry of Regional Development wealth creation can be enhanced in the economy and thus contribute effectively towards achievement of the economic pillar of Kenya Vision 2030".

### **1.1.2 Case study area: Tana River County**

Tana River County is situated in the Tana District of the wider Coastal Province of Kenya and is named after the Tana River which is the largest river in the country. "Approximately it has an area of 38,446 square kilometres (14 844sq mi) and a population of 240,075" (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009:20). The major ethnic communities are the Orma and Waedey (many of whom are predominantly nomadic) and the Pokomo who mainly practice small-scale farming.

These communities have had a long history of tension over access to land and water resources. Tana County is generally dry and prone to drought, with only erratic rainfall distributed over two distinct seasons annually. The long rainfall season occurs between April and July and the short rainfall season occurs from October to December. This unpredictable weather and climate patterns has spurred numerous clashes and conflicts between the farmers and the nomadic people over access to water. Flooding is also a regular problem caused by heavy rainfall in upstream areas of the Tana River. Moreover, the higher population density manifested in the County has put more pressure on the natural resources leading to over-exploitation and consequent soil erosion, biodiversity loss, and catchment degradation.

Agricultural production in the county has been largely dependent on rainfall. The area in the past has been known for the production of coffee, horticultural crops, cotton, sisal, fruits as well as beef and dairy farming production. However, today the region is a food scarce area despite the area being richly endowed with potential irrigable land. The region has fairly good infrastructure (roads, railway, electricity, water supply and telecommunications), which is a prerequisite for spurring economic development and increased productivity. Despite this, much of the hinterland is poorly covered and is largely inaccessible. For sustainable development to occur, infrastructural development needs to be given a high priority in region. Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA), community development projects are situated in the expansive Tana County and it is therefore against this background that the research investigation evaluates how PME is applied in these development projects.

### **1.1.3 Regional Development Authorities as a tool for sustainable development**

Devolution and equitable regional development is vital for wealth creation and sustainable development in the Kenyan economy. The Ministry of Regional Development have partnered with The Commission on Revenue Allocation to ensure Kenya's rural development through its six Regional Development Authorities (RDA's) namely: Tana and Athi Rivers Development Authority (TARDA), Coast Development Authority (CDA), Ewaso Ng'iro North Development Authority (ENNDA), Ewaso Ng'iro South Development Authority (ENSDA), Kerio Valley Development Authority (KVDA) and the Lake Basin Development Authority (LBDA) (Muturi, 2008:16). These RDA's have the responsibility of promoting integrated development within

their areas of jurisdiction through implementation of government community development programmes and projects for instance irrigation and water supply, provision of hydropower, flood control as well as environmental conservation. According to Agoya (2008:19), “RDAs should position themselves effectively to contribute towards achievement of the economic pillar of Kenya Vision 2030 by ensuring that Kenyans attain enhanced growth and sustained wealth creation through integrated basin-based development programmes. This would therefore lead to the conclusion that with proper planning, implementation and participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) frameworks in the RDA projects this could contribute to achievement of balanced regional development create employment opportunities and ensure equitable distribution of resources in the country.

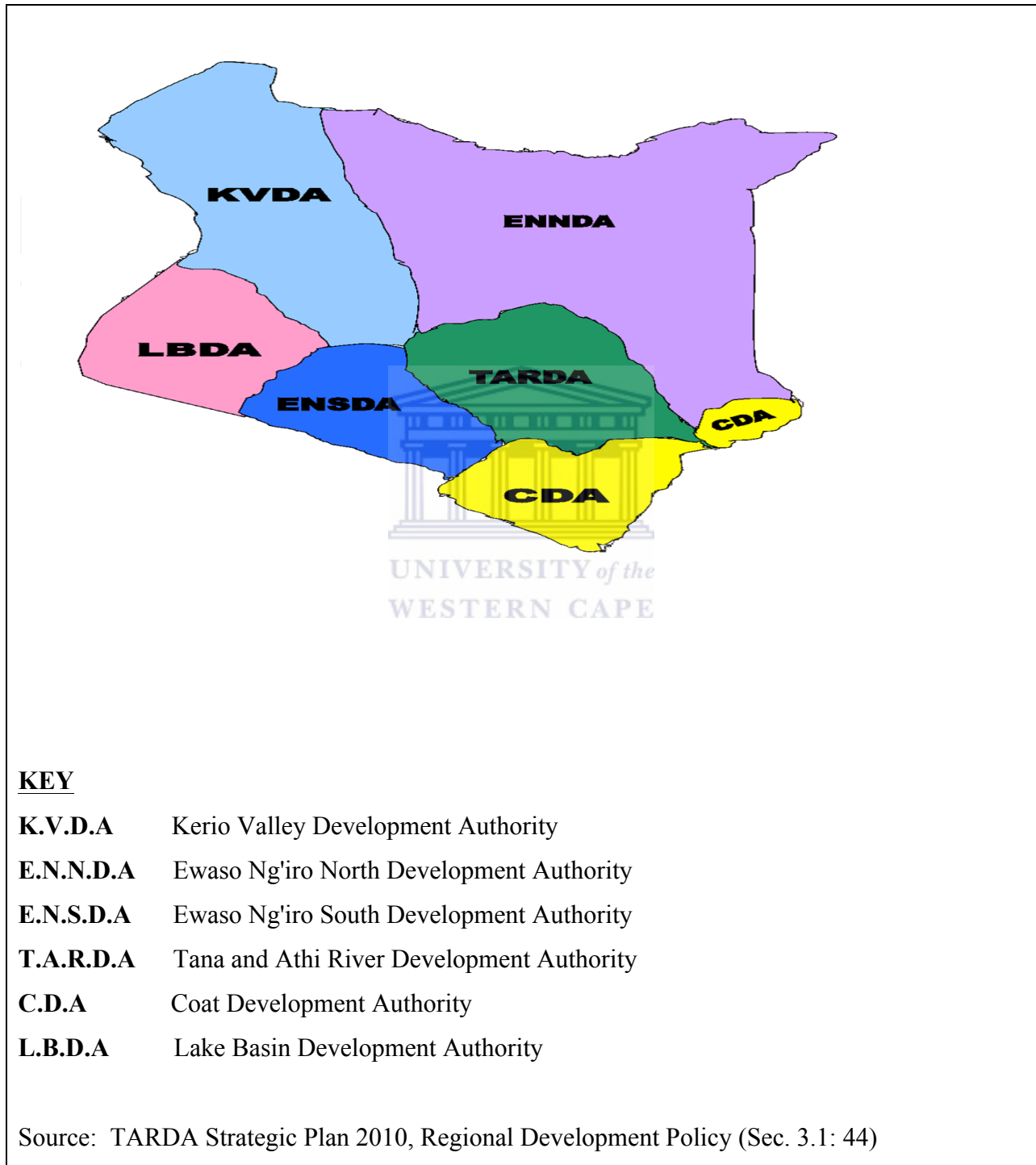
#### **1.1.4 Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA)**

Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA) was established by an Act of Parliament CAP 443 in 1974 and mandated to formulate integrated regional development plans in consultation with other stakeholders. TARDA’s area of jurisdiction covers approximately 138,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and comprises 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Tana Basin and 38,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Athi Basin in Tana County (Agoya, 2008:16). Key functions of the Authority as stipulated by the Act are to advise the government and the ministries set out in the schedule on all matters affecting the development of the area including: the apportionment of resources, to draw up and keep up to date a long-range development plan for the area, to effect a programme of monitoring the performance of projects within the area so as to improve that performance, establish responsibility and therefore improve future planning (Agoya, 2008:16).

Nevertheless, the functions of the Authority have been revised over time in order to make it a more effective vehicle for development. To effectively ensure improved performance as well as service delivery to the citizens TARDA is responsible to the Government, through the Ministry of Regional Development Authorities for planning, coordination, implementation and monitoring of projects within the Tana and Athi river basins. In addition the Authority strives to strengthen collaborations, partnerships and networks with all development stakeholders on all matters pertaining to the development and the maximum utilization of water resources. The researcher

used TARDA, Kenya as a case study to investigate and appraise the position of PME in the community development programmes and projects.

**Fig 1: An illustration of the Kenya's Regional Development Authorities boundaries**



## 1.2 The research problem

In the past few decades, participation has become a critical concept in development as government and other development stakeholders are insisting upon participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). However, despite the growing interest in PME, there is little knowledge about PME. This poses many challenges on how to make M&E more participatory and maintain high levels of involvement in terms of how diverse groups participate and influence what to monitor and evaluate, how to select methods used and how PME can be used in hierarchical organization in conflict situations (Guijt, Arevalo & Saladores, 1998). In Kenya, the Government has embarked in the allocation of huge amounts of money and other resources to fund the Regional Development Authorities (RDA's) for example TARDA, which is mandated to promote integrated development within Tana County through implementation of integrated programmes and projects.

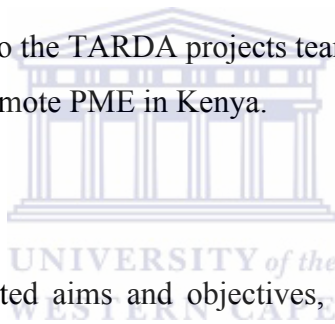
The assessment of existing literature has revealed that most of these RDA's do not bring the intended impact to the target communities and often people or 'authorities' given the mandate to facilitate sustainable development in these initiatives end up utilizing the resources allocated for private gain. Since participation has been hailed to be critical in ensuring that community members participate fully in running of government development projects, the researcher found it imperative to appraise whether Tana County communities participate in monitoring and evaluation of TARDA development projects from their initial stages all through to the end. The central problem in this study is that an appraisal of the PME process in these development projects has not been done and lessons of experience in this respect are required so as to provide a grounded framework on how to develop a workable participatory monitoring and evaluation system for TARDA (the case study) and other RDA's across the country in general.



### **1.2.1 Aims and objectives of the study**

The aim of this study was to undertake an assessment of participatory approach as a tool in monitoring and evaluation of government development projects in Kenya using the case study of TARDA in Tana County. Against this background the more specific objectives of the study were to:

- 1) Undertake a literature review on the current knowledge on PME and provide the study with an interpretive theoretical base and conceptual framework.
- 2) Present a general background perspective of the case study area of Tana County, Kenya and an assessment of major stakeholders of TARDA projects.
- 3) Provide an investigation of the PME themes: community participation, accountability, and transparency, and empowerment, capacity-building and decision-making process in TARDA projects.
- 4) Provide recommendations to the TARDA projects teams and other role-players in the Tana County on how to promote PME in Kenya.



### **1.2.2 Research questions**

In order to achieve the above stated aims and objectives, the study attempted to answer the following research questions to guide the study:

- 1) To what extent are Tana County residents involved in the monitoring and evaluation process of TARDA projects?
- 2) What does PME offer as a technique in appraising participation?
- 3) What key focus areas in the project management process and project management body of knowledge ensures community participation in TARDA?
- 4) Why does the PME differ between projects?
- 5) What lessons can be learnt from conducting an appraisal of PME as applied to Government Water Authorities?

## **1.3 Research methodology**

### **1.3.1 Research design**

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted constituting the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). The research design is an important part of the research as it provides structure for collection and analysis of data. The research design is stemmed in the epistemological approach a researcher chooses to employ as put by Kothari (2004:8) that it claims about how what is assumed to exist can be known. Under this approach, the literature indicates that two epistemological positions of positivism and interpretivist exist. According to Babbie & Mouton, (2001) "...positivism is an epistemological position that advocates the application of the methods of the natural science to the study of social reality and beyond. Meanwhile, interpretivist is epistemological position that is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural science and therefore requires the social scientist to grasp the subjective meaning of social action". Positivist research uses objective measures aimed at establishing the existence of definite facts and on the other hand, interpretivist research aims to investigate the subjective worlds of participants and tries to understand the meanings, hopes and aspirations of the participants through empathetically interpreting the meaning of what they say as it was engaged in this research.

### **Qualitative research**

Qualitative research is concerned with qualitative phenomenon and it is passionate about an insider perspective on a particular social phenomenon (Babbie & Mouton, 2001; Kothari, 2004). Wengraf, (2001) indicated that qualitative research involves collection of a variety of empirical materials: case study, personal experience, life story, interview, artefacts, cultural texts and production, observation, historical, interactional, and visual text that describe routine and problematic moments and meaning in an individuals' life. On the other hand, Babbie & Mouton, (2001), also argue that they give a more generic approach in collecting insider perspective on social action. Qualitative research techniques such as semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions proved most useful to a study of this nature, since it adopted a case study approach and they enabled the researcher get desirable findings. Furthermore qualitative methods were

well suited to fill the gap between the theoretical concepts on the one hand and the real-life case study interpretations.

### **1.3.2 Data collection methods**

Wengraf, (2001) alludes that the type of methods used in any research work largely depends on the topic to be studied. This researcher utilized purely qualitative methods for data collection in order to gain and achieve an in-depth understanding of the topic in question. A host of authors such as Kawulich (2005:95) and Kothari (2004:15) argue that qualitative methods encourage more discussion and involvement of the respondents who may be individuals, focus groups, or village committees. Furthermore, qualitative tools allow information to be collected on complex issues and can generate useful insights into a community and its dynamics. The researcher engaged in-depth data collection methods due to the nature of the research. The following tools and techniques were used:

#### **Literature review**

This provided an assessment of the literature on participatory monitoring and evaluation. The review entailed the researcher reviewing the related body of literature in order to discern relevant and pertinent information and debates that are related to the topic (Reid, 2000:44; Mouton, 2001:20). The literature review enabled the researcher to concentrate his efforts where information was insufficient rather than duplication of similar efforts. Furthermore it helped the researcher to provide a conceptual background to this study and to locate the topic in a body of theory.

#### **Secondary analysis**

This exercise entailed scrutinizing and analyzing documents and information compiled by other authors. This was useful in this study as it helped to incorporate ideas found in previously executed research reports. The secondary sources that were given special attention included: TARDA conference proceedings, strategic plans, operational manuals, technical reports, statistical reports, project proposals, village action plans, group records as well as government reports. It fully saved on the researcher time and avoided duplication of efforts.

### **Focus group discussions (FGD)**

Focus group discussions are regarded as an extended form of interviews which give room for research participants to have more interactive discussions. Typically they refer to a scenario where 12 to 15 people are brought together in a room to engage in a guided debate of some topic being investigated. They are imperative as they provide direct evidence about the similarities and differences in the participant's opinions and experiences as opposed to reaching such conclusions from ad hoc analyses of separate statements from each interviewee (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). For the purposes of this study, a total of four focus group discussions (FGDs) were conducted, comprising five to seven community members from Tana County where relevant field data was gathered. The chief rationale of the focus groups was to determine the nature and extent of community participation, community awareness about on-going TARDA projects as well as to assess the nature and extent of their participation and their involvement in PME process.

The researcher ensured that a cross section of interest groups in the community was represented. For instance key participants were chosen from the county development committee as well as the community leaders. Additionally, one focus group discussion was carried out with the Tana Delta Project representatives and three focus group discussions were carried out with project beneficiaries from the Masinga irrigation project, Kiambere irrigation project as well as the Kiambere bee-keeping project. The underlying questions and themes for the four focus groups were formulated around assessing community's perception about the importance of PME themes, identification of the different types of TARDA sustainable development projects, community participation levels, and recommendations on improving PME within TARDA.

