

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE MILLENNIUM VILLAGE PROMISE ON COMMUNITY
NETWORKS: THE CASE OF SAURI MILLENNIUM VILLAGE IN WESTERN KENYA

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EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF THE MILLENNIUM VILLAGE PROMISE ON COMMUNITY
NETWORKS: THE CASE OF SAURI MILLENNIUM VILLAGE IN WESTERN KENYA

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And hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to Mama Rose Jiveti, Lillian Waswa, and Belinda Nyirisi. The three brave women who travelled this journey with me. To dad Joash Jiveti, who took the first step when he held my hand to Makuchi Pre-School several years ago. Lastly, to my siblings for believing in me.

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ABSTRACT

For several decades, international development experts have been involved in attempts to help rural communities in Africa attain the economic development. The Millennium Village Promise is the recent strategy, which is designed as a bottom-up approach for empowering the rural communities. Studies are needed that will yield an understanding of the impact of these kinds donor intervention programs on local social capital. The aim of this study was focused on how relationships between exogenous and internal organizations in Sauri communities impacted community networks and how interventions would be sustained. A mixed methodology involving qualitative interviews with key informants and a more quantitative survey for community networks was used to collect data. The major findings indicated that the MVP had introduced new structures, reinforced collective action through development groups, and empowered the residents through agricultural and health development interventions. However, the absence of a clear exit strategy puts the sustainability of the programs into question. This presents the policy makers with valuable lessons about the ramifications of time-bound development approaches on local communities.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH PROBLEM

Background and Setting

International development experts and agencies face many challenges with regard to sustaining their development models. Part of the challenge lies in designing appropriate models that will suffice in mitigating the twin challenges of poverty and economic development (Stiglitz, 1998). With regard to Africa, poverty eradication in rural societies requires policies that also promote local livelihood diversification (Ashley & Maxwell, 2001). This is attributed to fact that the economies of most African societies are subsistent and rely on informal sectors while demand and supply preferences are influenced by a host of cultural practices of sharing and dependency on each other (Hyden, 2007; Narayan, 1999). Networks and associations emerge from daily interactions in the society and offer common survival and coping strategies (Narayan, 1999). However, most development programs promulgated by international agencies still neglect the role of informal associations while designing development policies (Pretty & Ward, 2001).

Relationships and networks and their impact on community development can be analyzed as capital that is vested in the social relations among people (Grootaert & Van Bastelaer, 2002). This is in conjunction with the view that development does transform groups of people and communities and the transformations may either weaken or strengthen the authority and relationships at the local level (Stiglitz, 1998).

Attempts by donor countries to alleviate poverty and economic development span more than four decades, yet there is little to measure in terms of development (Hyden, 2007). In fact, about 70% of the population in Africa still lives in rural areas that are so poor they lack the capital to produce and sustain their lives (Sanchez et al., 2007). Reasons for stagnated growth despite decades of foreign assistance have often been attributed to poor governance and corruption in recipient national governments (Sachs, 2005). Due to perceived governance and corruption issues, recent development interventions are advocating for policies that direct foreign assistance to communities instead of governments that are considered corrupt and inept (Sachs, 2005; Sanchez et al., 2007).

World leaders adopted the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000 with an aim of reducing extreme poverty, hunger, poor health, illiteracy, and environmental degradation by the year 2015 (Haines & Cassels, 2004; Sachs, 2005). The MDGs are predicated on the premise that rich (developed) countries can help poor (developing countries) attain economic growth through fair trade, foreign aid, debt forgiveness and the transfer of medicines and technology. These efforts represent the most recent global framework for international development (Haines & Cassels, 2004; Maxwell, 2003).

The Millennium Village Promise (MVP) concept was created in 2004 to demonstrate that Africa's poverty could be eliminated at the [local] village level and achieve the millennium development goals by the year 2015 (Sanchez et al, (2007). The MVP utilized a bottom-up model of development to empower villages to achieve the

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) target of 2015 (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006). The villages where the MVP projects have been piloted are intended to provide models for how to use low cost, community driven interventions to mitigate rural poverty (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006). The MVP provided investments in poor rural villages in Africa to enhance improvements in food production, education, health, food production, and infrastructure and ultimately support the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals for reducing poverty by 2015 (UNDP, 2006). This new development framework for rural African villages is part of the new global poverty agenda (Maxwell, 2003).

