

Influence of formation methodology on Farmers' Organizations' Sustainability

Webster Miyanda- (*Corresponding author*)

Email: wmiya2002@gmail.com

Hanns R. Neumann Stiftung Mbeya, Tanzania,

Hamidu Shungu

Email: hamidu.shungu@out.ac.tz

Centre for Economics and Community Economic Development, Open University of Tanzania

Deus Ngaruko

Email: ngarukoddp@yahoo.co.uk

Centre for Economics and Community Economic Development, Open University of Tanzania

ABSTRACT

This study identifies the influence of formation methodologies on the sustainability of Farmers Organisations (FOs) with specific focus on coffee producer groups in Mbeya and Kilimanjaro region and suggests appropriate sustainable formation methods. The research used both purposive and random sampling techniques to enhance the accuracy of sampling. Conducted between February and April 2015 the study was based on FO members and expert informants questionnaire, interviews, FGD and case studies in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. The results revealed that well performing FOs were established by PGs as building blocks for secondary organisations. Members described an effective formation method as one, which includes: mobilization, sensitization meetings and a step-by-step process of activities. FO facilitators and producers should adopt a formation process that addresses the needs of PGs and breaks the process into a step-by-step approach to enhance producer understanding. The findings are vital for policies relating to FOs establishment and promotion as well as useful for FO facilitators as they fine-tune their formation interventions to achieve FO sustainability.

Key Words: Formation methodology, farmer organisations (FOs) and producer groups (PGs)

Background Information

Farmer Organisations (FOs) are well-established avenues for rural development and livelihood advancements hence others researchers have argued that combining the primary structures (FOs) of poor farmers into small groups (PGs) improves rural livelihood (Aldana et al., 2007). FOs can make it easier and cheaper for the state and other actors to provide services to small-scale producers (Buckley, 2007). Many private and public community development projects utilize them although the state monopolized FOs are disintegrating (Ainebyona and Tiruhungwa, 2011). The disintegration of FOs has led to social and economical loses especially in rural areas were

small-scale farmers depend on them for service linkages (Francesconi, 2012). FOs need constant hand holding support throughout their formation, consolidation and sustaining phases because linking them to providers of essential services (i.e. finance, inputs and markets) is challenging for a variety of reasons: remoteness, low production, low farm-gate prices, and lack of information, to name a few (Wiggins & Keats, 2013).

According to the Centre for Development Innovation (2012), coffee ranks high among the most important agricultural commodities traded in international markets, in terms of both volume and value. Coffee production and agriculture in general generate more than 30% of GDP and employ more than 60% of the global population (IAASTD 2009: 2). Coffee has become the primary source of income for domestic and export revenues for more than 10 million households in 25 African coffee-growing countries (International Coffee Council, 2015). Smallholders dominate the production with few large plantations or coffee estates (International Coffee Council, 2015). Smallholders have unreliable capital and management organizational skills (CFAT, 2012).

The coffee sector in Tanzania involves between 400,000 and 500,000 smallholders in production (Baffes 2008; TCA, 2009; Itika 2005; and Mahdi 2008) and an estimated 2 million people engaged in ancillary sectorial activities such as research, extension, processing, input and output trading, and transportation (TCA, 2009). Tanzania has been ranked the 4th African country in coffee production (ICC, 2015) and FOs are seen as major contributors to this ranking. Tanzania has a rich diversity of FOs (Lema and Kapange, 2006). An assessment of FOs in Tanzania by Uliwa and Fisher (2004) established that there were over 6,000 active FOs with over 250,000 members. However not all these groups are genuine, and some exist only for a particular project (Lema and Kapange, 2006). In light of the important role they play in coffee production and in rural development in general, the importance of establishing FOs through sustainable means cannot be over emphasized.

Theoretical perspective

FO formation is based on social exchange theory which states that people participate in social exchange on the basis of perceived reward-cost outcomes of interactions. Social exchange distributes justice, equity or fairness in non-economic relations (Zafirovski, 2005). It considers FOs as structures created by exchange processes among different individual and collective actors. An individual will join a FO based on what he will get from interaction with FOs members. Psychological rewards for joining FOs are in the form of gratifying needs while cost is in the form of anxiety, frustration, embarrassment and fatigue. If rewards are equal to or more than the costs, the individual will join the FO.