### **Semi-structured interviews**

According to Wengraf (2001:73), "Semi-structured interviews are designed to have a number of interviewer questions prepared in advance but such prepared questions are designed to be sufficiently open that the subsequent question of the interviewer cannot be planned in advance". They involve the use of open-ended questions as an interview guide, and this method is crucial to the study in order to gather more in-depth information relating to the research problem. Kothari, (2004), on the other hand proposes that certain open-ended questions must be used in the

interview situation as a form of interview guide. This research encompassed a total of 43 respondents, namely: Thirty TARDA project beneficiaries (community members) from the five projects with PME frameworks. The second set of interviews was conducted to six project management facilitators who were responsible for the coordination of various TARDA projects at the county level.

The third category of individual interviews encompassed three TARDA senior management staff (fundraising & projects manager, finance manager and the manager in charge of performance, monitoring and evaluation). Lastly five-semi structured interviews were also conducted to monitoring and evaluation specialists both in Cape Town, South Africa and Nairobi, Kenya to understand the position PME in general monitoring and evaluation (M&E) and in the project management cycle. Other groups that were also instrumental in the interviews included local and central government officials. The semi-structured interviews served as useful tools to gather information on the understanding and perception of PME among TARDA stakeholders.

### **The case study**

This research adopted a case study approach and according to Yin, (1984:23) the case study research method is defined as empirical research that examines a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context. The case study area of this investigation is Tana River County which is situated in the Coastal Province of Kenya and is named after the Tana River which is the largest river in Kenya. The government development authority responsible for development in this county is Tana & Athi River Development Authority (TARDA). It is responsible for planning, development implementation and monitoring of programmes and projects that bring about balanced regional development in the area. Five TARDA projects that encompass monitoring and evaluation frameworks were selected for examination, and they fall under the TARDA department of performance monitoring and evaluation. They were selected due to their accessibility, nature of their activities (i.e. livestock, environmental conservation, and irrigation projects) and existence of PME systems. The five TARDA projects include: the Emali livestock multiplication project, Mwingi water project, Kitui honey refinery, Tana delta irrigation project and the Kiambere environmental conservation project.

#### **1.4 Limitations for the study**

The researcher encountered some limitations in the quest to undertake the research and they included the following: Language posed a key challenge to the research process, as the case study area is a predominantly Swahili-speaking community. It was an intricate task to translate some of the key PME terminologies and concepts on participation into Swahili language. For instance asking questions in Swahili language, so that the respondents could understand what they were being asked without having to define the PME terms for them. However this problem was minimized by the use of monitoring and evaluation pictorials which helped establish a common understanding and a shared meaning these terms throughout the interview process. Interviewer cooperation and prolonged engagement also ensured validity of the research. Despite these limitations, it is evident that lessons drawn from this study will serve to contribute to research studies related to this topic. The findings of the research are still reliable and will provide insight not only to TARDA, but also to other development stakeholders in the public sector in appraising PME in government development initiatives.

#### **1.5 Research schedule**

This thesis has been divided into six chapters. Below is an outline of how the subsequent chapters are structured:

##### **Chapter 1: Introduction.**

It comprised the introduction and background information. It also introduced the research problem that led into the formulation of the research questions, aims of the study, research design and methodology used.

##### **Chapter 2: Literature review and theoretical framework**

This Chapter presents the literature review and the theoretical framework for the study. PME literature is examined, as well as unravelling the people-centered theory. That further lays the basis of a solid conceptual foundation for the research.

##### **Chapter 3: Implementation approaches to Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

It introduces the readers the general background of the Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA); the operations framework as well as projects undertaken within TARDA. Furthermore it provides a discussion of PME themes and implementation approaches to PME.

#### **Chapter 4: Fieldwork results:**

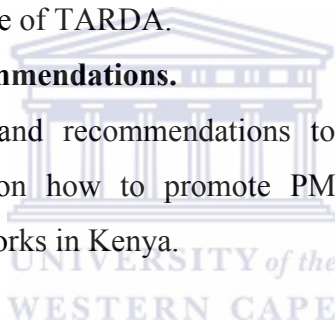
The Chapter presents the fieldwork results of the study. The nature and extent of established PME systems in TARDA places the study topic in perspective. This is done by presenting various TARDA projects, position of PME in public sector development programmes, PME frameworks in TARDA projects and various PME themes.

#### **Chapter 5: Research findings**

The research findings provide a comprehensive analysis and discussion of the research findings. A detailed account of the empirical field work undertaken in the case study is discussed and research findings are presented. The focus is also based on the identification of institutional aspects such as transparency, assessment of the degree of community participation in decision making throughout the projects life cycle; assessing community empowerment, co-ownership; examining TARDA stakeholders' accountability; identifying the perception of the community members on the presence and future of TARDA.

#### **Chapter 6: Conclusion and recommendations.**

It presents general conclusions and recommendations to the TARDA projects and other stakeholders in the community on how to promote PME and encourage participation in monitoring and evaluation frameworks in Kenya.



## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

### **2.1 Introduction**

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) have long been important in public sector development projects and programmes to assess actual change against stated objectives, and therefore judge whether development projects are successful or not. However in the last two decades there has been a growing interest among international development agencies and governments to shift from conventional methods of monitoring and evaluation to participatory approaches to monitoring and evaluation of development projects. This is a direct indication of the international community dissatisfaction with conventional approaches to development in general and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in particular, (De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998; Complain, 1997; Estrella et al., 2000; Rubin, 1995:31).

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) offers governments a host of opportunities for improving the performance of poverty alleviation programmes and building communities while focusing on service delivery. The subsequent sections will provide a review of key arguments as propounded by those who advocate for the use of participatory approaches such as PME in public sector development programmes, later major criticisms levelled against these participatory approaches will also be put in perspective.

#### **2.1.1 Conceptualization of key terms**

##### **Participation**

The understanding of the concept of participation among people has been questioned due to the manner in which it has been understood and exercised. Pijenburg & Nhantumbo, (2002) indicate that participation is often poorly defined. According to Coetzee & Graaff, (1996:312), "...by participation, we mean people involving themselves, to a greater or lesser degree, in organizations indirectly or directly concerned with the decision-making about, and



implementation of, development”. Midgley (1986:24), defines participation as “...the creation of opportunity to enable all members of a community and the large society to actively contribute to and influence the development process and to share equitably the fruits of development”.

On the same view, Davids et al., (2005:17) defines it as “A process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations”. The concept of participation enhances peoples’ power to take control of their own development by realizing that destiny is on their hands. Dinbabo, (2003:9), amplifies that participation is the exercise of people’s power in thinking and acting, and controlling their action in a collaborative framework. The term participation, in the context of this research, refers to the degree of community members’ involvement in decision making, implementation of development projects, monitoring and evaluation and sharing of benefits of development (Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, 2003:17; Davids et al., 2005:73).

### **Monitoring**

According to OECD (2002a) monitoring “...is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide for management and the main stakeholders of an on-going development intervention with indicators of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds”. Authors such as Gosling & Edward, (2003) support the definition by proposing that monitoring is the systematic and continuous collecting and analyzing of information about the progress of a project over time. Monitoring is an integral part of project as it enables the project designers to understand whether the project is in line with the operation plan.

Monitoring plays an important role to project managers and other stakeholders as it shows the necessary measures that can be taken if the project is not aligned to the pre-determined plan. It is useful for identifying the strengths and weakness in a project and for providing the people responsible for the work with sufficient information to make the right decisions at the right time to improve the quality (Gosling & Edward, 2003). The term monitoring in the context of this research, refers to the on-going process by which stakeholders obtain regular feedback on the progress in order to determine whether project is being implemented as planned, resources are

being mobilized and utilized as planned with the aim of achieving results intended (Valadez & Bamberger, 1994:77; Kusek & Rist, 2004:19; UNDP, 2009:89).

## **Evaluation**

Garaway, (1995:8) defines evaluation as “The determination of the value or worth of something, judged according to appropriate criteria, with those criteria explicated and justified”. On the other hand Gosling & Edwards, (1995:89) point out that “...an evaluation is the assessment at one point in time of the impact of a piece of work and the extent to which stated objectives have been achieved”. It is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity or project and involves making a judgment about progress and impact. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should be used to provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision making process of both recipients and donors. “Evaluation is also the systematic and objective assessment of an on-going or completed project, program or policy; including its design, implementation and results” (Kusek & Rist, 2004:21) The term evaluation in the context of this research, refers to the assessment of either completed or on-going projects to determine the extent to which they are achieving stated objective, in particular it responds the question of what the projects have achieved in terms of long-term impact to the community (Kusek & Rist, 2004; UNDP, 2009:89).

## **Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME)**

According to Jackson & Kassam, (1998) PME is a process of self-assessment, knowledge generation, and collective action in which stakeholders in a program or intervention collaboratively define the evaluation issues, collect and analyse data, and take action as a result of what they learn through this process. PME draws from various participatory research traditions, including participatory action research (PAR) spearheaded by the work of Paulo Freire (1972:12), Fals Borda (1985:30) and others, Participatory Learning and Action (including Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) and later Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) drawn on the work

of Robert Chambers just to name a few (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). It has also been explained as “The involvement of people in deciding what areas to monitor, selecting the indicators for monitoring and evaluation, designing data collection systems, collating and tabulating data, analyzing the results, and using information/data for their own use” (Murithi, Asiabaka & Mweri, 2002:8).

The introduction of PME stemmed from the desire to address the unequal distribution of power, and to ensure that projects meet the real needs of beneficiaries, rather than being driven by the assumptions of project designers (ibid: 230). PME is often premised on the assumption that project’s goals and participants’ goals are mutually compatible (Parkinson, 2009:19). However, this is not the case for many development projects that have been initiated as much focus on monitoring and evaluating target on meeting the needs of development agents. The term PME, in the context of this research, refers to the joint efforts or partnership of stakeholders to monitor and evaluate systematically development projects (Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, and 2006:41)

## **Development**

In recent years the concept of development has witnessed the widespread rise of interest and support from a range of discipline and it may be considered as societal credence (Pezzy, 1992; Hopwood, Mellor & O’Brien, 2005:12). An investigation of the current development literature reveals that the concept of the term development is so complex and requires a multi-dimensional approach to defining it. In general it is perceived as encompassing values such as participation, capacity building, empowerment, sustainability transparency, accountability, equity, and equality (Chambers, 2005; Rahman, 1993; David et. al; 2005; Freire, 1972; Swanepoel, 2002:13), and access to improved opportunities by the disadvantaged groups, ultimately leading to improvements in all spheres of life; socially, economically, politically, environmentally and materially (Allen & Thomas, 2002; Coetzee, 2001; Todaro, 1987:7). This study will adopt the idea that effective PME frameworks in government projects can aid towards contributing towards development by enhancing self-reliance and alleviating poverty among communities.

### **2.1.2 The growth and emergence of PME**

PME is part of wider historical process which emerged over the last 20 years of using participatory research in development (Rubin, 1995; Estrella & Gaventa, 1998; De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998; Sangole, 2007; Obure, 2008). Researchers such as Oakley & Clayton, (2000), propose that it should be standard practice among government institutions, development organizations, to use participatory monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes, effects and impact of all their programmes and projects. Participation has become a critical concept in development. Internationally donors, governments and NGOs are insisting upon participatory approaches in assessing needs and implementing programmes. In his recent book *Whose Reality Counts?* Robert Chambers, (1977:3) describes the new approach, which starts with people's knowledge as the basis for planning and change. A host of authors, (Chambers, 1977; De Beer & Swanepoel, 1998; Guijt & Gaventa, 1998; Estrella, 2000; Gaventa, 2004) agree that since the beginning of 1980s, the concept of participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) already entered the policy making domain of larger donor agencies and development organizations most notably Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Danish International Agency (DANIDA), Department for International Development (DFID), Norwegian Development Aid (NORAD) and the World Bank (WB).

On the other hand, scholars in the monitoring and evaluation field such as; Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, (2003) point to that whilst there is yet arguments as to different ways through which participatory monitoring and evaluation meet the needs of project stakeholders, its integration into the project cycle has strengthened the empowerment, learning, accountability and effectiveness. This is in particular through the realization that what matters is not only what is monitored and evaluated, but also who does the monitoring and evaluation and for what purpose. The above explanation depicts in various ways that there is a growing recognition that monitoring and evaluation of development and other community-based initiatives should be participatory (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998).

### **2.1.3 Significance of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation**

Kusek & Rist, (2004:12) propose that, "...building an M&E system essentially adds a fourth leg to the governance chair. What is typically missing from the government systems is the feedback

component with respect to outcomes and consequences of government actions. This is why building an M&E system gives decision makers an additional public sector management tool". It should be standard practice among public sector institutions to use participatory monitoring and evaluation of the outcomes, effects and impact of all their programmes and projects. According to Sartorius, (1998) Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) offers governments and development organizations a host of opportunities for improving the performance of poverty alleviation programs and building the management capacity of local partners. He points out that, "While there are many agencies that can evaluate poverty programs using outside 'expert' approaches, few have the know-how and skills to employ PME approaches and fewer still are able to design and implement effective PME systems".

A study conducted by Vernooij, Qiu & Jianchu, (2003:14), in China indicates that PME is a joint effort or a partnership between development agents and other stakeholders to monitor and evaluate systematically development activities. Further, this study contributed to a better understanding of what is monitored and evaluated, who is responsible in the process, and how different concerns and interests are negotiated in the project process (ibid: 3). Another study undertaken by in Colombia portrays that the planning process of project puts in place a system of participatory monitoring and evaluation of development projects, so that communities remain actively involved in the implementation, management and oversight of the project (Estrella, 2000:13). This shows that a well-designed and implemented PME allows communities to fully participate in project cycle management whilst determining the impact of the project on their lives.

Moreover, Horton et al., (2000:16) also support the notion that "an integrated PME system in an organizational system can enable effective planning, monitoring and evaluation of project activities in a coherent manner which would further aid in support of management decision making, accountability, and organizational learning. Based on the above, it is evident that when assessing the project, it is not only important to examine the amount of resources deployed but also the impact of these resources on the people who are directly or indirectly involved in the project. Holte-McKenzie, Forde & Theobald, (2006), in their study on 'Moving the Goalposts Kilifi' (MTGK) in Kenya implemented PME and found out that MTGK was dedicated to the empowering of girls and young women through football and the decision was made to develop a

PME strategy. Nevertheless, their findings show that while program staff, board members and fund providers were involved in the evaluation, design and data analysis, program participants/beneficiaries were the least likely to participate in evaluating, and were often only involved in data collection. Based on this study, it is evident that people who are the beneficiaries of development projects partially participate (co-opted) in the monitoring and evaluation processes.

