

RESEARCH REPORT

TOPIC:

Impacts of poor development on gender resilience

RESEARCH QUESTION:

To what extent has poor development affected gender resilience in West Budama County in Tororo district?

Date

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Implementing Organization

Youth Care Group Network International (YCGNI)

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INTRODUCTION.

Youth Care Group Network International has been implementing a GRRIPP project under the title "Encourage Women to share and express themselves to increase development" in Uganda. This project is under the GRRIPP theme of Resilience. There is a relationship between development and resilience because development challenges empower the community to adjust to disasters and difficulties in life and forge a positive way forward. According to the Article "Developing Resilience" by the Mind Tools Content team, Resilient people don't wallow or dwell on failures; they acknowledge the situation, learn from their mistakes, and then move forward¹. The question is that while the project is to empower sharing of ideas to increase development, do the participants understand the development in the context of their region and how it affects different gender differently. The second question is whether the project implemented is a step in the right direction to solve the community problem. This research will help the organizations and government to discover what the community needs in form of development and implement projects that are desired.

MEDHOD

We used focus groups. We had 23 focus groups consisting of males and females. Each group had 10 participants comprising of youth, middle age adults and the elderly. The groups were given questions relating to development and how it affects different gender. They discussed and suggested answers. Each group chose a representative to present their views in the local jopadhola language and it was recorded and later transcribed to English language texts.

RESEARCH RESULT

The type of development desired by the people.

The participants discussed the type of development that they would want in their areas and the following answers were given;

Construction of school and education of the children. Six groups indicated their desire to have schools in their areas. The available schools are far presenting difficulties to children who have to walk long distances. There is also need to have low cost schools.

Safe water for use in homes. Fourteen groups expressed their desire to have safe water for drinking and improvement in sanitation. There is need to have borehole at least in their zones nearby so that women do not walk long distances in search of water.

Construction of roads. Twelve groups suggested the need for improved transport by construction of roads to ease transportation of people and their goods to markets and other places. They acknowledge the presence of some roads but they are not maintained. Some roads have taken up to five years without maintenance.

Construction of health center/hospitals and adequate staffing of the hospitals. Some health centers are in place but very far and with very few staff, so there is need to build more health centers to reduce the distances.

There is need to extend electricity to homes as indicated by ten groups to improve lighting in homes, improve businesses like juice making and other cottage industries and improve security.

Improved food production was identified by one group as a way of increasing food security and business.

Availability of market places was also pointed out by one group to increase market for agricultural and other products from the local communities.

Improved security for people and their properties was mentioned by one group as another way of development in the area.

Why the desired developments are lacking or not adequate in the area

Slow pace of government programs was pointed out by two groups. Government plans can take more than ten years.

Shortage of clean water for use was mentioned by six groups. Women waste a lot of time to fetch water. This time could be used for other economic activities and without water even other domestic work is halted.

Poor roads; pointed out by 7 groups because the feeder roads cannot accommodate large vehicles that transport goods to market places.

Shortage of schools and educational institutions: was suggested by 3 groups. This causes lack of knowledge and skills to increase development.

General poverty/lack of income/lack of capital was mentioned by 5 groups. This is the reason lack of business ventures and money to invest in production of goods to satisfy people's needs.

Negative mindset was pointed out by one group. This does not support development because it creates laxity.

Poor government policy and governance was mentioned by 3 groups. Policies such as the Universal Primary Education (UPE) has led to low standards of education in primary schools. Also little resources are coming from the government to the people.

COVID 19 was mentioned by one group. The pandemic led to a setback that some people restarted their businesses from zero.

Climate hazards like drought and hail storm was mentioned by one group. Hail storm destroyed food crops causing food insecurity. Droughts lead to shortage of clean and safe water.

Low prices/price fluctuations of agricultural goods. (Identified by one group). This causes loses to farmers and they do not retain any profit to invest in other activities.

There is high population growth (mentioned by 2 groups). This causes the number of people to be more than the resources leading to low development.

Lack of unity in the area and families (mentioned by 4 groups). It does not favor sharing of skills and quality production of goods.

There is corruption within associations and groups (stated by 2 groups). This is where associations and groups who have received funds or any support get divided and collapses because of greed.

Jealousy (mentioned by one group). Some people in the community destroy others properties because of jealousy and hatred therefore causing low development for the person.

Lack of electricity (mentioned by 6 groups). Much as the government extended electricity in some areas, it is far from homes and most people have not accessed it.

Leaders lack clear vision for their areas (identified by 5 groups). The elected leaders do not have any program for their area. Some participants mentioned that the leaders went to parliament to sleep.

There is lack of information on development (mentioned by one group)

How low development is affecting gender differently

(i) How women are affected

When it is time for giving birth, women travel long distances to health centers and some end up giving birth on the way. Secondly due to few medical personnel women are not well attended to and some die in the process. (mentioned by 5 groups).