Concerns about the MVP

The MVP has been a subject of various concerns because the tendency of the program has been to promote monetary incentives over the role of local institutions, which provide the bedrock for socio-economic and political development in Africa (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006; Hyden, 2007). Other concerns include the formation and constitution of local committees, prioritizing increased income flow, and learning how to effectively tap into external markets outside the village level; all of which previous models abdicated (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006).

There are also concerns about the role of local communities in program design, political interference, and program sustainability beyond the funding period (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006; Maxwell, 2003). Successful implementation of projects of the

magnitude of the MVP depends on the goodwill of the local people in relation to their political systems and issues of equity.

Need for Research

Because of the increasing significance of collective action in agriculture, natural resource management and rural development programs, more research is needed to assess its performance (Meinzen-Dick, DiGregorio, & McCarthy, 2004). According to Gittel and Thompson (2001) these studies could provide information about the “social and cultural attachment of various sub-groups of the population” in economic development (p. 115). In addition, developing countries have unique development needs that call for the delivery of donor assistance using broad strategies that serve special development needs (Stiglitz, 1998). Research is also needed to assess the impact of international development programs on existing social networks in African societies (Gittel & Thompson 2001).

Problem Statement

Despite the abundance of literature on the role of social capital in creating sustainable communities, there is little literature on the MVP and how its interventions and policies shape and are shaped by social capital in Western Kenya. Investigations are needed that will yield an understanding of the impact of the MVP donor interventions and policies on local social capital (networks) in Sauri, Western Kenya and can help determine the extent to which the local communities will be able to sustain their efforts when MVP funding ends. Existing studies, documentation, and publications on the MVP

are primarily in the form of baseline studies and annual reports (Bourgignon et al., 2008; Konecky & Palm, 2008; Annual Report, 2006; Baseline Report, 2007; Sachs, 2005a). Some studies have questioned the impact and the sustainability of the MVP programs (Clemens & Demobynes, 2010). Wanjala and Muradian (2011) evaluated MVP households in Sauri with nearby and otherwise similar untreated households, and found agricultural productivity had increased but found no significant difference in income. However, these studies do not reveal much about the relationship between the MVP and the formation of social capital in Sauri. Understanding how the MVP influences social capital will contribute to understanding an important aspect of the development efforts that can affect the sustainability of the program after the funding is over and can help us better understand the overall contribution to the rural development agenda of the MVP.

The Millennium Villages Promise (MVP) is an example of a model that incorporates various sets of actors in its implementation. It is a bottom-up/top-down strategy designed to facilitate development in rural areas through community empowerment and the introduction of external expertise. Little is known about the effectiveness of this model in terms of how well it facilitates empowerment by building the institutional capacity of the local actors to work effectively with each other and external actors such as nongovernmental organizations and national agencies.

In particular, there is little know about how effective the program is at utilizing the vast network of groups and associations that existed in the villages prior to MVP and will likely be responsible for maintaining and continuing the development efforts once

the MVP efforts are complete. One intention of the MVP model is to create sustainable communities and a major factor in sustainability is the capacity of and effectiveness of the social networks to generate social capital. Community organizations and networks are vital to community development because they serve as entry points that enhance understanding of poverty alleviation and capacity building. This study seeks to fill this gap in understanding by focusing on how the Millennium Village Promise impacts community networks in Sauri, a group of villages in western Kenya, and contributes towards making development sustainable in this part of Kenya.

Theoretical Framework

The Actor-Oriented Approach. This study used the actor-oriented approach (AOA) as espoused by Long (2001). The AOA is a counterpoint to previous structural analyses in development sociology which according to Long, were insufficient in explaining structural changes because they merely looked at the impact of external forces (markets or international bodies). The AOA argues that structural changes are not a result of external forces alone, but are also influenced by social actors. According to Long, when external interventions enter the prevailing “life-worlds” of individuals or groups, they are equally altered and mediated by the same actors (p. 13). The lives and individual behaviors are altered by the action of external forces operating on their daily life experiences and perceptions for the concerned groups (this happens directly or indirectly).

A more dynamic way of explaining social change is one that emphasizes the centrality of human action and consciousness or the interplay and mutual “determination” of external factors and relationships surrounding the new and old forms of production, consumption, and livelihood interventions (p. 12). This focuses efforts on transactional, decision-making models, symbolic interactionist, and phenomenological aspects of social change. An advantage of using the actor oriented approach is that it helps explain the differential reactions to structural circumstances that are similar based on the assumption that the joint creation of the actors is responsible for the differential patterns.