PME has been seen to contribute towards improving decision-making in institutions, Researchers, Cousins and Earl, (1992) carried out a theoretical and empirical study which encompassed 26 cases to test PME models based on organizational learning as a theoretical basis, arguing that knowledge is socially constructed and that organization members share cognitive systems and memories. The researchers concluded that educational organizations have great potential to enhance organizational learning and improved decision making through PME. They further suggested that the approach has many requirements and adjustments on the part of the organization and evaluator. One of the proposed research issues was the depth of participation of practitioners in the research process. The term PME, in the context of this research, refers to the joint efforts or partnership of stakeholders to monitor and evaluate systematically development projects and thus this study intends to evaluate the role and the extent to which PME is being implemented as amplified by Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, (2003) and Estrella, (2000). The study will encompass the case study of TARDA projects in Tana County to examine the PME.

#### **2.1.4 Distinction between conventional and participatory evaluation approaches**

Several practitioners distinguish between conventional and participatory M&E and the various types of PME. Narayan, (1993) offers a useful explanation of the differences between conventional and participatory evaluation approaches: She argues that conventional evaluation focuses on ‘scientific objectivity’ distancing of evaluators from other participants and also employs uniform complex procedures whereas participatory evaluation places emphasis on Self-evaluation involving simple methods adapted to local culture and open immediate sharing of results through local involvement in evaluation processes. (Narayan, 1993:13). It is also evident that unlike conventional evaluation which purely centered on accountability in projects so as to determine continuity in funding, participatory evaluation is aimed at empowering local people to

initiate, control and take corrective action. Feuerstein (1986:12) also distinguishes between various kinds of evaluation based on the degree to which local evaluation stakeholders influence decisions about evaluation processes and the degree to which evaluation activities build local capacity for learning and collective action.

Feuerstein (1986:12) also highlights that in conventional evaluation methods there are predetermined indicators of success, principally cost and production output, whereas on the other hand in participatory evaluation people identify their own indicators of success. Participatory approaches often engage outside experts, but in different roles and relationships, however qualitative research methods may be used in both approaches. “The timing of participatory evaluation is not always on-going, and thus the question of whether participatory approaches can meet the purposes of accountability (including accountability to whom and for what)” (Narayan, 1993:13)

#### **2.1.5 Criticisms of participatory monitoring and evaluation**

According to Cracknell, (2000:335) a participatory approach “... is an indispensable tool that improves the effectiveness and ensures the relevance of the project’s activities, increases overall efficiency during implementation, and enhances the sustainability of the results after the projects have been terminated”. However there are problems encountered in implementing a participatory approach. Not all beneficiaries are literate; in such a case the participatory approach will have to be limited to help these people. Cracknell, (2000:335) asserts that visual forms of communication that is videos, maps models or photographs should be used to encourage participation of illiterate people. In this way, communities will be able to visualize their objectives, check their progress, verify their achievements and re-adjust their results accordingly.

He continues to add that lack of commitment on the partner institutions and supporting services organizations can hamper the implementation of participation programmes. This could be due to misconceptions about the concept ‘participation’ however; the beneficiaries should always be given a chance to express their views and should not be overpowered by their superiors. Monitoring and Evaluation are the most integral processes in a project cycle, and the most important element of monitoring and evaluation is participation. Participatory monitoring and

evaluation (PME) has a very significant impact on communities and stakeholders. This process encourages communities to be actively involved throughout the development process, from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The communities become better decision makers and managers.

## **2.2 Theoretical framework**

### **2.2.1 Theories of development**

There has been different schools of thought which emerged in the past few decades to explain the concept of development and they all present a range of views about the concept of development, this has been presented by different theorists in the development field (Coetzee & Graaff, 1996; Davids et al., 2005). Some of the earlier traditional development theories included: modernization and dependency theory (Coetzee & Graaff, 1996). According to Davids et al., (2005), the failure of these traditional development theories (modernization and dependency) to bring development, made development theorists and practitioners to realize that in order to foster peoples' development a humanistic approach must dictate rather than concentrating on theories and macro-strategies. Thus, the last two decades have seen a shift in development thinking and practice from macro-theories to the humanist paradigm that put emphasis on "People Centered Development" with the aim of increasing peoples' involvement in their development. Given the fact that development management and community development is associated with many theories, it is essential to examine theory that will form a framework for the study. Thus, the humanistic approach/people centered development theory shall be discussed below.

### **2.2.2 People centered development theory**

The last two decades have seen a paradigm shift in development thinking and practice from classical theories to a more humanist approach that places emphasis on People Centered Development with the overall objective of increasing people's involvement in their development. The People Centered Development paradigm focuses on the process that empowers beneficiaries to participate in the running of development project from its initial stages to the end of the initiative. "PCD is a notion that puts people at the center of their development and it is a tool that



can be used to address the communities' underlying needs whilst building their capacity, improving skills and knowledge, encouraging a joint decision making process and sustainability of the project" (Korten, 1984; Roodt, 1996; Coetzee & Graaff, 1996; Davids et al., 2005).

Many government development initiatives in Kenya outline in their strategic plans and operation documents; monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a key component of their projects. However, monitoring and evaluation processes have been passive in practice due to the fact that, it is only the organization's project management officers that conduct the process of project monitoring and evaluation without full involvement of the project beneficiaries. The PCD approach has been embraced due to the fact that it encourages bottom-up as opposed to top-down decision-making and project implementation (Korten, 1984; Swanepoel, 1997; Pijnenburg & Nhantumbo, 2002). This can be a useful approach in ensuring participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) of TARDA projects and operations in the Tana region, in Kenya.

### **2.3 Importance of building a participatory and consultative process involving major stakeholders**

It is of utmost importance to adopt consultative approaches while working with any group of people or in any community project. Authors such as Kusek & Rist, (2004:58) highlight that "When choosing outcomes, do not travel the road alone". This is because setting goals in isolation leads to a lack of ownership on the part of the main internal and external stakeholders for example lack of ownership of a project by the community. "It is fundamental to build a participatory and consultative process involving the community stakeholders. The participatory process should start with the development of goals and continue with setting outcomes and building an indicator system. Indicators cannot be simply turned over to technicians, because the community has to be consulted and agree on both goals and indicators" (Kusek & Rist, 2004:58).

### **2.4 Key participatory monitoring and evaluation themes**

Oakley, (1991: 161) argues that the themes of any form of development practice are linked to the development analysis which the practice employs. Dinbabo, (2003:10) indicates that participatory development approaches including PME have major guiding principles in terms of undertaking public sector development projects/programmes in communities. These include: the

principles of community participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision making. The description of these themes is provided below.

#### **2.4.1 Community participation**

The term participation refers to the degree of community members' involvement in decision making, implementation of development projects, monitoring and evaluation and sharing benefits of development (Vernooy, Qiu & Jianchu, 2003; Davids et al., 2005). However the understanding of the concept of participation among people has been questioned due to the manner in which it has been understood and exercised in development work. PME advocates for the participation and ensures community members take control of their own development. In addition PME practitioners argue that stakeholders involved in development planning and implementation should also be involved in monitoring and devising indicators. Nevertheless the main concerns in PME to be investigated and reflected upon in this research include: who to be involved and to what extent /depth they are involved in monitoring and evaluation of government development initiatives.

#### **2.4.2 Accountability and transparency**

In promoting increased community participation, the PME process seeks to build local accountability and transparency among stakeholders in the development projects. According to Estrella & Gaventa, (2000:13), "...communities assess their own institutions in terms of fulfilling their commitments and responsibilities". They are able to participate in the formulation of plans, allocation of resources and assessment of these institutions in order to achieve overall planned objectives and while ensuring accountability. Moreover they propose that, "Rather than PME solely being used by funding and government agencies as a way of holding beneficiaries and other project participants accountable, it also enables local stakeholders to measure performance of these institutions and to hold them responsible for their actions and interventions" (Estrella & Gaventa, 2000:14).

#### **2.4.3 Empowerment**

According to Estrella & Gaventa (2000:13), the concept of empowerment has been used in relation to community involvement for some time, but has only recently entered into the vocabulary of government policy. The realization of the importance of the concept of

empowerment as propounded by Barlow, (2007:17) is stemmed in the idea that “...people who are experiencing a problem are in the best position to understand it, and to find the solutions to it, and are the ones with the potential decision making power to ensure that the solutions are achieved”. Empowerment is a significant theme in PME especially with regards to devising of indicators in a development project. “Stakeholder participation in the identification of M&E indicators is considered to be empowering, as it allows the community members to dictate what constitutes success or change” (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998). Further, PME also fosters empowerment among community members by putting them in a position to develop the skills and capacities in their development initiatives.

#### **2.4.4 Decision-making**

A cohesive PME system calls for joint collaboration between government, the community and other key stakeholder in decision making so as to bringing effective development to the people. PME is not so different from traditional M&E since both approaches are concerned with measuring and judging performance, however PME aims to go beyond simply judging but also seeks, “...to create an enabling environment for stakeholder groups including those directly involved and affected by a particular intervention to learn how to define and interpret changes for themselves, make independent decisions and hence to take greater control over their own development” (Guijt & Gaventa, 1998:26). PME encourages self-reliance in decision making thus strengthening people’s capacities to take action and promote change in the development projects.

#### **2.4.5 Capacity building**

“Different stakeholders bring different skills, capacities, expectations and interests within a range of contexts and situations- all of which influence the capacity building needs” (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998: 218). Though the concept of capacity building is gaining popularity and expansion, the World Bank, (2005:27), reveals that capacity building has not developed as well-defined area of development practice. Nevertheless, this concept is essential in uplifting communities to take control in implementing development projects. There is need to build on the skills and capacities that are necessary for conducting and sustaining PME. Literature reveals that after the PME process has been established, “...it is important to train new people entering

the PME process and increase the skills of those already involved in order to improve the process's ability to analyse and act on the lessons arising" (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998: 217).

## **2.5 Chapter summary**

The chapter has briefly described the growth and emergence of PME in the context of government community development projects. It also examined the significance of PME and the distinction between conventional and participatory approaches. Furthermore, this section also presented the significance of building a consultative process involving major stakeholders in development. The literature section revealed that PME can be a useful a toolkit for problem solving and thus strengthening people's capacities to promote change in development projects. The criteria for appraising PME that was engaged in this research was be based on the following key themes: community participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision-making. Against the backdrop of the main thematic areas of PME that were discussed in this chapter and against public sector development projects the next chapter will examine implementation approaches to PME, the position of PME in the project management as well as how to institutionalize PME in the development context.

## **CHAPTER THREE: IMPLEMENTATION APPROACHES TO PARTICIPATORY MONITORING AND EVALUATION (PME)**

### **3.1 Introduction**

Monitoring and evaluation are essential tools in public sector project management as they aid in ensuring effective planning and successful implementation in order to add value to public sector work and further in the broader government policy. This Chapter engages the practical aspects and operationalizing of PME and the general fit in public sector development projects. Consequently the chapter commences with demystifying public sector development projects and the unique aspects that characterize these projects. This chapter will also present the project management cycle, this reinforces the notion that formulation and implementation of development projects is a process with different phases. Moreover special attention will be given to PME in the project management cycle as it is the study's central purpose and how it can be successfully appraised.

### **3.2 Public sector development projects**

According to De Coning & Van Baalen, (2006: 233) the majority of governments in developing countries, NGOS and donor projects now have a development focus aimed at eradicating poverty at community level. They propose that it is of vital importance to distinguish between public sector development projects and other projects citing the following factors: One is to focus on the outputs of the projects, i.e. the facilities created about to bring about (developmental) change through the conscious implementation of targets and projected outputs of project plans and a second way is to focus on the methods employed by project managers to make projects work (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006). This type of development incorporates participatory approaches and goes beyond the scope of conventional projects by: encouraging beneficiary communities to participate actively in the projects take ownership and maximize project benefits so as to alleviate poverty and using these projects and further build their capacities.

The second type of development projects is referred to as social development project which seeks to combine the delivery of project outputs with the mobilization of local people to take charge of their own development (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006:234). Projects of this nature also focus on the 'softer' outputs, i.e. capacity building and empowerment of involved

community members, and sustainability through a participative and social learning approach to the management of projects (Bryant & White, 1982; Rondinelli, 1993; Cusworth & Franks, 1993; Brinkerhoff, 1992; Chambers, 1993). There have been on-going debates and attempts by development practitioners and researchers over the years to inculcate these principles into management processes of projects and this has proved to be ultimately effective in bringing about sustainable development. A host of authors such as Brown (1997), analyses how involvement of the community as ‘clients for the product of the project’ and the promoter (i.e. government agencies) as the ‘the customer for the projects’ interacting in terms of various interests, activities and responsibilities, establishes a partnership model between the community and the management of the project.

### **3.2.1 Participatory monitoring and evaluation in the project management cycle**

Project management is commonly referred to as the process by which a project is brought to a successful conclusion (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006:224). The authors articulate the three main dimensions to this process i.e. managing of project objectives, the processes involved in managing the achievement of project objectives and the levels at which these processes are applied. Project management cycle was formerly used by donor agencies to help them to manage their aid-funded projects; nevertheless today there has been a paradigm shift which calls on government and other public institutions to encompass the project management cycle techniques in the running of development programmes so as to improve performance. PME is of vital importance in project management cycle as explained by Cracknell, (2000:98) who acknowledged that projects can no longer imposed on beneficiaries, but have to result from a process of participatory discussion with them, meaning they must own the projects. The common aspect of PME is that it allows for the empowerment of project beneficiaries (who are mainly the less powerful in the society. This is the recipe or prerequisite for ensuring local ownership as well as equitable and sustainable development

### **3.2.2 Project cycle and its phases**

Formulation and implementation of development projects and programmes is a process which involves various phases of a project cycle as unravelled by Conyers & Hills, (1984:74) which includes:

### **Planning and the creation of an organization framework**

According to Abdalla, (1997:153) Third World countries have fared badly over the last two or three decades in their intensive attempts to develop, this implies that their levels of poverty, exclusion and inequality have increased over time. This scholar believes that this has attributed to poor planning in the development field, arguing that effective planning should include all stakeholders so as to foster ownership of a project. During the first phase of the project cycle, a decision in principle is usually taken at central government level to effectively plan so as to solve development problems and achieving desired objectives in a project (Conyers & Hills, 1984:74). This therefore means that it is the responsibility of the government to establish the necessary organizational framework to carry out planning; and further ensure availability of the necessary human and financial resources to carry out the planning and implementation effectively.

### **Formulation of goals and objectives**

The second step in the project management cycle is the identification and formulation of project goals and objectives. It involves laying down general guidelines to indicate the course of development and framework within which development planners can formulate more specific objectives. Turner, (1993:1) proposes that this stage should also include establishing basic economic feasibilities, risk level and identification of viable alternatives.

### **Data collection and processing**

The availability of information is essential for determining the nature and scope of developmental problems in a community and consequently for designing alternative courses of action to relieve or solve problems. A host of experts in the project management field such as De Coning & Van Baalen, (2006:232) propose that where data capturing is fully integrated into a project planning and control, full benefits of project management are realized. Techniques of collecting data may include: survey of natural resources, collecting national statistics and even social surveys for specific purposes.