Women walk long distances to fetch water. They get tired. Sometimes they spend nights at the wells during drought/dry season. (mentioned by 8 groups)

They are affected by water borne diseases because of consuming dirty water. (one group)

Women have lots of thoughts in their minds and increased worries leading to mental breakdown. It also affects their thinking capacity leading to poor performance of domestic work. (mentioned by 3 groups)

Most women depend on their husbands and in times when the husbands fail to provide it results into mental torture, fear and worries. (mentioned by 2 groups)

There is domestic violence. Women take long to fetch water which are misunderstood by some husbands as time wasting at the wells causing misunderstandings and violence. (mentioned by 8 groups)

Women are forced to do other casual work to earn money in addition to domestic work. This is a burden on their part. (1 group)

Young girls are forced into early marriages because of lack of school dues and scholastic materials (1group)

women have less time for other economic activities such as agriculture causing food insecurity in homes because they take a lot of time in fetching water. (mentioned by 1 group)

(ii) How men are affected

Men move long distances regularly to look for income to support family basic needs. Sometimes they take many days out of home. The constant movements may result in accidents (mentioned by 14 groups)

Some men face domestic violence in form of quarrels and fights especially when he fails to provide the basic needs. (4 groups).

Most men do not have formal and permanent employments due to this low development and therefore have unstable income. So they have less income and fail to provide for their families. (mentioned by 3 groups).

Some men face challenges in selling agricultural products because in most cases women entrust them with selling home produce. This is due to poor roads and falling prices of agricultural products. (mentioned by one group)

In some families, men are affected because of delayed meals and poor sanitation because of shortage of water for domestic use. (suggested by 2 groups).

Some men are not affected at all by the poor development. They are not concerned so long as they can get somewhere to find alcohol to drink.

That should be done to increase development and resilience among the different gender in the area?

There is need for construction of more schools and increase education and improve knowledge. (3 groups).

Construction of roads to ease movement of goods and people and improve business. (6 groups)

Construction of more boreholes to increase access to safe water to reduce the burden of women moving long distances daily to fetch water and this will also improve sanitation and domestic work. (mentioned by 11 groups).

There is a need for income generating projects for the youth and women to get money for basic needs. (3 groups).

Women should form groups to share ideas, skills, save money, support each other, lobby for funds from government and Non-Governmental organizations to develop and become more resilient. (mentioned by 22 groups).

There is need for funding from the government and Non-Governmental organizations as startup capital for the formal groups to start projects such as animal rearing, poultry, commercial agriculture and craft making. (7 groups)

There is need for change of mindset. People should believe in themselves and be positive to any form of development. (one group)

In addition to domestic work, women should save and start small businesses to earn income to buy some basic needs. (4 groups)

There should be development of cooperative societies to improve the agricultural activities. (1 group).

There is need for some processing factories closer to the people to process agricultural products and add value (mentioned by 2 groups)

Women should participate in elections and be voted in political offices to increase their voice. (1 group)

It is important to vote good leaders who understand and support women causes. (1 group).

It is important for groups/associations to link up with others to share knowledge. (1 group).

Government leaders should have with all gender inclusive of men, women and youth regularly to plan for development. (mentioned by 1 group)

There is need for trainings for people to practice commercial agriculture to improve food security (suggested by 2 groups)

It is important to improve health centers and provide enough drugs and staff. (mentioned by 1 group).

What has the government done so far to increase development?

The government has given loans to some people under a program called parish development model (PDM) to increase activities among the unemployed. (mentioned by 4 groups).

Some Savings and Credit Cooperative Organizations (SACCOS) have been supported by the government by giving them funds, goats, cows, chairs. (5 groups).

The government has constructed roads. The problem is that the roads are not maintained. (5 groups)

The government constructed safe water/boreholes but most of them have broken down. (6groups).

The government has extended electricity to rural areas but the power lines run along the main roads mainly and has not reached deep in the settlements. (mentioned by 4 groups)

The government has constructed schools. The current one under construction is Sopsop secondary school. (3 groups).

The government has constructed health centers. The recent one is the maternity ward at Sopsop sub-county. (3 groups).

The government has done nothing to our area (mentioned by one group).

Conclusion

From this research we conclude that the type of development that our local people need is that which leads to the satisfaction of the basic needs of life such as food, health, water, education, security and clothing. It is very important for the government to get closer to the communities and increase the speed of investments in community and family basic needs. This requires good representation by the elected leaders and effective government policy. We also conclude that much as low development affects all gender negatively, women are more affected and they have a great burden and therefore women need more support in order to develop and increase resilience. It is very clear that the people favor a form of development that starts with group/association formation in this area. Almost all the focus groups mentioned formation of groups to share ideas, skills, save money, lobby for funds and others. There is also acknowledgement for the need of external funding to support development activities at the grassroots, directly into the groups/associations, including giving them more knowledge in form of trainings. Since the level of government involvement is low in the area, there is a great need for advocacy by the people's representatives and also involvement of Non-governmental organizations to directly support formal groups with development projects.

Bibliography

1. <https://www.mindtools.com/ao310a2/developing-resilience>