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STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, PROJECT MONITORING AND PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY AMONG WATER PROJECTS IN ZOMBO DISTRICT

BY

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BU/GS21/MBA/26

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DIRECTORATE OF GRADUATE STUDIES,
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BUSITEMA UNIVERSITY**

SEPTEMBER, 2026

DECLARATION

I, **Angom Jenefer Obura** hereby declare that this is my original work and to the best of my knowledge has never been submitted for the award of a Master's degree in Uganda in any other institution of higher learning unless otherwise acknowledged.

Signature.....



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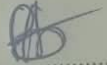
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APPROVAL

This research dissertation titled "Stake holder engagement, project monitoring and project sustainability among water project in Zombo district" has been prepared under our supervision and is submitted with our approval as university supervisors.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved parents, Mr. Edward P. Obura Onep and Mrs. Milly Grace Obura, whose unconditional love, prayers, sacrifices, guidance, and unwavering support have been the foundation of my academic journey. Your encouragement and belief in my abilities have inspired me to persevere and achieve this milestone.

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability of community projects remains a serious concern in many developing nations, particularly in rural communities, where projects frequently fail to deliver the promised returns when foreign funding ceases. This study investigated the link between stakeholder engagement, project monitoring, and project sustainability in community water initiatives. The study specifically looked at the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project sustainability; the relationship between stakeholder engagement and project monitoring; the relationship between project monitoring and project sustainability; and the role of project monitoring as a mediator between stakeholder engagement and project sustainability. The study was based on stakeholder theory and used a quantitative cross-sectional design. Structured questionnaires were used to collect data, which were then analysed with descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, regression, and mediation analyses. The findings revealed that stakeholder engagement has a positive and statistically significant relationship with project sustainability. Stakeholder engagement was also found to have a significant positive relationship with project monitoring, while project monitoring significantly and positively influenced project sustainability. Further still, the findings revealed that project monitoring partially mediate the association between stakeholder engagement and project sustainability. The study concludes that stakeholder engagement and project monitoring are complementary governance mechanisms that promote the social, economic and environmental sustainability of community water projects. Active community participation and acceptance strengthen project monitoring through regular reporting, performance measurement and stakeholder feedback, which in turn enhance accountability, informed decision-making and long-term project sustainability. The study recommends that government agencies, development partners and local governments institutionalize participatory stakeholder engagement and strengthen project monitoring systems by enhancing community participation, building the capacity of water source committees, promoting regular project reporting, and establishing effective stakeholder feedback mechanisms to ensure the long-term sustainability of community water projects. However, since the study employed a cross-sectional design and focused on rural community water projects, the findings should be generalized with caution. Future studies should adopt longitudinal and mixed-methods approaches across different development sectors and geographical contexts to validate and extend the findings.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Overview

This chapter includes the study's background, statement of the problem, study purpose, study objectives, study hypotheses, study scope, significance of the research, and conceptual framework.

1.1 Background of the Study

For stakeholder value, projects ought to retain their worth by continuous delivery of social, environmental, and economic benefits beyond project completion (Orieno et al., 2024). Scholars such as (Shokouhi & Bachari, 2025) conceptualize Project sustainability as the ability of a project to retain benefits beyond external support. It is the project's ability to balance economic efficiency, environmental protection, and social responsibility (Ahmed et al., 2026). Project sustainability is studied a multi-dimensional construct comprising of Economic Sustainability (the ability of a project to maintain financial resources and generate continued economic value beyond its implementation phase), Social Sustainability (the extent to which a project meets stakeholder needs, promotes equity, and gains long-term community support), Environmental Sustainability (minimizing negative environmental impacts and promoting ecological balance), Institutional Sustainability (structures, policies, and governance systems that support project continuity) and Technical Sustainability (the continued functionality, usability, and maintenance of project outputs or systems) (Ahmed et al., 2026; Kivilä et al., 2017; Myers et al., 2014).

Empirical evidence affirms that the life span of NGO projects hardly sustain benefits beyond funder support. For instance, a study by García Villena, et al. (2022) in Latin America and the Caribbean revealed that many community-based projects had moderate sustainability, with performance indices averaging 0.638, suggesting that many projects fail to maintain their benefits over time. Similar trends are observed across Africa, as highlighted by the World Bank (2023), which reported that 40% of development projects in Tanzania failed to generate economic returns. In Uganda, research conducted by the Office of the Prime Minister (2020)

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