In relation to Group Congruency Theory, a person in a given society can be ranked on a variety of dimensions such as age, education, income, occupational, power and such ranks tend toward equilibrium i.e. FOs vary in the degree to which members of the group fit together harmoniously. The less congruent the group members, the greater the disruption on the internal functioning of the group; the more the internal functions of the group is disrupted, the poorer its performance of the group; and the more the internal functioning of the groups is disrupted, the lower its morale.

The internal and external structures of the FO play a vital role in sustaining its existence. "Sustainability" is commonly cited as a necessary condition for judging something to be a

success (Stockbridge, et al., 2003). Hence FOs that survives the test of time are more likely to be deemed to be successful. Although, there could be FOs that survive long periods without achieving much or they could be others that only survive for a short period of time and achieve their main objectives and are terminated because they have achieved their role (Stockbridge, et al., 2003). The approach of external support to organisations must be patient and realistic (FAO, 2010). This is because collective enterprise may not always work since there are threshold levels of asset requirements and of external support required for successful group formation and operation.

Stockbridge, et al., (2003) further comments that it is clear that collective enterprises are 'organic': they learn and grow, sometimes fail, and sometimes need to rise from the ashes of incompetence and corruption. The path to maturity is usually long, and needs supportive investment through a range of planned and sequenced business services, with an exit strategy in place to ensure progress towards sustainability (FAO, 2010). FAO further emphasized that there is no 'one size-fits all', and no guarantee that individual successes can be scaled up and replicated.

Producers' tradition and culture have the ability to cement members into a sustainable unit as a sense of belonging and community responsibility is within their beliefs. This particular aspect is often forgotten in current debates about FOs formation in Africa (Mangnus and Piters, 2010). The formation of FOs needs to be built on a strong foundation of producer initiative and ownership (Buckley, 2007). The methodology used in the formation process sets a vital hub for FOs' ownership and subsequently sustainability. Improving the organization of small producers through effective group formation is increasingly promoted as an important component of equitable and sustainable development linked to markets (Aldana et al., 2007). The role and timing of the substantial public and private investment needed to establish and maintain these organizations is poorly understood (Guidi, 2011). Madelon et al. (2006) indicated that there is too little attention directed at the most appropriate types of FOs, whether the public and/or private sector is best placed to support their formation, and the conditions necessary for ensuring their economic viability.

FOs established by and directly linked to supermarkets may be more economically sustainable as opposed to organizations supported by non-governmental organizations (Medalen et al., (2007). Traditionally the combination of agricultural input supply and output marketing was critical in meeting farmers' production requirements and was used as an inducement for FO formation (Chambo, 2013).

Empirical literature review

Literature indicates that provision of extension services does not only attract more members but also sustains the FO (Bachwenkizi, 2009). In this case, the methodology used is vital for setting out the potential existence of FOs that will provide such services (Buckley, 2007). It is important to make sure that the organisational services meet the users demands (Mutunga, 2008). Trainings as well as service portfolio of the FO plays a vital role in member determining although tradition and culture plays a significant role too (Mangnus and Piters, 2010) while member commitment and group cohesion in vegetable producing FOs worked as sustaining factors (Guidi, 2011), in the EU member states, production inputs and extension services served as pull factors in Africa.

An approach that involves a system of village-based training which equips the participating PGs to develop, implement and monitor action plans related to farming, Outgrower linkages, and FO businesses activities is more likely to strengthen the formation process. However, without the necessary support especially in the initial stages of formation, FOs may fail (Buckley, 2007). This is because the majority of FO members are poor rural farmers lacking the requisite agricultural knowledge, financial resources and assets for use in agricultural production (Global Forum on Food Security and Nutrition, 2012). FOs based on established objectives such as services are bound to survive the test of time. A survey conducted by (Wennink and Heemskerck (2006) concluded that service-system-oriented and network FOs (i.e. MVIWATA and MVIWAMO in Tanzania, but also IMBARAGA in Rwanda) emphasize self-reliance by promoting community-based farmers' groups that are part of larger networks that are linked to services.