### **Identifying alternative courses of action**

Identification of alternative courses of action in essence means specifying alternative ways that may be adopted to solve development problems and achieve objectives (Conyers & Hills,

1984:74). This stage of the project management cycle may employ a written planning document or a series of proposals for specific development programmes or projects. It is also at this stage that proposed alternatives are also weighed and appraised against each other for successful management.

### **Implementation**

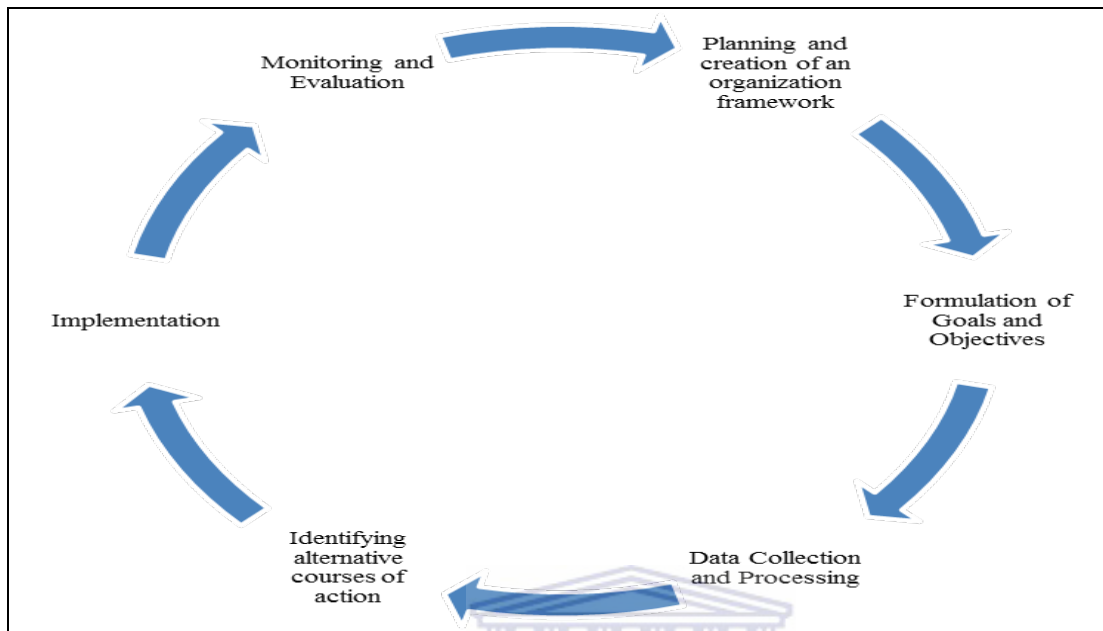
According to Stewart et al., (2010:17), the implementation of plans and projects is often not considered to be part of the planning process, chiefly because the professional planners are not directly involved in the implementation of plans, which is left to technicians and administrative staff. In such cases the linking gap between theory and practice becomes unbridgeable and unrealistic plans are drawn up. In order to fully implement the functions, processes and methods identified for any given project, key principal tools and techniques from the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK) such as management of scope, organization, quality, cost and time should be employed (Burke, 1999).

### **Monitoring and Evaluation**

This is the final stage of the project management cycle as well as the cycle of development planning. Monitoring and Evaluation enables effective illustration of project outcomes and results. In recent times governments and other public sector initiatives are receiving increasing pressures for reforms and effective management, calling for greater stakeholder accountability and incorporation of participatory approaches. PME provides as solution to this challenge as it instills responsibility of monitoring and evaluation to project beneficiaries in the project cycle. To this end it is clear that PME should be undertaken on a continuous basis, thus therefore forming part of the implementation process. This is the last phase in the project management cycle and it seeks to establish what takes place during the implementation phase so as to determine to what extent objectives have been realized, formulate the lessons learnt from the project and to solve problems as they arise.



**Fig 2: Diagrammatic representation of the project cycle**



Adapted from: Conyers & Hills (1984:74)

### **3.3 Designing PME frameworks for better government development projects**

According to Mackay, (2007:7) PME can provide unique information about the performance of government policies, programs, and projects. It also identifies what works, what does not, and the reasons why? PME also provides information about the performance of a government, of individual ministries, agencies as well as individual programmes and projects from the beneficiaries' perspective. Hence this section of the thesis will particularly focus on how to design effective PME frameworks to aid in better development projects. It is crucial to design M&E systems for government development projects and programs that incorporate participatory approaches for example, PME, which encourages participatory management and partnership with local stakeholders. Mackay, (2007:7) argues that it is significant to have a flexible and practical framework for designing PME systems. This in essence means that PME facilitators should work with all stakeholders during project inception to develop the PME plan and later to provide training and capacity building support needed to implement the system. In his approach he includes the following principal elements in designing an effective PME system:

### **3.3.1 A collaborative team approach**

This means that a group made up of project and development institution staff and stakeholders have shared responsibility for PME and not just an individual. The team should be comprised of key PME stakeholders in the development project i.e. people who are committed to PME and who are willing to take responsibility for it in the project, further individual roles and responsibilities for each team member are spelled out in the M&E plan.

### **3.3.2 The PME worksheet**

The centrepiece of the PME approach is a planning worksheet derived from the project's Log Frame used to assist the team to identify and organize the key information needed in the M&E plan. Authors such as Sartorius, (1997) highlight the fundamental importance of a project log frame stating that it helps stakeholders generate consensus on project objectives and especially higher level results. "The PME facilitator works with stakeholders to draw out the Log Frame (or at a minimum the hierarchy of project objectives/logic model) and to define indicators that are practical and important to the stakeholders" (Sartorius, 1997:57). Moreover special attention should be accorded to PME workshops and planning meetings as they help the project management facilitators/staff to think critically about the details of who will participate in each stage of PME, how information will be used to improve the project and how lessons will be shared.

### **3.3.3 Annual project self-assessments**

Self-assessments using participatory workshops and data gathered through the participatory monitoring system are used on an annual basis (Sartorius, 1997:4). They provide a chance for reflecting on project activities and gaining insights on what aspects of the project have worked well, what aspects have not worked well, and why? These self-assessments are conducted by project staff and partners and may or may not involve outside resource people. According to Mulwa (2010:45), these workshops can be done in a 1-5 day format depending on the size and complexity of the project. The result of these sessions is a set of action plans for improving project performance.

### **3.3.4 A written PME plan**

In project management, teams are requested by the project leads to develop a brief, written PME plan through a series of planning meetings that all participants are aware of and agree on what will take place. Ideally, these meetings take place during the project start-up phase when the major stakeholders, including project staff, are in place. The plan also describes how the activities in the PME worksheet will be carried out. According to Sartorius, (1997) the written PME plan should include the following items a description of the project's approach to PME and the process used to develop the PME plan, key users of PME information and their specific information needs, list of PME team members and their responsibilities. Other additional information that ought to be captured here includes PME training plan and the budget for PME activities (Mulwa, 2010:46).

### **3.4 Institutionalizing PME**

Many of the more complex challenges of PME arise when organizations realize the widespread repercussions of shifting to include more stakeholders in assessing the changes caused by their project/programme. Other things that change while shifting from conventional approaches of monitoring and evaluation include: reporting procedures, budgets, indicators and the timing of monitoring change. Mulwa, (2010:188) sheds more light on this issue arguing that "While many are keen to learn more about the internal processes and external impacts in order to perform better, opening up a development programme or project to comments from a wider group of people can be threatening and provoke resistance to change, and may well only be possible under certain conditions". Many questions persists that need more research for instance; how can flexible and context- specific PME processes be better integrated with more rigid and standardized project cycles and management frameworks? What are the real costs of PME and can this investment of time and money be sustained? How can capacity be built while also producing worthwhile information in the organisation and the continuity that PME requires in order to draw useful conclusions? PME raises many questions by inviting more and diverse stakeholder groups into the process. Therefore it is important to document and bring in rules and procedures to govern PME in organization departments so as to mitigate potential internal and external conflicts. Bringing PME into the legal domain and public context can be viewed as institutionalising accountability mechanisms.

### 3.5 Assessment of institutional capacity for M&E against regional and global systems

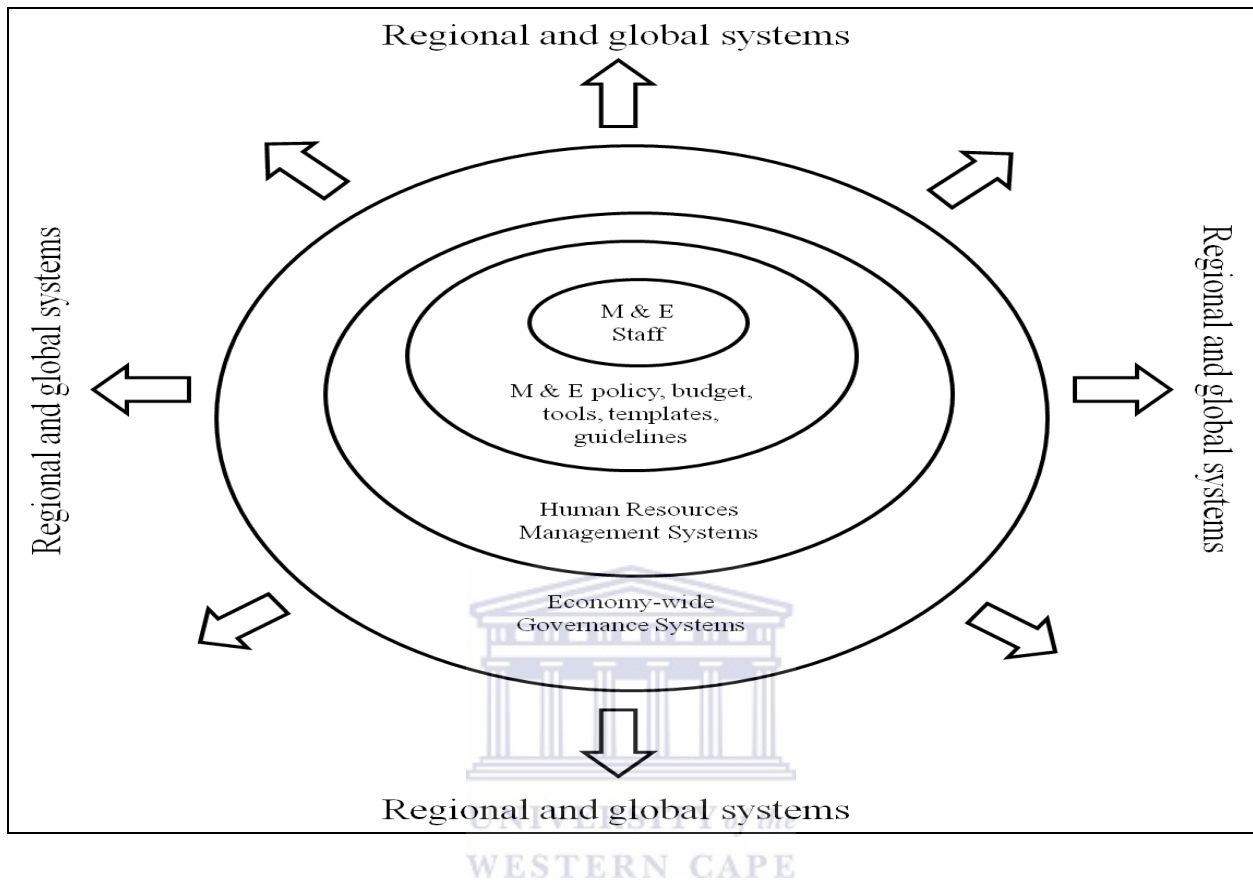


Fig 3: Source, Adapted from UNDP Conceptual Framework for Capacity Assessment

M&E systems should be driven by sector policy goals which are based on the needs of the project beneficiaries and they should be practical about what can be achieved as well as institutional arrangements for decision-making. An assessment of the institutional capacity for M&E identifies the various elements that make up institutional capacity starting by placing the skills of the individual staff member at the core organizational capacity, Human Resource Management systems and then broadening to issues of how organizational policies and systems support and reinforce performance of the individual and thereby contribute to institutional capacity.

### **3.6 Chapter summary**

The chapter has described the practical approaches to implementation of PME and the general fit in public sector development projects. The process of designing PME for better government projects was also put into focus, noting that PME is of fundamental importance for project management success as it allows for the empowerment of project beneficiaries (who are mainly the less powerful in the society. Furthermore special attention was accorded to the process of institutionalizing PME in development initiatives that brings PME into the legal domain and public context thus enhancing accountability mechanisms. The next chapter presents a report of the fieldwork results of this study that was undertaken in selected community development projects, in TARDA



## CHAPTER FOUR: METHODOLOGY AND FIELDWORK RESULTS

### 4.1 Introduction

The Section below presents a report of the fieldwork results of this study. Seven key factors will be demystified and discussed so as to clearly communicate the results collected from the field. First TARDA's operations framework, the second section will address the development projects undertaken by TARDA. Thirdly, the fieldwork results will provide a dissection on the level and existence of community participation in monitoring and evaluation of the projects. The fourth factor will narrow down the institutional arrangements in TARDA (rules, procedures, steps for PME within the structure of TARDA. The fifth aspect focuses on an assessment of the community's perception on the presence and future of TARDA. Other issues to be presented here include the relationship between PME and the project management body of knowledge (PMBOK) in TARDA context and the position of PME themes (i.e. community participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision making) in the context of fieldwork results.

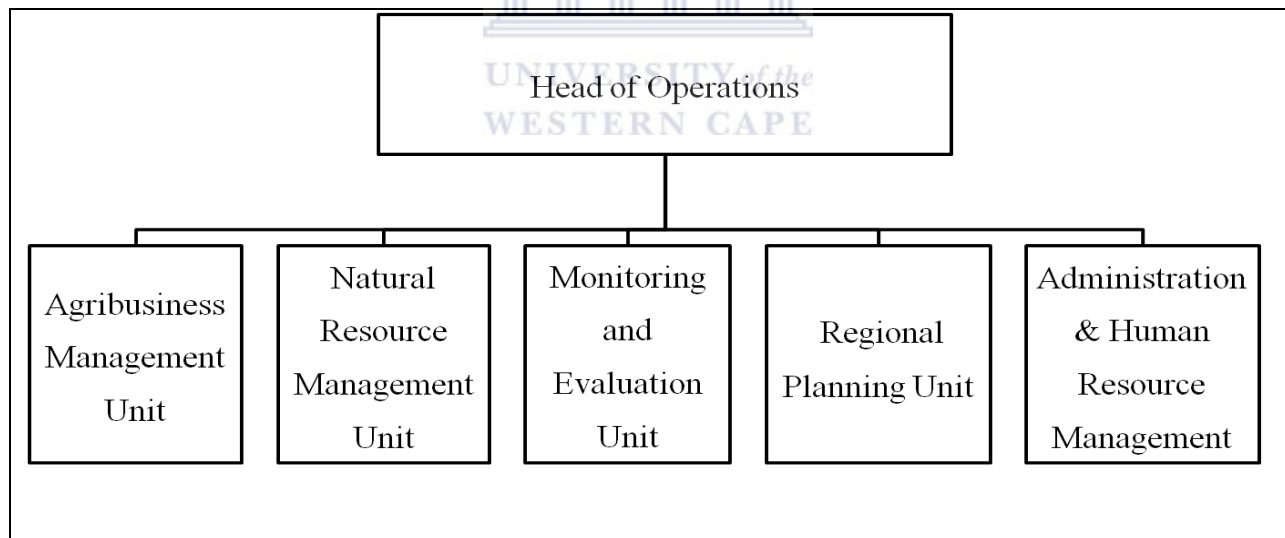
### 4.2 Case study area: Tana River County

This research was carried out in three administrative divisions of the Tana River County Garsen, Bura and Galole divisions. Tana River County is situated in the Coastal Province of Kenya, and is named after the Tana River which is the largest river in Kenya. It has an area of 38,446 square kilometres (14,844 sq. mi) and a population of 240,075 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2009). The major ethnic groups are the Pokomo (many of whom are farmers), as well as Orma and Wardey who are predominantly nomadic. The County is generally dry and prone to drought with only rainfall distributed over two distinct seasons. The long rainfall season occurs between April and July and the short rainfall season occurs from October to December. Conflicts have occurred between farmers and nomadic people over access to water. Flooding is also a regular problem, caused by heavy rainfall in upstream areas of the Tana River. Tana River County comprises several areas of forest, woodland and grassland, however despite the apparent adequate natural resources, the region remains marginalized from the rest of the country (Muturi, 2008:19).