The actor-oriented approach embraces the existence of multiple realities that inform the differential interpretations and responses people ascribe to various social issues. As a result, actor-oriented approach methods require documentation of the ethnographic situation and practice of the actors and ways in which they deploy social relationships, technologies, material and other resources. This enables the delineation of social relationships, networks, meanings, and values that are generated within different arenas and scenarios (p. 242). The AOA further explores the critical interfaces between local actors and ‘intervening’ actors from institutions that are likely to bring contestations among the actors involved (p. 242).

Key concepts guiding the AOA are agency, knowledge, and power construction in social arenas. Agency refers to the mixture of social, cultural, and material elements that shape the perceptions of actors. Knowledge process construction refers to the ways in which actors appreciate their world (surroundings) based on their experiences and

understandings. Power is configured by the ideas of the actors' projects that are comprised of different values, meanings, and notions regarding authority, control, domination, subordination, and how resources are distributed. In this vein, power is considered a product but not a 'given' (empowerment) (p. 242-243).

This approach has been widely used in the rural development sphere, which is characterized by a diversity of policies, programs, livelihood interventions, and actors with different interests based on the myriad of challenges facing rural communities (Long, 2001). Researchers, policy actors, development practitioners, national, and international agencies such as the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID), the World Bank, and many development NGOs have used this approach.

Several studies exist supporting the use of the actor-oriented approach. Brenner and Job (2006) used the AOA to investigate the challenges of managing protected areas in Mexico's tourism industry that has multiple power structures. Data for this study was collected by use of structured and semi-structured interviews with visitors, entrepreneurs and other key informants from numerous government and non-governmental organizations considered the primary actors whose interests, strategies and specific actions affected tourism management in Mexico. The study by Brenner and Jobs revealed that Mexico's tourism industry faced challenges of planning, coordination, and lack of enhanced local participation despite massive investments by government and non-governmental agencies.

Long and Jinlong (2009) used the AOA to investigate the impact of a European Union-funded village-based forest-management project on rural livelihoods in northwest China. This study found out that even though the project was aimed at improving local livelihoods and forest protection, local participation was diminished by the interplay between local actors against those of other dominant interests and institutions. Thus, this project failed to reconcile international discourses of forestry interventions with local meanings, or empower local communities.

Biggs and Matsuert (2004) used the actor-oriented approach to investigate donor-funded poverty reduction programs in Nepal and Bangladesh. Using a case-study approach, they identified all the actors involved as well as the linkages between the actors in the programs. Using what they called actor linkage maps, they determined the existing relationships and how information flowed among the actors involved in a natural resource program. They learned that weak linkages between the local community and external actors were preventing local participation in the program even though the program had the potential of improving local livelihoods. Biggs and Matsuert (2004) concluded that AOA tools were helpful in analyzing the roles of aid agencies and other international organizations because it emphasized the role of social groups or actors.

The use of the AOA by these studies reflects the objectives of this study in several ways. The findings confirm that the AOA is effective for investigating programs that target livelihood interventions. This is evidenced by the projects that were investigated, all of which had multiple actors drawn from the local regional, national,

and international levels seeking to bring change to local communities. The livelihood interventions programs were based on decision making and funding from national, bilateral, and multilateral agencies.

The interplay between development actors revealed the aspects of power, knowledge and agency that the AOA is intended to explore. The underlying relationships between the actors are akin to those depicted between rich and poor countries as some of the literature reveals (Easterly, 2006). Similarly, literature on social capital and empowerment supports the role that norms, trust, and reciprocity play in communities. These elements were highlighted by the studies that used the AOA in enhancing local participation. The use of case study methodology and identification of the key actors involved is also similar to the boundaries of this study.

The actor oriented approach supports the literature used for this study in regards to exploring policies and programs intended for community empowerment, the practices of aid agencies, livelihood interventions, new and old practices, local versus national and global, and the interfaces between these levels. This study is interested in exploring the relationships among the actors involved with the MDGs and MVP village in Sauri, Kenya and the AOA is suited for that purpose. The MVP is guided by policies that are likely to reconfigure the local communities' aspects of agency, knowledge, and power that are highlighted in this study. Aspects of AOA emerge from the existing power, relationships, interactions, and the shift from short term to long-term goals of the MDGs and MVP in 2015. As other studies have revealed, interventions are strengthened and become more effective and sustainable when the relationships

among the actors facilitate information flow over time (Biggs & Matsuert, 2004; Brenner & Job, 2006; Long, 2001; Long & Jinlong 2009).

