

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE SUSTAINABILITY OF POVERTY
ERADICATION PROJECTS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES OF
CAPRICORN DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY: LIMPOPO PROVINCE IN
SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development in the
School of Agriculture**

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

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DATE: 7 SEPTEMBER 2010**

ABSTRACT

Poverty is defined as the inability to meet minimal standard of living, measured in terms of basic consumption needs or the income required to satisfy them. Eradication of poverty is the greatest concern globally. The eradication of poverty and hunger, and the need for better equity in income distribution and human resource development remain major challenges in Capricorn District Municipality of Limpopo Province in South Africa.

This study is concerned with an assessment of the sustainability of poverty eradication projects in Rural Communities of Capricorn District Municipality of Limpopo Province. The objectives of the study are to identify the existing poverty eradication projects in Capricorn District Municipality and to assess the sustainability of these projects through their income generation, employment creation, skills and capacity building aspects of the projects. The study further evaluates the determinants of success or failures of these projects.

Primary data were collected through the use of questionnaires administered to project participants. From a list of existing poverty eradication projects in the five local municipalities of Capricorn district a sample of 120 projects were selected. The projects were clustered into the following: bakery, bricklaying, clothing production, dry land farming, food gardens and livestock.

The criterion for project selection was based on clustering as well as the need to select projects which have been in existence for at least three years prior to the survey. Four participants were selected and interviewed for each project. These include the project leader and three other members. The sample consisted of men and women, depending upon the dominating gender in the group. The total number of participants selected for the study was 480.

Besides the use of questionnaires to obtain cross sectional survey data, additional secondary

data on selected projects were obtained from various sources including annual reports and income statements of some of these projects. Also, focus group discussions were carried out to assess the major factors and constraints affecting the sustainability of these projects.

The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics, frequency distribution and chi-square and regression analysis. Some of the results of the study are summarised as follows:

The survey analysis reveals that vegetable projects were the most dominant type of projects in CDM followed by Clothing Production, the third one was poultry. Women constituted the largest percentage of project participants, followed by men and lastly youth. Focus group discussion reveals that the major problems facing these projects are lack of good management skills, poor record keeping, and lack of capital to expand their businesses.

Some of the identified challenges and problems facing poverty eradication projects in CDM include the following:

- Fraudulence among some projects participants.
- Lack of skills in marketing and project management.
- Youth lacking knowledge of self-employment strategies.

The challenges above can be met by adopting the following recommendations:

- Training of participants in marketing and financial management and strengthening security for the projects to prevent theft and fraudulent practices.
- Encouraging more participation of the youth in poverty eradication projects; especially youth participation in fruits and vegetable projects which have been found to be highly sustainable.