According to Mutunga (2008) participation of members results in genuine economic benefit with a strong sense of member ownership, which is essential during formation. Formation trainings must be incremental whereby mastery of one step prepares producers for the next one. Achievement and success at each stage are the primary motivating factors for FO members to continue with the formation process. While FOs need access to information and technology during development to operate efficiently, multiple economic activities must be considered such as fertilizer bulk purchase and distribution, bulk marketing, internal savings, etc during formation in order to take advantage of local and regional niche markets (CLUSA, 2012). These business activities will already attract and hold members and leaders responsible right from the initiation of the FO. Chibanda, et al., (2009) observed that some farmers were forming FOs as a way of accessing government grants other than forming sustainable business organization for their own benefits.

FOs formation process experiences contributed tremendously in sustaining FOs as producers learn through practice. According to Satterly (2015), the biggest mistake organisations are making is trying to reinvent the wheel by establishing totally new FOs. While Buckley (2007) maintains that the best is to work with existing FOs and sustain their business activities. Groups of farmers, who come together spontaneously or through their own efforts to answer their own felt needs, are more likely to be effective than groups that are brought together to suit the needs of an external agency (Rani, 2010). Furthermore, access to and frequency of information sharing works as a sustaining factor. In addition, the how FO members understand and define sustainability influences how they conduct their business and attain the objectives they set.

Research methodology

Design and Strategy

A combination of data collection methods were employed including; focus group discussion, interviews, and a questionnaire. A mixed research methodology facilitates the use of induction, deduction, and abduction logic of inquiry (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This strategy was used because researchers needed to evaluate the extent to which the research findings will be trusted and inferences made from the same (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003).

The case study strategy was used because of its considerable ability to generate answers to the question 'why?' as well as the 'what?' and 'how?' questions, although 'what?' and 'how?'

questions tend to be more the concern of the survey strategy (Saunders, et al., 2009). Saunders, et al., 2009 further argue that a case study strategy can be a very worthwhile way of exploring existing theory and enables to challenge them. Similarities and differences were compared during case studies (Yin, 2003). This gives researchers the advantage of strengthening the external validity of the findings, as it allows for a cross-case analysis, in addition to the fact that comparisons can be made with theory.

Sampling, data type and collection methods

The researcher employed the use of purposive sampling for the FOs and their member PGs, while simple random was used for respondents with a FO beneficiary background including board members and ordinary FO members. Simple random sampling technique was used in order to eliminate bias and to be able to estimate sampling error (Kothari, 2004).

Table 1 List of FOs and their Member PGs' interviewed

Region	FO Name	PG Name	Frequency	Percent
Mbeya	Isuto DC	Itimu Coffee group	3	4.8
		Lugombo Kibwe Popular coffee group	2	3.2
		Hawaya group	8	12.9
		Ilyala group	5	8.1
		Relation	8	12.9
Kilimanjaro	Kirua Vunjo North	Chapakazi	7	11.3
		Komongoro	7	11.3
		Mkonja	3	4.8
		Imani	4	6.5
		Muongano	6	9.7
		Total	62	100.0

For 2 regions, 2 FOs and 10 PGs were purposely selected for the research (table 1). An additional 62 farmer respondents with a beneficiary background at FO level were selected in both regions. An average of 6 members per PG, 8 board members, 17 key expert informants with an operational (i.e. agriculture and CDOs), local level implementing (i.e. NGO staff - HRNS), and business-oriented background (i.e. private sector representatives) were selected using a snowball method. Policy and training experts from training and government institutions were also selected through a snowball method. In accordance with Creswell (2003), all the FOs, PGs, individual producers and key informants in the population had an equal chance to be selected. The average membership per PG from each of the two FOs is 35 hence an estimated total of 350 prospective respondents from the 10 PGs were accessible in this investigation. At a Confidence Level of 95%, Confidence Interval of 10 and a total population of 350, the sample required was 76 FO members, complimented by 8 executive board members, 29 conveniently selected FGD participants and 17 key informants.