Profile and Description of Study Area

Sauri became the UN's first Millennium village in 2004. Geographically, it is located in the Yala Division of Nyanza province in western Kenya. The region is south of the equator. The Sauri MVP is a conglomeration of 11 villages covering an 8km square mile. The Luo are the dominant ethnic group and subsistence agriculture is the primary livelihood strategy in Sauri. Common food crops grown are corn (maize), beans, sorghum and cassava while cotton and tobacco are the two main cash crops.

According to the MVP Baseline Report (2005), there were about 975 households with 64% living in abject poverty (less than \$1 a day) and 20% HIV-AIDS prevalence. The area has a bi-modal rainfall pattern with the long rains season March to June and the short rains from September to December. Village administration occurs through a sub-location assistant chief, location chief, village elders, and an elected councilor (Baseline Report).

This study focused on communities within the Sauri MVP that are host to most of the health and agriculture sector projects. The two sectors were intentionally selected because they are thought to utilize community networks in the dissemination of information and in accessing resources needed for community development. By focusing on two sectors and three communities, the findings were expected to provide insights into the framework that the Millennium Villages Project used to form

relationships among the communities where projects were being implemented (see Figure 1)

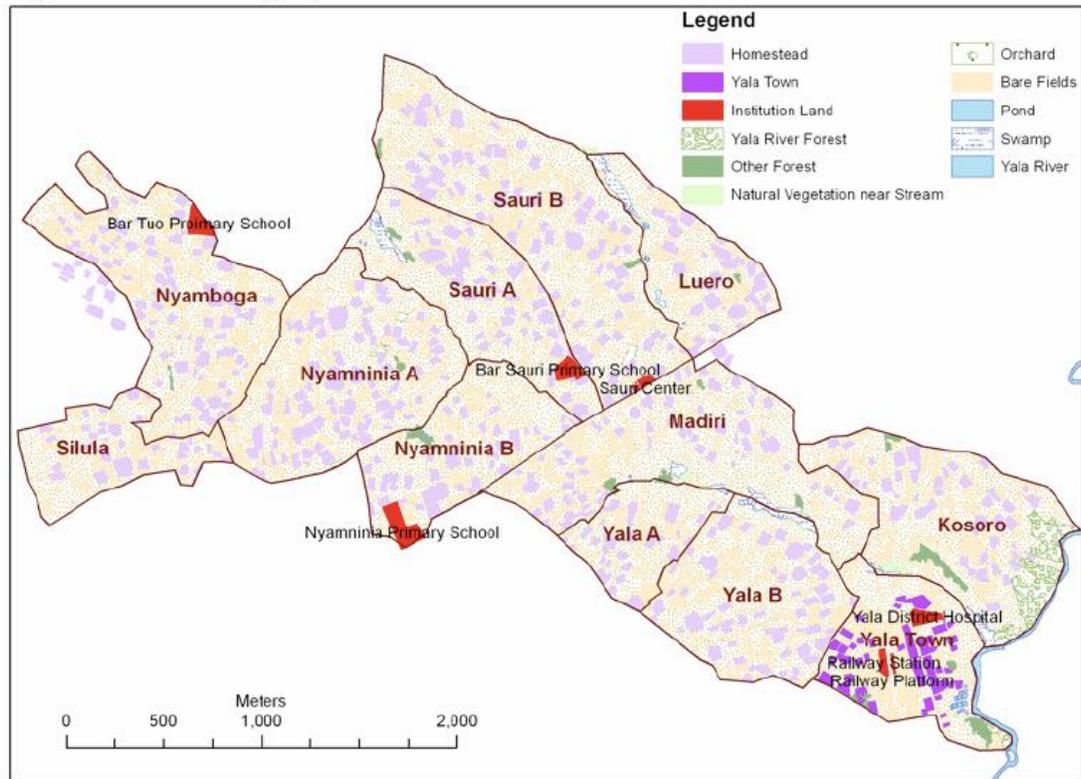


Figure 1: The sub-villages within Sauri Millennium Village.

(Adapted from the Sauri Annual Report, 2006).