### 4.3 Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA)

“Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA) was established by an Act of Parliament CAP 443 in 1974 and mandated to formulate integrated regional development plans in consultation with other stakeholders, TARDA’s area of jurisdiction covers approximately 138,000 km<sup>2</sup>, and comprising 100,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Tana Basin and 38,000 km<sup>2</sup> of the Athi Basin in Tana County” (Agoya, 2008:16). Key functions of the Authority as stipulated by the Act are: to advise the government and the ministries set out in the schedule on all matters affecting the development of the area including the apportionment of resources, to draw up and keep up to date a long-range development plan for the area, to effect a programme of monitoring of the performance of projects within the area so as to improve that performance, to establish responsibility and therefore improve future planning. Nevertheless, the functions of the Authority have been revised over time in order to make it a more effective vehicle for development.

#### 4.3.1 TARDA operations framework



Sources: TARDA Strategic Plan 2010/2014 (Sec 7:1)

### **4.3.2 TARDA development projects**

#### **Emali livestock multiplication project**

The chief function of the Emali livestock multiplication project is to promote the development of livestock industry in the TARDA basin. From an interview conducted with the project manager in charge of the Emali livestock project, it was clear that this project also provides superior and desired breeding stock to farmers at reasonable prices. The involvement of the community in TARDA projects allows imparts better livestock management skills to farmers therefore improving their livelihoods.

#### **Mwingi water project**

The purpose of the Mwingi water project is the provision of portable water for the people of Mwingi town and those along the pipeline route. The project was designed to produce 3,250m<sup>3</sup> per day and distribute the water through communal kiosks and individual connections (Agoya, 2008:47).

#### **Tana delta irrigation project (TDIP)**

The Tana delta irrigation project was established to open up the delta area to farming. TARDA acquired 28000 ha of the Eastern Delta area of the Tana River and earmarked the first 16000ha for commercial rice farming. Individual interviews conducted with the project manager established that the TDIP project also engaged farmers in other commercial crops such as cotton, sugar, palm oil, bananas or settlement programme under smallholder models of commercial farming. Other objectives of the TDIP were to earn foreign exchange through sales of commodities as well as creating employment and incomes for the local communities.

#### **Kitui honey refinery**

Through an interview with the manager in charge of performance, monitoring and evaluation, the fieldwork results established that the principal objective of the Kitui honey refinery project included stimulation of honey production, streamlining honey processing and marketing in Kitui District. Additionally, the project leaders also participate in organizing honey producers into beekeepers groups, purchasing and collection of crude / honey in the district and also in ensuring suitable prices to honey producers in order to increase rural incomes for the communities. The



research also deduced that the Kitui honey refinery also ensures production of high quality honey from the district and hence stimulate external markets. It also creates self-employment for the local people to be attached to the processing plant and therefore can be considered as a source of livelihood to the beneficiaries.

### **Masinga irrigation project**

Initially, TARDA would grow horticultural crops on contract for exporters and in the process explored the possibilities to export the produce directly, however today the Masinga irrigation project has enabled the RDA to generate revenue from the sales of French beans chillies, brinjals, straw berries and passion fruits due to irrigation efforts by the farmers. An interview conducted with Fundraising and Projects manager indicated that this project was also established as a demonstration/experimental project to research on the suitability of different horticultural crops in the area to necessitate making marginal decisions through comparisons crop enterprises.

### **Kiambere beekeeping project**

Focus group discussion with the community members in the Tana County revealed that the Kiambere beekeeping project was started so as to make beehives for establishing an apiary to produce honey for the Kitui Honey Refinery. The community members also make beehives for sale to the needy beekeepers within the neighbouring honey producing districts thus earning some self-generated income.

### **Kiambere irrigation project**

Fieldwork results from an interview conducted with the project manager in charge of Kiambere irrigation project established that the chief objective of this project was to grow horticultural crops mainly okra, chillies, brinjals, and baby corn for export. The fieldwork results also established that Tomatoes, onions and green maize were also cultivated for local markets. Other key aims of the project were to create employment opportunities in Mbeere District, produce horticultural crops for export and earn foreign currency. The project members also engaged in the provision of electrical power to TARDA regional offices and even in their homes.

### Environment conservation projects

TARDA has established an afforestation programme whose key objective is to plant trees in all areas under TARDA's jurisdiction. This has been done by encouraging the communities around the reservoirs through public awareness campaigns on the importance of planting trees in their farms. An interview with the manager in charge of performance, monitoring and evaluation at TARDA indicated that the organization also identifies with other Government departments, stakeholders and communities in overall catchment rehabilitation and management in order to guarantee sustainable development within the basins.

#### 4.3.3 TARDA implementation matrix

Project	Objective	Activities	Expected Output	PME
<b>Emali livestock project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve revenue flows</li> <li>• Technology transfer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heifer upgrade</li> <li>• Artificial insemination</li> <li>• Embryo transfer</li> <li>• Dairy goat programme</li> <li>• Value addition for dairy products</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 200 herd of cattle</li> <li>• 659 Ha improved pastures</li> <li>• Improved milk output in the region by 50%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> <li>• Community Representatives</li> </ul>

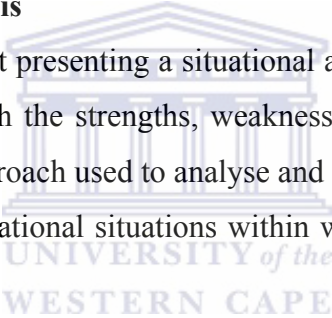
<p><b>Kitui honey production programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community capacity Building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reconstruct honey refinery</li> <li>• Upgrade honey</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve honey production by 100%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• K-Rep bank</li> <li>• Community representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Masinga irrigation project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate project and improve revenue</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate irrigation infrastructure</li> <li>• Establish horticultural production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 60 ha Irrigated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> <li>• Community representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Tana Delta (rice) irrigation project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitation of rice project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Repair rubber dam</li> <li>• Rehabilitate 1663 ha rice including irrigation infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Functional rubber dam</li> <li>• 10,000 Tonne white rice/year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> <li>• Community representatives</li> </ul>

<p><b>Kiambere irrigation project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate project and improve revenue flows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate irrigation infrastructure</li> <li>• Establish cotton seed unit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 150 ha irrigated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> <li>• Community representatives</li> </ul>
<p><b>Mwingi irrigation project</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rehabilitate project and improve revenue flows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modify Irrigation infrastructure to introduce gravity system</li> <li>• Horticultural production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 140 Ha irrigate land</li> <li>• Fruit production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> <li>• Community members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Masinga dam resort</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve revenue flows</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Construct conference facility</li> <li>• Water Boiling Plant</li> <li>• Introduce tourism circuit</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase revenue by 200%</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TARDA M&amp;E officers</li> </ul>

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**4.3.4 TARDA situational analysis**

This Section of the research aims at presenting a situational analysis of TARDA. The situational analysis was conducted to establish the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in the institution. In this study it is an approach used to analyse and determine the SWOT of TARDA in terms of internal and external operational situations within which the organization operates and their impact on project operations.



**Institutional strengths and opportunities**

**TARDA’s key strengths**

- TARDA is established by an Act of Parliament and therefore protected by the Constitution.
- Existing asset base including land and water that form a basis for development in the region.
- Ownership of two largest multipurpose reservoirs (Masinga & Kiambere) in the country.

## **Opportunities**

- Huge development potential for hydropower, tourism, Irrigation, manpower and a fairly good communication infrastructure network.
- A line Ministry which is the main driver in Regional Development Policy.
- Diverse ecologies offering widespread economic opportunities in agriculture, livestock, wildlife, fisheries and community development.
- Private sector willingness to participate in development due to favourable government policy and conducive investor environment.
- Existence of research institutions and universities, which offer opportunities for collaborative research and technological transfer

## **Institutional challenges**

### **Internal weaknesses**

- Weak financial base and procedures.
- Poor staffing composition characterized by inadequate technical staffing levels
- Lack of enforcement of administrative rules and regulations.
- Weak Information Communications and Technology (ICT) infrastructure and monitoring and evaluation, reporting and feedback system.
- Poor collaboration with GOK, stakeholders and other development partners.

### **External Threats**

- Inadequate funding from the exchequer.
- Encroachment on TARDA's assets.
- Lack of legal framework for intervention and/or oversight roles.

#### **4.4 The Management position of PME in public sector development programmes**

Six semi structured interviews were conducted among TARDA senior management staff: (including the Natural Resource & Projects Manager, Finance Manager and the Monitoring and Evaluation Manager) at TARDA main office headquarters in Nairobi with regards to the position of PME in TARDA development projects and insights at the national level. The senior managers

highlighted and stressed the fact that a well-designed and implemented PME system allows project beneficiaries to fully participate in public sector project management. They also alluded to the fact that PME had helped increase levels of accountability within TARDA organization structure and at the same time positively impacting on the lives of Tana County residents.

In seeking more clarification the organization's finance manager revealed that most public sector institutions and authorities are facing increased calls from human rights groups to exhibit transparency and accountability and deliver their services to citizens with integrity and efficiency. Through the interviews with the managers it was also evident that PME plays a vital role in public sector development programs, as it allows the citizens to have a stake in the running and management of government authorities through monitoring and evaluation outcomes of the projects while at the same time advocating for good governance through participation.

#### **4.5 Key stakeholders involved in the PME process in TARDA**

In order to assess the main stakeholders involved in the PME process in TARDA, two local government officials and three TARDA staff were interviewed on their responsibility in the M&E process. From the interviews, PME stakeholders that were mentioned included: the TARDA Monitoring and Evaluation unit which is tasked with the responsibility of designing PME tools, supervising collection of data, analysing data and generating organizations monthly and quarterly reports. Key partners were the Ministry of Regional Development Monitoring & Evaluation committee that was responsible for receiving PME reports from Tana County and subsequently providing feedback to TARDA at the national level. Other stakeholders that were involved in the running and Monitoring and Evaluation unit included the Pokomo, Orma and Wardey communities who are the main inhabitants of the Tana County. From a section of the community member's interviews; they cited their responsibility as that of data collection, submission of data to the project facilitators receiving feedback and further implementing decisions on the projects that they were part of to ensure successful monitoring and evaluation.

The fieldwork results also elaborated the various PME methodologies used by TARDA stakeholders to ensure success of their projects. Routine data collection, analysis, supervision and quarterly reports form an essential part of TARDA's PME for purposes of assessing performance and instituting corrective measures in a timely manner through community

participation. However there was minimal sensitisation of the main stakeholders, inadequate training of staff in change management and less teamwork between the project personnel and the community in general in the implementation of PME. Lastly it is worthwhile to note that interviews conducted with the project managers revealed that from 2012 onwards, project operation plans and PME methodologies will be assessed on quarterly basis to ensure that they remain relevant, feasible and deliver the expected outputs that contribute to sustainable development. To this end, the project facilitators proposed that TARDA will develop annual work plans and related resource needs to implement the plan as well as evaluate them to achieve desired goals and objectives.

#### **4.6 The contribution of participatory monitoring and evaluation in TARDA projects**

The TARDA management team explained that PME creates an enabling environment for stakeholder groups to learn how to define and interpret changes for themselves and hence to take greater control over their own development. The manager in charge of performance, monitoring and evaluation cited the case of Masinga irrigation project where community-monitoring has enabled the community gain influence over policies that govern natural resource and irrigation management. Results from the interviews with community members also showed that PME had enabled previously marginalised communities like the Orma and Wardey gain strength, confidence and vision to work collectively with others a case in point is the Mwingi water project where all communities had come together for a common cause i.e. water generation. This meant that incorporating PME in the projects had led to empowerment of community members to take action and improve their lives. PME has also empowered the Tana county residents since it had given them a voice in the running and management of projects such as the water projects.

The field work results emphasized the fact that PME had led to improvement of accountability in TARDA management to the general public (immediate community and the country at large). For instance research established that the Kitui honey refinery had been able to attain higher accountability levels thus stimulating more honey production, honey processing and marketing in Kitui District since the successful implementation of PME. Production of high quality honey from the district had stimulated growth of both internal and external markets. Through effective accountability mechanisms it has also been able to create self-employment opportunities for the



local people through openness and fairness in the organizations processing plant. With regards to the role of PME in effective decision-making in the organization, TARDA management felt that PME systems had played a very vital role in enhancing effective decision making as there was more room for consultation with the community members as well as horizontal flow of information in the projects. The management team also claimed that PME systems enabled them to generate more crucial data, assess progress systematically, and take corrective measures in order to achieve their objectives, demand services from various service providers like Kenya Power and Lightning Company thus boosting investor confidence in the public domain

From the empirical research, the project facilitators revealed that PME had significantly boosted community participation and enthusiastic efforts towards community projects. Marginalized communities were able to debate on key issues that affected them for instance the Kiambere and the Masinga irrigation projects where community participation in monitoring and evaluation had enabled the community to collectively understand, learn from and reflect upon the design, management and implementation activities related to the TARDA management development plans thus achieve overall objectives and consequently lead to eradication of poverty in Tana County

#### **4.7 Integration of key projects that affect community participation into the project management body of knowledge**

##### **4.7.1 Project integration**

Project integration incorporates the three main project management processes of planning, execution and control- where inputs from several knowledge areas are brought together (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006:233). The Emali Livestock Multiplication project had linked together effective planning and control mechanisms of the entire project to aid in speedy multiplication of livestock and consequently leading to the development of livestock industry in the TARDA basin. The project facilitators appreciated the fact that integration of the community members to the planning, execution and control of the project had allowed impart better livestock management skills to farmers.