Primary data were collected through questionnaire; interviews and FGDs were used for collecting Primary data. The use of different methods and sources was to ensure accuracy of the data collected (Saunders, et al., 2009). This allowed the researchers to gather different types of data, as well as to crosscheck information from different sources (Bernard, 2006). A structured questionnaire was used for the face-to-face interviews with FO members. Producers'

Journal of Business Management Science

perspectives on factors that contribute to sustainability of their FOs was collected by face-to-face interviews.

Secondary data was collected through document reviews, workshops and forum minutes review. The reviewing of documents was done in several places including government offices (DAICOs, DCOs, TCB and the MAFSC). Literature on Cooperatives provided by the Principal Cooperative Officer and the Registrar of Cooperatives played a vital role as sources of secondary data. Presentation and academic papers from MoCU in Moshi were made use of to consolidate the document reviews on FOs and PGs with respect to cooperatives. Research papers from NGOs with vast experiences in working with FOs such as CLUSA, HRNS and Technorseve were made use of.

Data analysis

To analyze the influence of formation process on FOs sustainability, Content Descriptive Technique (CDT) was adopted in the discussion of results. Large amounts of textual information that were collected during fieldwork were used in discussing the results. Descriptive summary statistics particularly frequency, percentage distribution tables and figures were adapted to present results. FOs community mobilization, awareness meetings and step-by-step formation process as independent variables were significantly and logically explained with respect to their capability in determining FOs sustainability.

Results

FO sustainability in relation to formation process

This research investigated the factors relevant during FO formation process and how they contribute to its sustainability. One of the objectives of the structured interviews was to solicit from respondents their understanding of a sustainable FO. The goal in asking such a question was not to create a list of definitions but to gauge the diversity of perceptions and personal priorities within the organisation. Some responses were conceptual in nature but more often people responded in practical terms, as shown in table 2 and paraphrased in the following paragraphs.

Table 2: Understanding of Sustainable FO, members' perception

	Frequency	Percent
FO members producing high quality coffee in bulk	23	37.1
Members supporting the FO existence	17	27.4
FO existing today and forever with different generations	17	27.4
FO supports members social-economic and environmental needs	5	8.1
Total	62	100.0

Table 2 shows a diversity of members' understanding of a SFO which ranged from FO members producing high quality coffee in bulk at 37.1%, followed by members supporting the FO existence at 27.4 tallying with FO existing today and forever with different generations at 27.4% and FO supports members social-economic and environmental needs at 8.1%.

Journal of Business Management Science

It is clear from the findings that producers have a broad understanding of what constitutes a sustainable FO; the how members perceive sustainability contributes greatly to the execution of activities that support FO sustainability. Most of the themes involve their sense of belonging to the FO. The connotations members attached to SFO assisted in further ascertaining their validity through triangulation with other data collection tools.

Existing today and with different generations

Members commented that sustainability meant that the formation of their FO rests on a non-time-dependent foundation that it will remain viable and that markets would be stable over time. They connected it to enhancing their continued coffee production through soliciting of production inputs and GAP trainings.

Increased production of high quality coffee

The continuous production of high quality coffee ensures producer income and sustains their group. Coffee production is vital for CFO sustainability; hence members consider FO support to production to be cardinal. Members support their FO when their production is progressively increasing with technical assistance from their FO; hence some felt that sustainability meant that the opportunities made available to them would also be available for their children, and that the gains they made would not suffer setbacks if, for example, an adult family member becomes ill or dies. A group that encourages information sharing among members and leaders was seen to be increasing its sustainability and member commitment. Fos common goals which include activities that support members' livelihood (members' well being); increased equality of member shares and; independence from outside influence. Rankin and Russell (2005) defined a sustainable FO as one that is economically successful and hence able to compete with other FOs and the private sector as well as being economically successful and able to maintain this position. There are several factors relevant during FOs formation process that contributes to its sustainability as indicated in table 3.

Steps Followed During FO Formation

Table 3 Steps followed during formation

	Frequency	Percent
Identification of members	16	25.8
Sensitization meeting	24	38.7
Village mobilization meetings	9	14.5
Group meetings	13	21.0
Total	62	100.0

The findings in table 3 on the steps, process or procedures followed during FO formation showed member sensitization meetings as leading steps at 38.7% followed by village mobilization meetings at 25.8%. Group meetings were rated 21.0%, and member self-selection rated at 14.5%.

Journal of Business Management Science

Identifications of members

Results in table in table 3 show that member identification has a profound impact on FO formation and on the functioning of PGs and the achievement of its objectives. Members have to be able to self-select suitable FOs members. This eliminates the possibility of serious producers having to work with free riders. Albert, et al., (2000) state that the beauty of the identity and identification concepts is that they provide a way of accounting for the agency of human action within an organizational framework. Barney and Stewart (2000) argue that organizational identity is (a) what is taken by members to be the central attribute of the organization; (b) what makes the organization distinctive and unique from other organizations in the eyes of the member; and (c) what is perceived by members to be enduring or continuing, regardless of objective changes in the organizational environment.

Sensitization and mobilization meetings

Successful community outreach requires consistent messages repeated using a wide variety of materials and reinforced by interpersonal contact as well as via mass and local media channels including producer information centers (info-points) and handouts. Mobilization meetings help in disseminating information through focused diffusion while organized diffusion help to spread information through connected communities or social networks. Social mobilization increases the impact of FOs via PGs, spreading new ideas organically from person to person and community to community. Mobilization assists in getting knowledge of the intended project disseminated to farmers who are looking for vital information such as existing local and international programs in the area, production trends, member needs, history of FOs in the area, markets and acceptability of the intended program. Facilitators must know the active programs and strategize on the best model of mobilizing prospective FO members.

Group meetings

Group meetings are crucial during formation although they are an insufficiently examined aspect of organizational life but which can play key roles in the formulation of strategies and strategic changes within FOs. Open meetings tend to reinforce existing authority structures. However, in poor organised FOs open meetings would undermine existing FOs authority; closed meetings are attended by executive leaders and, potentially, offer greater scope for suspending established structures. Closed meetings do not validate decisions hence they need to be linked to open meetings.

Member Formation Trainings

Table 4: Formation trainings received / offered

	Frequency	Percent
Group vision setting	13	21.0
Constitution formulation	27	43.5
Member self selection trainings	13	21.0
Progress monitoring	9	14.5
Total	62	100.0

Table 4 reveals that the most appreciated trainings during formation were constitution formulation (43.5%) followed by group vision setting and member self-selection at 21% while FO monitoring was rated 14.5%.

Constitution formulation

Constitution formulation was considered highly crucial by members because of the importance of the document in FO registration requirements, opening of bank accounts and registration of a board of trustees. Business and service providers prefer registered FOs over informal organisations for the greater security for their assets; hence this training was rated high in the survey. Vision setting and member self-selection were rated equally. Vision gives direction to the FO while a well-screened member base is vital for sustainability. Structured survey responses did not consider monitoring as a cardinal element of formation probably because they do not seem to understand its importance, as do experts in shaping the progress of the FO by allowing it to learn from mistakes.

Member Training

Training as a means of increasing knowledge and skills for doing a particular activity was mentioned as both a motivating factor and means to sustainability enhancement. Salifu et al. (2010) indicated that there is a need to introduce long-term learning-by-doing programs with FOs and their leaders because learning bridges the gap between performance requirements and present competence. Training imparts members with skills and knowledge so that they contribute to FO efficiency and are able to cope with the pressures of changing economic and social environment (Rankin and Russell, 2005). The viability of an organization depends on the skills and knowledge of its members hence FOs have obligations to solicit and invest in trainings for their members. Chambo, (2015) argued that the private and not public sectors are the best providers of trainings hence FO facilitators need to establish a system of localizing training approaches. This is also suggested in a research conducted by Parker (2012) for CLUSA in which she argued that “Field presence is essential for development organisations to ensure FOs have the capacity to expand and work in a sustainable business environment”. Trainings present an option for members to recognize and appreciate (by differentiating themselves from none members) their FOs through basic trainings. Trainings help producers understand the importance of organisations. Through formation trainings members understand their responsibilities on equitable contributions and democratically control the capital of their FO. Through these trainings the possibilities of free riders is minimized since the group norms will be set clear.