#### **4.7.2 Project scope management**

Project scope management ensures that the project includes all the work required and only the work required, for completing the project successfully. It is primarily concerned with defining and controlling what is or is not included in the project to meet the sponsors' and stakeholders' goals and objectives. It consists of authorisation, scope planning, scope definition, scope change management and scope verification (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006:233). The fieldwork results indicated that for water projects to be successful scope is of key significance for instance provision and distribution of portable water, were the two main themes for the scope of operation for the Mwingi water project for the people of Mwingi town and this was done solely through communal kiosks and individual pipeline connections.

#### **4.7.3 Project time management**

Time is money and therefore a cost to the project. According to De Coning & Van Baalen (2006:233), "project time management is the processes that ensures timely performance of the project and consists of activity definition, activity sequencing, duration estimating, establishing the calendar, schedule development and time control". The project management facilitators indicated that TARDA rules and procedure are very strict on project time management citing that poor time management leads to losses in the horticulture industry. The Kiambere Irrigation project focuses on growing horticultural crops mainly okra, chillies, brinjals, and karella and baby corn for export. If project time management is not effectively observed this could lead to the products going bad and consequently losses of foreign exchange.

#### **4.7.4 Project cost management**

Project cost management ensures that the projects are completed within the approved budget. Specialists in the field of project management such De Coning & Van Baalen, (2006) propose that project cost management should consists of resource planning, cost estimating, cost budgeting, cash flow and cost control. From the interviews with TARDA M&E manager he emphasized that the community has a limited role in project cost management. They were only involved in some aspects of budget formulation, leaving the final approval decisions to the top management and thus room for manipulation of personal interests. For instance TARDA had lost seven million Kenyan Shillings in the Tana delta irrigation project though improper budget

mechanisms and extravagant costs on administration of the project, this did not go well with the locals as it led to retrenchment of personnel.

#### **4.7.5 Project quality management**

Project quality management ensures that the project will satisfy the needs for which it was undertaken (De Coning & Van Baalen 2006). It consists of determining the required condition, quality condition, quality planning, quality assurance and quality control. A quality assurance department was lacking in the organization despite being ISO certified. Honey quality and marketing had significantly deteriorated over the years due to lack of effective community participation in quality control and thus loss of the market share in the local and regional markets.

#### **4.7.6 Project risk management**

Project risk management mainly identifies analyses and responds to project risks; it consists of risk identification, risk quantification and impact, response development and control (De Coning & Van Baalen, 2006). Initially, TARDA would produce crops on contract for exporters without ascertaining the risk involved; this has led to imminent losses of huge amounts and bad debts for the organization, since some parties in the contract dishonour the contract terms.

### **4.8 Institutional procedures and arrangements that guide PME in TARDA**

A strong and efficient operation framework matrix has continued to guide PME in TARDA, thus enabling the management to continuously focus on needs of the Tana community. Operational excellence in the monitoring and evaluation unit has led to high value services and exceptional service delivery in the community projects thus leading to efficiency. However the lack of adequate institutional capacity within the TARDA has impeded achievement of development potential in different Tana county regions under the jurisdiction of TARDA. Although the management has established performance Monitoring and evaluation unit to address capacity issues in the RDA, there is still lack of qualified and experienced human resources, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate financial and technical resources and limited institutional procedures to guide effective PME. However the field work results established that in the TARDA strategic

plan for 2012-2014 the development authority endeavours to focus on training and skills development, promotion of ICT, and strengthen the participatory monitoring and evaluation unit.

#### **4.9 Knowledge and understanding of participation among community members**

Individual respondents were interviewed and requested to provide brief understanding of the term participation in TARDA projects. They gave varying definitions and understandings of the term participation in their projects. Some definitions will be presented below:

- “Voluntary involvement by the community members in one or different ways in the public programmes or even community development projects”
- “Involvement of community members by providing labour, fundraising/raising funds or even undertaking self-help towards maintaining TARDA Projects”
- “The community members offering themselves for free labour in community projects”

The fieldwork results established that majority however viewed participation as a partnership or working together with the TARDA staff and project officials from the planning to the implementation of the development projects.

#### **4.10 Integration and management of key PME themes in TARDA development projects**

As explained by Oakley (1991: 161), the themes of any form of development practice are linked to the development analysis which the practice employs. The integration of key PME themes in TARDA projects was therefore put into focus during the fieldwork so as to meet the research objectives. The discussion in the previous chapter revealed that participatory development approaches including PME, have major guiding principles in terms of undertaking public sector development projects/programmes in communities. These included: the principles of community participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision-making. The objective of this section is therefore to examine how the various PME themes discussed in preceding chapter are integrated in various TARDA development projects based on the interviews and discussions conducted during the fieldwork. The following key PME themes were scrutinized.

#### **4.10.1 Incorporation of community participation in TARDA projects**

Interviews with TARDA middle management staff revealed that the community is regularly involved in various processes of the development practice ranging from planning, implementation monitoring and evaluation. A meeting with the Deputy Manager in charge of operations revealed that community representatives from the vast Tana County are brought on board in the weekly meetings and are given a chance to articulate their ideas and propositions of the projects. It is also through these meetings that they are able to raise issues such as conflicts and security issues arising among the Pokomo and Orma over management of the TARDA water points in the region. These weekly gatherings also enabled the beneficiaries articulate their project needs and their desires for low prices on TARDA farm produce. In finding out whether PME systems enhanced participation of project beneficiaries, the researcher conducted a focus group discussion with the community members on their participation in Emali Livestock Multiplication project whose prime objective was to promote the development of livestock industry within the Tana basin.

The project beneficiaries argued that they participated in the project meetings as they wanted to achieve their collective goals and therefore attending TARDA meetings was considered as vital. Attendance of routine organization briefing sessions and meetings also enabled them acquire superior and desired breeding stock at rational prices as well as imparting enhanced livestock management skills. The research also established that the TARDA meetings at the county level took place in Swahili and Pokomo languages which are the two native languages. This enabled the community members to participate and to articulate unique aspects of their local culture.

Furthermore every community member is given an equal chance to participate in the community halls. In a different interview session with one of the TARDA project facilitators, he emphasized that all the projects that had incorporated PME in their project cycles not only had the project improved in terms of quality but also interactions with project beneficiaries indicated that there was a greater enhancement of community participation, thus giving them a greater voice in the running of the Regional Development Authority (RDA). Discussions with the immediate Pokomo community also pointed out that PME had enhanced full community participation in the Kiambere conservation project with an establishment of more than 100 tree nurseries and an

afforestation programme of more than 3 million tree seedlings aided by community participation. The involvement of project beneficiaries in resource planning, investment, PME and management of TARDA projects can therefore be seen as key to sustainable human development, poverty reduction, food security and even improvement of livelihoods in the Tana County region.

#### **4.10.2 A reflection on accountability and transparency mechanisms**

In the quest to establish the integration of accountability and transparency themes within TARDA, the researcher interviewed the project heads in the Masinga and the Kiambere irrigation projects on the procurement of irrigation equipment, timeliness in performance of core project duties and budgeting mechanisms among project facilitators. The field work results of this study brought into the limelight differing opinions on the contribution of PME towards enhancing transparency and accountability in TARDA. From the project facilitator's perspective, major projects that had incorporated PME in the project cycle ensured that the procurement of irrigation equipment, farm machinery and organization financial procedures were open to the public thus ensuring a free accountable and transparent process. Furthermore, to improve overall accountability and transparency mechanisms in the organization the management had also ensured that project beneficiaries were part of procurement committees alongside the TARDA management in the purchase of irrigation sprinklers, hoses and generators in different projects.

In an exclusive interview with TARDA monitoring and evaluation manager on the role of PME in enhancing accountability and transparency, he attested to the fact that TARDA values of integrity and accountability in service delivery ensured that the organization remained a strong and credible institution. The field work results indicated that PME systems in TARDA had improved overall service delivery through accountability among project teams. Timeliness in performance of tasks by project facilitators was crucial to the success of various projects and underperforming staff members were put on notice. The PME frameworks had also ensured monitoring of the performance of various projects so as to improve their performance, establishment of responsibility and more importantly to improved future planning. A review of the organization operation plans and constitution revealed that budgeting and financial management was open to the community since annual TARDA accounts were published and

made available to the public, however focus group discussions with the community established that the community still has a limited role in finance and revenue allocations, for instance they mainly participated in the budget formulation but rarely in the budget approvals.

#### **4.10.3 The role of PME in enhancing empowerment among Tana County communities**

The interviews conducted the project beneficiaries indicated through collaboration with other government institutions like the Agricultural Society of Kenya (ASK), TARDA had established mechanisms and instruments for empowering local communities to enable them participate in regional development activities. Community members were allowed to participate in the annual ASK show with no charges in order showcase their crops and livestock at the national level and also to network with other experienced farmers country-wide. The RDA had also fostered close and more proactive linkages with the community and other development partners to promote sustainability in regional resource development and also to empower the community members.

Previously marginalized communities such as the Pokomo and Orma stated that TARDA had empowered them through Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) training to enhance self-reliance. Other groups that had benefited from the skills-enhancement program included the youth and women who had been empowered through irrigation development thus enabling them to participate in the running of the development initiatives. Additionally, the research also established that communities were expected to identify their needs and opportunities, prescribe solutions, mobilize their resources and implement the decisions on their own with minimal external support. PME had also contributed to the empowerment of community members through teamwork within the projects, the organizational values called for: community respect, participation and full contribution in addressing shared challenges through common effort.

A review of previous field work plans and reports conducted in TARDA indicated that some of the projects that incorporated PME in the entire project management cycle were able to empower the Pokomo and Orma communities previously marginalised to take position on daily activities that affected them. During the research it was established that the local communities were expected to identify their needs and opportunities, prescribe solutions make decisions and take

actions, mobilize their resources and implement the decisions on their own with minimal external support.

#### **4.10.4 Role of PME in improving decision-making among TARDA project beneficiaries**

As the discussion in the previous chapter reveals, PME improves decision-making among all stakeholders involved in the implementation of development projects since it provides the stakeholders with timely information needed for making informed decisions. In order to assess the role played by PME in enhancing decision-making in TARDA, several questions were posed to the community members in order to gain insight on how decisions are made within the different development projects. The researcher posed these questions through various focus group discussions and forums in which it was noted that most of the projects with PME systems easily made their decisions through consensus building by participation of all members based on the available information generated through PME. The research established that PME had enhanced participation of community members in decision making by enabling them to equally participate in meetings and activities thus increasing the success chances project sustainability.

The interviews with the managers also observed that Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) had provided decision support for TARDA management and had built capacity of the project beneficiaries, by impacting them with skills to appraise the quality of service delivery and further ensure downward accountability service providers to the people of Tana County. The community members had more capacity and were able to make informed decisions using PME information, this enabled them determine their values and priorities to address in the Tana County. For instance project beneficiaries in the Masinga irrigation project were able to hold routine meetings among themselves in order to monitor the farming activities against set irrigation time frames and therefore overall improvement in joint decision-making.

#### **4.11 Challenges of implementing PME within TARDA projects**

The research established that lack of monetary incentives had made it difficult for local activists and community change agents to undertake and continue PME work in the county, majority of the project assistants were working on voluntary and part-time basis. When caught up with tight family and work commitments they failed to show up in the community meetings citing personal engagements and therefore PME activities in some projects had to come to a standstill. The field



work results also pointed out inadequate staff capacity in the entire TARDA hampered PME efforts and general project coordination. Majority of the crucial departments like regional planning, M&E and agribusiness management lacked of qualified and trained workers, who in turn could train community members and the beneficiaries in PME. From the field work conducted it was evident that present trainings were being conducted by chiefs, and project assistants who worked on part-time basis.

In terms of challenges faced in implementing PME systems in TARDA; interviews with the project officers indicated that the PME concept itself is a bit difficult as one needs to clearly understand the project activities, output, outcomes and goals so as to develop relevant indicators. Finding the right local terminologies with groups was challenging and making the groups understand the concept, especially in the initial stages, was said to have been tasking. The officers also hinted that establishing an effective PME system requires more time therefore more meetings with the community especially in the initial stages. This required resources that were not readily available from the project budgets.

#### **4.12 Interviews with monitoring and evaluation specialists on PME in development projects**

Interviews with Monitoring and Evaluation Specialists revealed that government development projects should strive to build a participatory and consultative process involving the community stakeholders. The PME process should strive to ensure that it involves consultation start with the development of goals and continue with setting outcomes and building an indicator system. Indicators cannot be simply turned over to technicians, because the community has to be consulted and agree on both goals and indicators. Interviews with Monitoring and Evaluation Specialists drawing on their experience from different programs and projects recommended a flexible and practical framework for designing and ensuring success of PME systems in development projects. Further the research showed that a PME facilitator can work with stakeholders during project inception to develop the PME plan and later to provide training and capacity building support needed to implement the system.

Monitoring and evaluation specialists also indicated that PME experiences should always be documented for further reference and foster information generation. Drawing on the case Tana County residents, monitoring was done by mere observation with little and haphazard documentation as the beneficiaries largely relied on their recalling capacity. When asked why they did not keep clear PME records of the information that they observed, the frequent response was that writing itself was too involving. They categorically stated that the records they prefer to keep most are the attendance at TARDA project meetings citing that these records are easy to keep and are less demanding. What is required for these records is just to tick in the register the names of members that are present or absent during a project meeting.

#### **4.13 Chapter summary**

From the field results it was evident that active participation of stakeholders in all stages of the project cycle is a critical factor in determining the success or failure of the TARDA projects. The integration of key PME themes i.e. participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision-making in TARDA project management cycle had not only enhanced the ownership of the project, but had also ensured that maximum use is made of the knowledge and experiences of all relevant stakeholders involved. Furthermore the effectiveness and efficiency of the project is increased if all key PME themes are drawn upon. Public sector project leaders are encouraged to seek involvement of community members just like the case of TARDA, where appropriate. The next Chapter will present the research findings of the study which is a close scrutiny of the fieldwork results and an accordance of meaning in the context of the research questions and the available theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 2 and 3 of this research.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: RESEARCH FINDINGS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This Chapter will present the research findings of the study. The findings are a critical analysis of the fieldwork results and a reflection of meaning against of the backdrop of the research questions, theoretical framework and PME implementation approaches presented in Chapter1, 2 and 3 of this study respectively. It attempts to provide a detailed account on the role played by PME in enhancing community participation, accountability and transparency, empowerment, decision-making and capacity building within Tana County communities. Moreover, the findings also provide a situational analysis of TARDA and its contribution towards the country's vision 2030 which is the economic blueprint in poverty alleviation and sustainable development. Furthermore the documentation and sharing of PME experiences within TARDA will be analysed as well as challenges with reference to the coordination of PME.

### **5.2 The contribution of PME in enhancing community participation in TARDA**

The key concept of participatory development includes the collaborative efforts of peoples' involvement from the very beginning of project identification, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation (Rahman, 1993; Oakley, 1991). The TARDA project facilitators emphasized that all the projects that had incorporated PME in their project cycles not only had the project improved in terms of quality but also interactions with project beneficiaries indicated that there was a greater enhancement of community participation, thus giving them a greater voice in the running of the Regional Development Authority (RDA) . Discussions with the immediate Pokomo community also pointed out that PME had enhanced full community participation in the Kiambere conservation project with an establishment of more than 100 tree nurseries and an afforestation programme of more than 3 million tree seedlings aided by community participation. The involvement of project beneficiaries in resource planning, investment, PME and management of TARDA projects can therefore be seen as key to sustainable human development, poverty reduction, food security and even improvement of livelihoods in the Tana County region.