It was noted during interviews that most external agencies often view the forming of FOs as a positive intervention, a way of increasing impact and sustainability of their activities. However, groups formed in this way are typically more prone to difficulties at the start and there is a risk that they will not continue if or when the initiating institution withdraws from the area. When voluntarism and social capital are distorted by a ‘predetermined approach’, the facilitating organisation and not the members eventually own the resulting Organisation. A key challenge for facilitating agencies is therefore to act as catalysts and bring out the self-organizing capacities of farmers in the most locally relevant and useful way.

Formation Process: a deductive approach

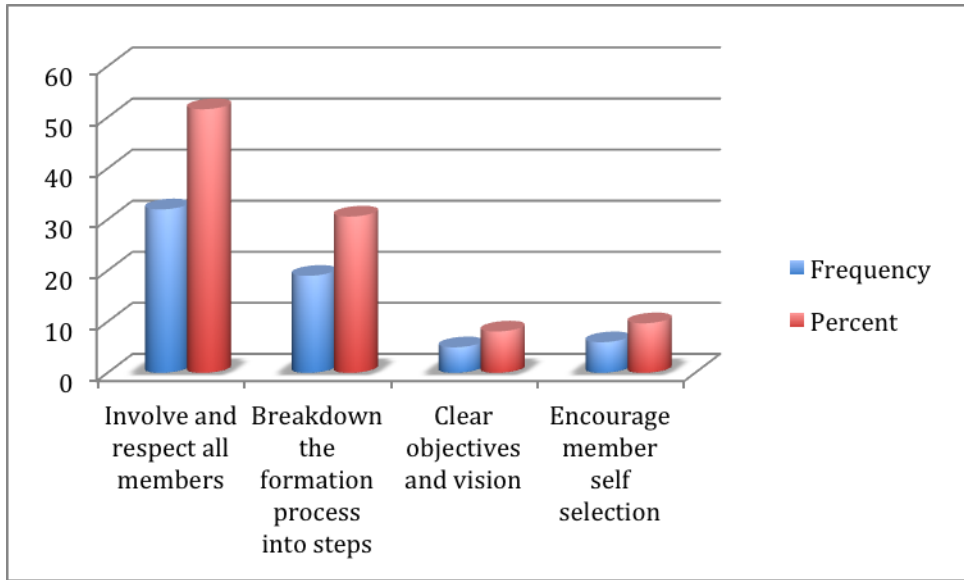


Figure 1 FO Formation Process: a deductive approach

Figure 1 reveals how learning from experience contributes to sustaining FOs. Breaking down trainings into a step-by-step approach rated at 30.6% followed the involvement and recognition of all FO members at 51.6%, while encouraging member self-selection was third at 9.7% with clear objectives and vision at 8.1%.

Member recognition

On-farm demonstrations with a given farming technology are one of the most popular activities for starting up PGs that will form FOs. According to FAO, (2010), they are used as a way of recognizing and appreciating the hosting member. Other members and non-members in the community learn from these demonstrations and apply the new techniques in their fields. Chan, (2010) claimed that hosting members develop strong sense of ownership and identify themselves with their FOs. Farmers enjoy recognition and would stay members for the sake of the respect obtained from the organization and even strive to impress others by trying to implementing the demonstrated techniques offered, hence finding themselves increasing production and even performing far much better than a non-recognised farmer of the same level.

Step-by-step process

The breaking down of formation trainings into a step-by-step process was noted as being key formation factor. Buckley, (2007) advised that FO facilitators should come up with clear and effective formation methodologies and utilize member ownership, mentorship, and the type of management system to create a sense of ownership among producers. Among the suggested methodologies is the breaking down of the entire training and formation process into steps in order to accommodate slow learners. Formation trainings should be given frequently and in depth because most of the members have low comprehension levels. In addition handouts should be provided so that producers can refer to vital information when need arises following the training.

Encourage member self-selection

Involving all prospective members in member self-assessment tallied in terms of significance on sustainability contribution through formation methods used. It is vital to inform all prospective members through village or ward meetings of the importance of FOs so they conduct self-assessments and screenings before joining or forming FOs. Producers need to decide on whether to work with farmer “X” or “Z” through their self-assessments and screenings that looks at individuals effectively. This way, free riders will be eliminated and group cohesion strengthened. Through group dynamics members develop capacities and abilities to participate in the planning and decision making of their own development with local institutions. Spontaneous and voluntary formations of FOs involve a high degree of trust, which cannot be manufactured. This is one reason why PGs are often formed around one strong personality and/or due to some immediate issue. Working together increases members’ bargaining power, which helps to share, and lower risks and the costs of FO business activities. In areas where farmers are scattered geographically, and transport and communications are difficult, the importance of FOs is even greater. This is because FOs brings these services to members' doorsteps.

Cohesion is usually not strong in multi-tier FOs due to heterogeneity. Cohesion is critical for FO sustainability through the development of a sense of ownership by individual PG members. A number of studies have shown that disintegration in groups is mainly caused by heterogeneity (Cook and Burrell, 2009). Homogeneity, on the other hand, facilitates oneness and enhances social belonging/security hence a suitable methodology is needed to foster it.

Conclusion

The study began by pointing out the contribution of formation methodologies on sustaining FOs from Moshi and Mbeya regions of Tanzania. Despite the growing importance of FOs in coffee production, however, little information exists in literature on participatory formation methodologies that support sustainability of Coffee FOs. Through this research a deep insight of formation contribution was attained. This was done through analyses that focused on operational case studies at both levels of individual PGs and FOs. The need for targets has distorted even the basic formation procedure that CDO had in the past. Although building from the existing FOs adds value in sustaining FOs. The biggest mistake organisations are making is trying to reinvent the wheel by establishing totally new FOs. The best will be working with the existing structures and give them intensive organisation trainings that will enhance their management skills. Through this study it has been noted that most of the FOs challenges and problems are due to malformation processes hence this study came up with fundamental propositions for formation processes as highlighted below.

Mobilization

Mobilizing producers through established structures such as government extension and community development sections, village and ward leaders, etc is advisable. Farmers easily get together for a common goal and especially with someone they trust. This activity is a process on its on and has to be acknowledged to produce good results. Several avenues should be used to disseminate FO information to prospective members and help them understand the importance of FOs in order to have informed decisions.

Awareness

Awareness is another process that should be repeated in several places and be presented to as many prospective members as possible. They could be lots of such activities resulting from few mobilization processes depending on the geographical coverage of the intended organisation. This action is sometimes called sensitization or contact meeting. It is vital because producers will be able to make informed decisions from the discussion with the facilitator. Usually informal FO formations starts after this stage hence producers should be clear on the purpose of the proposed FO, otherwise it may not be sustainable. It is vital for producers to come up with a suitable place, date and all necessary logistics for the awareness meeting in order to instill a sense of ownership right from the start. In sensitizing communities, trusted authorities and community members should be engaged in disseminating information. Among these trusted individuals are Community Development Officers, extension officers and teachers. Salifu et al. (2010) revealed that rural leaders in the community are more likely to have a significant influence in encouraging participation in farmer groups even in the absence of external support ensuring that these groups are long-lived and independent.

Step-by-step process

It has been established through this research that most of the producers are literacy challenged hence ensuring their understanding requires a better approach. Essential formation procedures should be laid down for the FOs and their PGs to consider and apply if they feel fit to do so. However, the results in here reveal that facilitating organisations have been overly time conscious and would in most cases just collect names of members and the next day the business starts. Facilitators are supposed to master facilitation skills which will help in the mobilization, awareness and strategizing of the step-by-step training approaches. This research has noted that most of the trainings conducted are in a student teacher manner hence a change in the adoption of adult literacy will add strength to membership enhancement and enrich the contribution of the formation methodology to FO sustainability.

General

FOs should be independent from outside influence otherwise, when external forces facilitate its formation, members will not accept it as their own which distorts the voluntary membership principle of member owned organisations. FOs with income diversification activities for members and that do not depend on coffee pre-marketing financial advances are more likely to be sustainable than those that are not. Thus, it is crucial that managers carefully plan, implement, and effectively execute community mobilization meetings. Through mobilization, the facilitating organisation is able to identify other players, assessing the project area, and be able to plan for a better intervention method.