The TARDA management also explained that the community members from the expansive Tana County were involved in weekly meetings and workshops to enable them share their ideas and developmental themes. Local community involvement was done through consultation, involvement and participation. However, although the meetings with community members were presented in the native languages i.e. Swahili and Pokomo; there were also issues to do with punctuality and attendance. Some of the community members lamented that there was poor cooperation among the project beneficiaries and this hindered their communication with management. From the strategic plan and the organizational Constitution it was evident that community participation and involvement policies were designed to provide for community participation and embrace issues of environmental conservation and economic empowerment of the local Tana county community. Nevertheless a drawback of PME towards participation as explained by community members was that any risk of failure in PME process; all project beneficiaries were affected.

### **5.3 The contribution of PME in enhancing transparency and accountability in TARDA**

According to Kaaria (2005) and Eldis (2005), participatory monitoring and evaluation provides decision-support for process oriented management and builds capacity and skills in assessing the quality of service delivery and enhances downward accountability to communities by service providers. Other scholars in this field such as Hohenheim (2002) reveal the practical notion that transparency and accountability within an organization's activities is not plausible until project beneficiaries demand services legitimately meant for them. The field work results of this study brought into the limelight differing opinions on the contribution of PME towards enhancing transparency and accountability in TARDA. From the project facilitator's perspective; projects where PME was part of the project cycle, procurement and financial procedures were open to the public and thus ensured a free accountable and transparent process.

Kiambere irrigation project beneficiaries revealed having been part of previous procurement committees alongside the TARDA management that saw the purchase of seven hundred irrigation sprinklers, hoses and generators as part of the project. An interview with TARDA deputy manager also presented the role of PME in enhancing accountability and transparency attesting to the fact that TARDA values of integrity and accountability in service delivery

ensured that the organization remained a strong and credible institution. This is in line with Kenya's Vision 2030 economic blueprint which advocates for transparent, accountable, ethical and results-oriented government institutions. This also reinforced as to the reason why budgeting and financial management has to be made open to the community i.e. all TARDA accounts were published for the community members to see how the apportionment of resources and management of finances is undertaken.

#### **5.4 The role of PME in promoting capacity building within TARDA**

Davids (2009), draws attention to the fact that capacity building enables institutions to be more effective and efficient in the process of identifying, implementing, monitoring and evaluation of developmental projects. Community members are therefore able to determine their own values, priorities and act on their own decisions. The research pointed out to the fact that TARDA was committed towards building capacity of community members on natural resource management. During the field work, the monitoring and evaluation team was seen to be busy conducting a needs assessment for the Masinga irrigation project participants and had even developed a training plan which was to be implemented quarterly. This would build on capacity of the staff and community members therefore enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of all community projects.

In programmes and projects that had integrated concrete PME plans in their cycles, community members had more capacity and were more able to make informed decisions using the PME information. Further this also enabled them determine their priorities and act on their own decisions on matters pertinent to them. Some of the key areas of focus were capacity building through training on the value of environment conservation, biodiversity management to minimize adverse effects from forest destructions and lastly the promotion use of ground and surface water to satisfy the domestic, livestock and industrial demands. These were seen as essential factors towards the sustenance of the development initiatives.

Some of the key areas of focus were capacity building through training on the value of environment conservation, biodiversity management in collaboration with other stakeholders to minimize adverse effects from forest destructions and lastly the promotion use of ground and surface water to satisfy the domestic, livestock and industrial demands. These were seen as essential factors towards the sustenance of the development initiatives. However, despite having

established a PME team to deal with capacity issues, there were challenges ranging from: lack of qualified and experienced human resources in the monitoring and evaluation department, inadequate infrastructure, inadequate financial and technical resources skills to strengthen the capacity of the entire project team. These shortcomings were seen to affect the nature, scope and establishment of PME systems within the organization.

### **5.5 The contribution of PME in enhancing effective decision-making in TARDA**

The most important element of participatory development approaches is that people themselves make decisions on implementation of projects or programmes that affect them (Slocum, Wichhart, Rocheleau & Thomas-Slayter, 1995). PME specifically, encourages self-reliance in decision making and therefore strengthening people's capacities to take action and promote change in the development projects. The research revealed that projects that had embraced the PME practice had a faster and more reliable decision making process that was inclusive of all the community representatives. Moreover, the evaluation of these projects was undertaken in a collaborative manner with both the project facilitators and beneficiaries being part of all phases of PME: describing, analysing results and making judgments on outcomes in the project activities.

Furthermore, there was consensus among community members in decision-making since all information needed for decision making was generated and made available through PME. The challenge however was that though the community representatives were very much involved and consulted in the PME process, their participation was mainly limited to consultation. In many occasions the, Pokomo and Orma communities were often regarded as an information source rather than as key actors capable of playing a central role in the decision-making processes of the organization. However in projects that had strictly adhered to PME procedures, such as: Emali livestock project and the Tana delta irrigation project, the communities were empowered and decision making had been improved significantly. These findings are therefore in agreement with the theoretical foundations presented in the theoretical framework that PME improves greatly on decision-making among stakeholders of a project.

## **5.6 Documentation and sharing of PME experiences in TARDA**

Documentation is very crucial for building a more coherent body of knowledge in PME. Estrella & Gaventa, 1998, Parks, et.al (2005), noted that effective documentation often requires additional skills for example report writing although many PME practioners may not be fully equipped to, or capable of carrying out. On the other hand, information sharing is also very critical for the growth, sustainability and cohesion of any organization. One of the key principles of participatory monitoring and evaluation is information sharing and reflection as propounded by Coupal (2001). To appropriately investigate documentation and the sharing of PME experiences in TARDA, the researcher utilized information from individual interviews conducted with community members and project management facilitators.

The main purpose of the individual interviews in this respect was to seek information on whether the community members were involved in keeping project records of the organization routine activities as means of documentation. Furthermore the researcher sought information from the respondents on whether the local communities i.e. Pokomo and Orma were involved in joint community meetings and forums to share information and reflect on past PME experiences and the regularity of such reflection meetings. From the daily observations and discussions with the communities, the researcher established that they held the routine reflection meetings among community members and these empowered them to take corrective actions on touching project matters as well as analyse the PME information.

Most community members had received a major boost from the organization information communications and technology (ICT) team which supported their documentation efforts. The main role of the ICT team was to simplify documentation and ensure accessibility of information to the people as well as sound decision making in the projects. However this was not very effective as majority of the community residents lacked adequate computer skills to retrieve and share electronic information. From the empirical research conducted, one would argue that PME plays a crucial role in documentation, information generation and sharing. It also signified that PME had enabled TARDA project beneficiaries apply their knowledge and skills in record keeping in their project activities. To this end it clear that PME inculcates a culture of record keeping project teams and therefore efficient and effective decision making.

## **5.7 Strategies for resource mobilization of PME within TARDA**

Lack of resources is frequently noted as one of the greatest constraints to building the abilities of stakeholders, as well as sustenance of PME systems in organizations as postulated by Estrella & Gaventa (1998). They argue that there are significant costs associated with both formal training and actual implementation of the PME process in organizations. The Results-oriented Monitoring (ROM) handbook which is backed by the European Union (EU) also highlights that Development projects can vary significantly in their objectives, scope and scale. Smaller projects might involve modest financial resources and last only a few months, whereas a large project might involve many millions of Euros and last for many years (Estrella & Gaventa, 1998:17).

The funding of TARDA PME systems mainly comes from the Government of Kenya (GOK) through the exchequer releases; however for the RDA to effectively bid for allocation of funds for PME it has to prepare quality medium-term expenditure framework budgets focusing on priority projects and programmes. The TARDA management team has established a resource mobilization mechanism for marketing of project proposals on socio-economic development and collaborations with development partners. Other resources available for implementation of PME frameworks and methodologies include: partnerships with other government departments, Public- Private Partnerships (PPP), NGOs, and devolved funds such as the Constituency Development Fund (CDF).

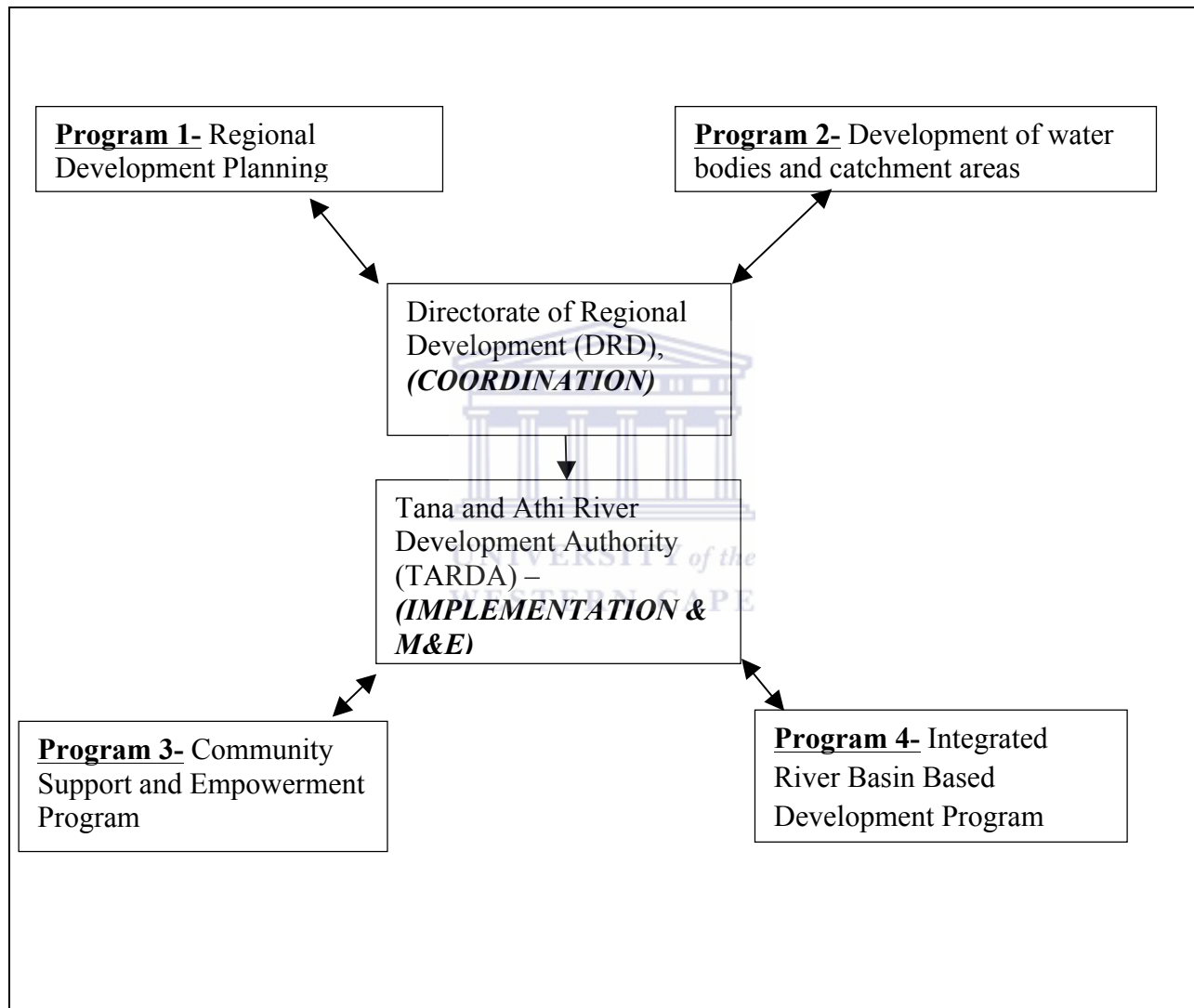
## **5.8 Scaling up PME in TARDA and the challenge of coordination**

According to Estrella & Gaventa (1998) as participatory approaches to M&E are increasingly based on inter-institutional linkages, there is need for more open discussion about the scaling up of PME at higher institutional levels, especially at the level of national and international policy. They propose that there are two issues with regard to scaling up PME: (1) the scaling up of micro-level information generated at the village and project levels; and (2) the implications of integrating participatory approaches. However there exist enormous challenges of coordination associated with the institutional linkages. Empirical evidence gathered from TARDA case study depicted challenges of poor coordination and staff capacity to that had an effect on the organization's service delivery to stakeholders.



The management and Directorate of Regional Development (DRD) had however proposed to put in place the requisite capacity to effectively and efficiently deliver its services to the stakeholders. This therefore would strengthen TARDA’s project operations, enhance effective coordination and improve feedback mechanisms.

**Fig 5: Programme coordination framework**



(Adapted from TARDA Strategic Plan (2012/2012:45))

## 5.9 Chapter summary

The above research findings have demonstrated that PME plays a critical role in enhancing community participation, accountability and transparency, empowerment, decision-making and capacity building in government development initiatives. Development initiatives that had effectively included PME in their project cycles were seen to be appeal more to stakeholders and had a positive impact on the lives of the project beneficiaries. It was evident that beneficiaries of TARDA development projects participated in the monitoring and evaluation processes, PME had empowered them to participate in the documentation and sharing of PME experiences thus increasing effectiveness and efficiency in overall decision making. However, there were still some challenges with institutionalization and need for more documentation of the PME processes within TARDA. Consequently, using these research findings as a base, the proceeding Chapter will present general conclusions and recommendations for the study.



## **CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Introduction**

This main objective of this Chapter is to provide conclusions and recommendations on the research. It presents recommendations on effective ways on how to sustain and manage participatory monitoring and evaluation (PME) in public sector development initiatives so as to boost performance, support effective management and improve on decision-making. The lessons learnt and areas for future research have been entrenched in the recommendations and will be presented in this section of the research including the understanding the complexities of the PME process and the need for documentation which poses enormous hurdles for future research and implementation. The research was firmly rooted in appraising key PME themes as well as the local impacts of the PME process in TARDA as determined by the research design. Researchers such as Oakley, (1991: 161) postulate that themes of any form of development practice are linked to the development analysis which the practice employs.

The main themes that were investigated include: the principles of community participation, accountability, transparency, empowerment, capacity building and decision making. Involvement of project beneficiaries in the participatory, monitoring and evaluation (PME) process enabled them apply their knowledge and skills in record keeping, documentation, information generation and even sharing in their projects. This would draw the conclusion that PME inculcates a culture of empowerment of project teams and therefore efficient and effective decision making. The research also identified the challenges with institutional capacity and need for more documentation of the PME processes within TARDA which will be reviewed here in this section.

### **6.2 Local impacts of the PME process**

#### **6.2.1 Increasing public accountability and transparency**

The research indicated that with inclusion of PME into the project cycle's openness, transparency and public accountability in project implementation had been enhanced. As mentioned earlier procurement, supply-chain management and financial procedures were made open to the public and thus ensuring a free accountable and transparent process. There was also greater local awareness with regards to how the management allocated the RDA's resources as

well as the designing of the development projects. This was seen to serve in line with the organization's values of integrity and accountability in service delivery. Nevertheless a SWOT analysis carried out in the project operations indicated that there were few existing challenges such as weak financial and budgeting procedures which would lead to misreporting of the current financial situation of the TARDA to the government and therefore receive minimal funding for PME.

### **6.2.2 Improvement in decision-making**

The research established that PME enables the project beneficiaries to assess their past performances so as to enable them to make effective decisions to aid in achieving their development objectives. The Orma and Pokomo communities routinely compared their performances in different development projects and this would foster shared-learning and help them become better decision makers. This was in agreement with the previous literature perspectives postulated in chapter two that the most important element of participatory development approaches is that people themselves make decisions on implementation of projects or programmes that affect them. Only a few individuals however expressed dissatisfaction on the manner they were involved in monitoring and evaluation, who said they were often regarded as an information source rather than as key actors capable of playing a central role in the decision-making processes of the organization

### **6.2.3 Fostering community participation through PME**

The empirical research findings revealed that the PME process in TARDA had fostered effective community participation in the development initiatives. The project beneficiaries pointed out that they had been actively involved throughout the development process, from planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Moreover the PME discussions with the community members took place using the two community local languages: i.e. Pokomo and Swahili, this was to enable all community members participate and ensure that no one was side-lined even the illiterate community members. With the involvement of the project beneficiaries, this made them own the development process and ensure overall sustainability. Additionally these research findings match with the theoretical underpinning presented in the theoretical framework section that use of the people-centred approaches to development enhances community participation at grass roots level and also increases the success and sustainability of projects.

#### **6.2.4 Laying the foundation: capacity building through PME**

The research findings of this study indicated that TARDA was committed towards building capacity of community members on natural- resource management. Needs assessment and routine training by the project facilitators for the community members enabled them gain essential skills in development management and also make informed decisions using PME information. Local capacity building is an essential factor for the sustainability of development initiatives. This is crucial as it confirms the PME the literature as pointed out by Mulwa (2010:23) that capacity building is about enabling people engage in the process of transforming their own lives and their own societies.

#### **6.2.5 Empowerment of project beneficiaries through PME**

The research findings pointed out that PME had empowered the Pokomo and Orma communities, whom were previously marginalized to take position on daily activities that affected them. During the research it was also established that the communities were expected to identify their needs and opportunities, prescribe solutions make decisions and take actions, mobilize their resources and implement the decisions on their own with minimal external support. This is in agreement with the theoretical underpinning presented in Chapter Two (Literature review) that people experiencing a problem are in the best position to understand it, and find the solutions to it, and are the ones with the potential decision making power to ensure that the solutions are achieved.

### **6.3 Recommendations on key PME thematic areas**

- The study indicated that the selected community was actively involved in the various project management processes ranging from projects communication management, risk management and even project scope management. The fieldwork results and consequent findings furthermore, established that the community participated fully in different projects like the Mwingi water project which involved the provision and distribution of portable water to the people of Mwingi Town. In this project provision, distribution and effective service delivery were the main themes of the scope of project operation; this was done solely through communal kiosks and individual pipeline connections. However since some of the project management techniques employed here were technical,

intensive and time consuming, this was found to affect negatively affected the morale and attention of the Tana Project beneficiaries in fully participating the project management processes.

To ensure full community participation, the researcher recommends that the process should be more flexible and less technical to ensure fluent and speedy execution of the projects, the facilitators should work with closely in scoping of the project in a participatory manner in order to achieve overall developmental objectives.

- The research also established that there was the challenge of illiteracy levels among project beneficiaries. A case in point was brought to light during the documenting PME experiences where some individuals and had to rely on their colleagues to help them to record information and thus it became a setback on the part of documentation and information generation.

The researcher therefore recommends that when designing PME systems for public agencies and government institutions, the literacy level of the target project beneficiaries should be considered. The PME process could be simplified by using visual aids such as pictorials and graphic images this would help ensure that everybody equally benefits from the process.

- The project staff must ensure full accountability and transparent processes that result from implementation of PME are appreciated and for the overall success of the TARDA projects. The research findings established that some of the TARDA projects such as the Tana Delta irrigation project as well as the Emali livestock project were still grappling with financial accountability challenges despite having a PME system in place in their project management structures. This is because the successful integration of a PME system within organizations is not an over-night issue and requires lot of stakeholder's efforts and commitment.

To ensure full accountability and transparency in the programmes and projects, the researcher recommends full stakeholder commitment support. This will ensure

that the PME system in TARDA becomes a powerful public management tool that will facilitate positive cultural and political changes in the organizations fostering accountability, and transparency.

- The project management facilitators had earlier expressed alarm on the challenge of demystifying the technical jargon of the PME field to the project beneficiaries who resided the entire Tana County. The training manuals and the resources were predominantly in English and they had to translate to the community in both Pokomo and Swahili languages to make them understand the PME process, this posed an enormous challenge of misinterpretation and ensuring the use of right PME jargon to describe the themes and procedures.

To this end the researcher recommends PME experts in developing countries especially in the African continent should consider developing PME manuals and training resources that are translated into vernacular languages , as many of these countries are predominantly multi-ethnic with different languages of thus this it will make the project beneficiaries understand the process better.

- A Review of the organization structure and human resource capacity in TARDA indicated that the monitoring and evaluation staff are inadequately trained on the latest trends and even different case studies on PME the implication is that they cannot pass new PME knowledge themes to the community. There is need to invest on the human resource of the organization since the PME process is a cornerstone in the running of the organization. Furthermore it requires require greater degrees of co-ordination, administrative efforts and long-term commitment on the part of stakeholders at all institutional levels.

The researcher recommends that TARDA needs to put in place appropriate Human Resource policies to attract and retain PME staff with key competencies, this could be done through recruitment , training and suitable remunerations to match its development role in the region.

## **6.4 Areas for future research**

### **6.4.1 Documentation versus sharing of PME experiences**

From the daily observations and discussions with the communities, the researcher established that the communities held routine reflection meetings and this empowered them to take corrective actions on touching project matters as well as analyse the existing PME information. Furthermore, they kept the records of the gathered PME information and therefore enabling them to compare their past and current and more importantly make informed decisions. This presents an opportunity for future research on the role and position of PME in record management and documentation. The discussions in previous chapters indicated that PME inculcates a culture of record-keeping among project teams, which is crucial for sharing ideas and effective decision-making but does not exactly state when documentation should take place in the PME process. Despite the arguments presented in the literature review section that lack of well-documented experiences in PME can be a limitation to sharing ideas about the process and impact of PME, it does not tell us clearly who should be in charge of the documentation and at what exact stage that the documentation should take place.

### **6.4.2 The complexities of the PME process**

The results of the study showed that the lack of adequate institutional capacity within the TARDA has impeded full achievement of development potential in different Tana County regions under the jurisdiction of TARDA. Despite having a Performance Evaluation unit to address capacity issues within the RDA, there is still lack of adequate infrastructure, technical resources and limited institutional procedures to guide effective the PME process. The research also established that PME work had been slowed down due to inadequate incentives. Lack of monetary incentives makes it difficult for local activists to undertake and continue PME work indefinitely, as they often work on a voluntary basis. The results of the study also postulated that in most cases individuals are engaged in other activities and therefore find it difficult to carry out PME activities. There is also lack of qualified and trained workers, who in turn could train community members and the beneficiaries in PME. From the field work conducted it was evident that present training was being conducted by chiefs and village leaders. All these are challenges faced in the implementation of the PME system and therefore it presents the



researchers and scholars in the PME with areas of future research to identify the solutions to these complexities.

## **6.5 Conclusion and final thoughts**

This research has adequately met the objectives of the study and more importantly addressed the research questions raised in Chapter one in demonstrating that (PME) is an integral part for the success of any government development initiative as it helps foster a sense of ownership and at the same time promotes meaningful development at grass root level. The mini-thesis used TARDA, as a case study to conduct the fieldwork and subsequently ascertain the roles and contribution PME as presented in the literature section. The findings were also firmly rooted in various project management areas. The study was able to demonstrate that PME plays a significant role in enhancing community participation, accountability, capacity-building, and empowerment and further in sound decision-making. Nevertheless, the research also established that there is need for more documentation of PME information and institutionalisation of the process as they present a challenge for successful implementation in development projects. It is therefore concluded that PME may play an important role in the above areas in similar circumstances in a different parts of Africa and the developing world and that much opportunities exist to introduce PME in community development projects.

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## APPENDICES

University of the Western Cape - Institute for Social Development Year 2011

**Questionnaire/Interview Schedule on the process of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) in government community development initiatives.**

**(A case study of Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA), Kenya)**

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**Hello, my name is Erick Mariga**

I am a student from the University of the Western Cape- South Africa. I am conducting a research on an appraisal of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) in Government community development initiatives. The questionnaire/interview schedule below has been developed for the purposes of understanding PME process. Please share a few minutes of your time to express your views on the process of participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in Tana and Athi River Development Authority (TARDA).

### **Ethics Statement**

This study is conducted under the University of the Western Cape (UWC) ethics policy and the researcher will adhere to the following ethical rules:

- Participation in the research study will be voluntary, with no form of coercion used against participants.
- Confidentiality will be guaranteed, and the participants reserve the right to withdraw from the research at any stage and for whatever reason.
- The researcher will take responsibility in ensuring that all the information gathered is treated sensitively and confidentially as well as protecting the identities and interests of all participants.
- The researcher also undertakes to submit the research findings to all relevant bodies and will also make the research available to the information bank of the University of the Western Cape.

DATE OF COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE: \_\_\_\_\_

LOCATION: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPENDIX I: MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

**Question 1:** What is the position of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in public sector development programmes?

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.....

**Question 2:** What is the purpose of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in TARDA and who are the main stakeholders that are involved in the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation process?

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.....

**Question 3:** Are all stakeholders involved in deciding and planning who should participate and how at each stage of the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation process?

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.....

**Question 4:** What role of participation in Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in TARDA?

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.....

**Question 5:** What are the institutional arrangements/rules/procedures in place that guide Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation in TARDA?

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.....

**Question 6:** What is the relationship between the Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation unit and other departments within TARDA in addressing key issues in community development?

.....  
.....

**Question 7:** To what extent/level does the management engage the community in the monitoring and evaluation?

.....  
.....

**Question 8:** How are the following areas managed and integrated in TARDA development projects?

a.) Community Participation

.....  
.....

b.) Accountability and Transparency

.....  
.....

c.) Empowerment

.....  
.....

d.) Decision making

.....  
.....

e.) Capacity Building

.....  
.....



**APPENDIX II: PROJECT MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Question 1:** What kind/types of projects does TARDA engage in?

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.....

**Question 2:** What steps or key focus areas in the project management process and project management body of knowledge ensures community participation?



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**Question 3:** Who measures and appraises changes occurring within these projects, and whether they are impacting (or not) on the sustainability of the project work of the community?

.....  
.....

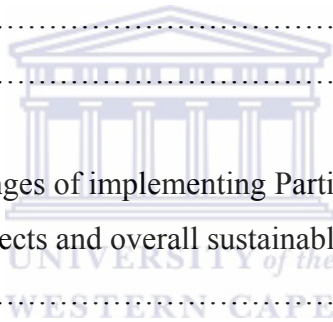
**Question 4:** Which indicators for change are used, and how are they established?

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**Question 5:** Does participation take place uniformly throughout the entire M&E process?

.....  
.....

**Question 6:** What are the challenges of implementing Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation within TARDA projects and overall sustainable community development?



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.....

**Question 7:** Are Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation experiences documented in TARDA? and who is responsible for documentation and sharing?

.....  
.....

**Question 8:** What is the contribution of Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation to the following themes in TARDA development projects?

a. Community participation

.....  
.....

b. Accountability and transparency

.....  
.....

c. Empowerment

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.....

d. Capacity building

.....  
.....

e. Decision-making

.....  
.....

**APPENDIX III: COMMUNITY/ PROJECT BENEFICIARY QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Question 1:** What is regarded as participation in your community projects?

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.....

**Question 2:** Which projects are you involved in monitoring and Evaluation in TARDA?

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.....

**Question 3:** To what extent/level do you participate in the monitoring and evaluation of these projects?

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.....  
.....

**Question 4:** How important is participation in development projects and how do you see participation?

.....  
.....

**Question 5:** How is participation in community projects monitored?

.....  
.....

**Question 6:** Please comment on the successfulness or failure of the following areas in your projects?

a. Community participation

.....  
.....

b. Accountability and transparency

.....  
.....

c. Empowerment

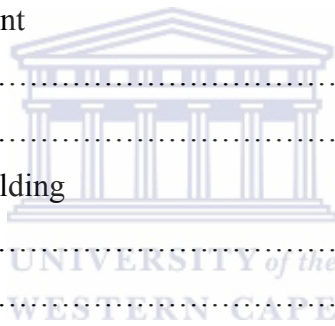
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d. Capacity building

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e. Decision-making

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**APPENDIX IV: MONITORING AND EVALUATION SPECIALISTS QUESTIONNAIRE**

**Question 1:** What is the purpose of building a participatory and consultative process involving community stakeholders in government development projects?

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**Question 2:** What conditions should be in place to ensure success of PME approaches in development projects?

.....  
.....

**Question 3:** What do you think are some of the social and political dimensions of PME?

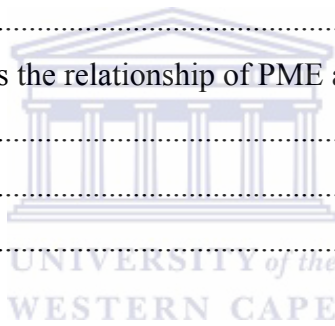
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**Question 4:** How does PME practice differ when applied across different political environments i.e. from centralized to more decentralized systems of government?

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**Question 5:** What do you think is the relationship of PME and the project cycle?

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**Question 6:** Would PME be as effective in project or programme contexts that do not initially incorporate a participatory approach in their original design and implementation?

.....  
.....

**Thank you for your participation!**

**APPENDIX V: LETTER OF CONSENT**



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I....., have had the opportunity to ask any questions related to this study, and received satisfactory answers to my questions, and any additional details I wanted. I agree to take part in this research.

I understand that my participation in this study is voluntary. I am free not to participate and have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without having to explain myself.

I am aware that this interview might result in research which may be published, but my name may **be/not** be used. (Circle appropriate).

I pledge to abide by the requirements to keep within the focus group information that comes out in the focus group discussion of which I am a participant.

I am aware that information discussed in this focus group discussion will be used in a research that may be published.

I understand that if I don't want my name to be used that this will be ensured by the researcher.

I may also refuse to answer any questions that I don't want to answer.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

If you have any questions concerning this research, feel free to call Erick Mariga on (+27823442319) or by email on [ericomariga@gmail.com](mailto:ericomariga@gmail.com) , alternatively, you may write to my supervisor Professor Christo De Coning on: [cdec.consult@mweb.co.za](mailto:cdec.consult@mweb.co.za) for any clarifications.