Recommendations

The methodology used in this study was a mixed one and employed a combination of data collection tools including FGDs, surveys and interviews, plus a mixed analysis method, which compromised on time. The research looked at the contribution of formation methodology on sustaining FOs with respect to coffee organisations in two districts of vast two regions. The approach used included several players i.e. producers, FO facilitators, policy makers and academicians. This study reflected a slightly difference from most of the researches on FOs in that it highlighted the importance of formation methodology on the sustainability of FOs. Its conceptual approach brought to light concepts that important issues related to FO sustainability

calls for further studies. A similar study could be done in the same area with a different approach or elsewhere with the same approach. A clear understanding of the suitable participatory FO formation methodology for both producers and FO facilitators is cardinal. The connection between formation methodology and sustainability of FO should be established.

Unfortunately the literature says little on the formation methodologies of FO and success factors that would support the establishment of strong FOs. Identifying viable options for improving the formation methodology in less time and with fewer external resources will require new thinking about how to organize FOs, support them over the long term, and improve the overall business environment in which they operate.

References

- Aldana, M. and Ashby, J. C. (2007). *The Organization and Development of Farmer Groups for Agro-enterprise: Conclusions from a CRS & RII-CIAT Study Tour in Asia, Africa and Latin America. A CRS Internal Working Paper*. Baltimore: USA.
- Bernard, H.R. (2006). *Research Methods in Anthropology. Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. New York: AltaMira Press a division of Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Chambo, S. A. (2015). *Transport Co-operatives and Organizational Integration in Tanzania*. Paper presented to the Co-operative Research Workshop organized by The Institute of Continuing Co-operative Education and Development. Moshi Co-operative University.
- Chambo, S. A. and Bwabo, M. (2013). *The Co-operative Movement and African Union: Partners in African Development*. Workshop to commemorate 50 years of OAU/AU held at J.K. Nyerere Hall, MUCCoBS: Moshi
- Francesconi, G.N. and F. Wouterse. (2014). "Promoting the Role of Farmer-Based Organizations for Value Chain Integration: The Tension between a Program's Targeting and an Organization's Investment Strategy". Forthcoming in *Agricultural Economics*.
- International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development (2009). *Agriculture at a Crossroads. Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) Report*. Washington D.C.: IAASTD.
- Kothari, C. R. 2004. *Research Methodology: "Methods and Techniques"*. Second Revised Edition, New Age International (P) Ltd: Delhi, India.
- Mangnus, E. and SteenhuijsenPiters, B. (2010). *Dealing with Small-Scale Producers: Linking Buyers and Producers*. KIT-Publishers: Amsterdam.
- Onwuegbuzie, A. J. and Leech, N. L. (2006). *Linking Research Questions to Mixed Methods Data Analysis Procedures. The Qualitative Report*, 11(3), 474-498. Accessed at <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR11-3/onwuegbuzie.pdf>. Retrieved on 27/11/14],
- Penrose-Buckley, C. (2007). *Producer Organisations: A Guide to Developing Collective Rural Enterprises*. Oxford/Eynsham: Information Press.
- Rankin M. and Russell, I. (2005). *Emerging Structures of Farmer Cooperatives in Vietnam: Case Studies from the Mekong Delta*.
- Rankin, M. K. and Russell, I. (2005). *Building Sustainable Farmer Cooperatives in the Mekong Delta, Vietnam: Is Social Capital the Key?*

- Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research Methods for Business Students*. (5th Ed). RotolitoLombarda: Italy.
- Uliwa, P and D. Fisher (2004), “*Assessment of Tanzania’s producer Organizations. Experience and Environment*”. USAID Economic growth office. Dar es salaam
- Wennink, B. and Heemskerk, W. (eds.). (2006). *Farmers’ Organisations and Agricultural Innovation. Case Studies from Benin, Rwanda and Tanzania. Bulletin 374*. Amsterdam: KIT-Publishers.
- Wennink, B., Nederlof, S. and Heemskerk, W. (2007). *Access of the Poor to Agricultural Services: The Role of Farmers’ Organizations in Social Inclusion. KIT Bulletin 376*.
- Wiggins, S. and Sharada, K. (2013). *Leaping and Learning: Linking smallholders to markets in Africa*. London: Agriculture for Impact, Imperial College and Overseas Development Institute