Organization of the Dissertation

The balance of the report will be organized into six chapters. Chapter 2 contextualizes the research via a review of existing literature on social capital, international development, the MDGs and the MVP. Chapter 3 describes the methodology used for collecting the data for this study and includes a description of the key informants used in the study. Chapter 4 describes the findings of 30 key informant

interviews conducted in the agriculture and health sectors that focused on personal networks in the Sauri MVP communities. Chapter 5 presents findings from 13 key informants used in the **quantitative survey** on community networks and Chapter 6 analyzes the findings of the study and discusses their implications for practice and future research in international development.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

For the last several decades international development assistance agenda for sub-Saharan Africa has focused on poverty reduction. These interventions have brought mixed results. Some projects succeeded and brought desired changes while others did not. There has been some progress but poverty is still a widespread phenomenon in developing countries that have traditionally been recipients of development assistance. Factors that affect the effectiveness of these programs include the decision-making framework (from top down to grassroots), implementation, focus, design, efficiency of the national governments, and socio-cultural factors (Abrokwa, 1999; Brown & Ashman, 1996; Sachs, 2005a). These attempts to bring about social change can be explained through the lens of theoretical frameworks that seek to analyze and explain the agenda and the effects of approaches used in international development (McMichael, 2008).

Theories of Development

The three main theories that have been used to analyze the frameworks inherent in international development models include modernization theory, dependency theory, and the world systems theory.

Modernization theory. Modernization theory emerged at the end of the World War II, at a time when there was massive industrial redevelopment in Europe. It

is attributed to Rostow (1960) who sought to explain the paths that a country needs to take before to achieve development. Modernization theorists contend that the rest of the world can attain development through assistance from the West, which is much more developed. This theory was popularized during the 1960s-1970s on the premise that the progress in the West can be replicated in the rest of the world (Arat, 1988; Peet & Hartwick, 2009). This school of thought guided the practice of international development based on the idea that poor countries could be brought to the same level of development as that of wealthier countries through a foreign assistance relationship.

Modernization theory has been the dominant orthodoxy guiding development thinking and practice over the decades. This theory espouses the dominance and superiority of rich Western countries over developing or third world countries. Modernization theorists believed in the export of Keynesian principles of macro-economic management to the developing countries (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

Dependency theory. Dependency theory was developed as a rebuttal against prior theories of development particularly the modernization theory and has been attributed to theorists such as Cardoso (1972) and Frank (1969). Dependency theory suggests an asymmetrical structure of control relations where the controller can be a state or a multinational enterprise with the ability to influence, change and maintain the behavior of the controlled state or its economy. Frank (1969) uses the terms “the development of underdevelopment” to explain the idea that the development of rich countries contributed to the underdevelopment in poor countries through the

exploitative flow of resources from their peripheral position to the wealthy core of countries.

Developed countries propagate a state of dependency in all aspects of development including economy, political, education, and culture, among others. Most poor nations dependent on developed countries are also often former colonies whose economies act as sources of raw materials and markets for developed countries (Cardoso, 1972; Frank, 1969, p. 3; Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

Dependency theory sought to explain economic development using the global geography of first world, center, and third world. The first world included countries that were advancing in Europe. There exist dependent relations between the center and the periphery and the first world. Dependency theory contends that economic growth in third world countries could only occur through changes taking place in developed countries. This was used to explain how multinational companies have grown to dominate capitalism. The period of the 1980s were characterized by neoliberalism ideologies of the World Bank and IMF. These policies have popularly been referred to as the Washington Consensus, which includes fiscal discipline, foreign direct investment, privatization, deregulation, tax reforms, and market competition. Latin America, Africa, and Asia were the main recipients of these policies. During these periods, structural adjustment programs dominated development practice, which imposed austerity measures on developing countries as conditions for receiving development assistance (Peet & Hartwick, 2009; McMichael, 2008).

World systems theory. World systems theory arose as a counter to the modernization and dependency theories and has largely been influenced by the writings of Wallerstein (1974). The world system, popular in the 1970s and 1980s, analyzed development from a framework that placed regional dynamics into the global context namely the core (developed) semi-periphery, and periphery. This school of thought argues that developed countries are responsible for the unequal development in the world economy due to their dominant capitalist and highly industrialist economies while poverty in poor countries is a consequence of their peripheral position (Peet & Hartwick, 2009; Wallerstein).

Wallerstein proposed three structural systems for analyzing the development of the world economy. First, there is the core system, which was endowed with skilled labors and increased agricultural production enhanced by technology and high incomes. Second, there are the peripheral countries, used to provide appropriate resources needed for the economic expansion of the core. Finally, the semi-periphery countries serve as good sources for investment by the capitalist core economies. It is observed that unequal development is not just a creation of the world economy, but a major component promulgated by the capitalist or core economies, which are exploitative (Wallerstein, 1974).

As the foregoing theories of development explain, the results of development programs financed by bilateral and multilateral development agencies have been, at best, mixed. Other explanations exist that also serve to support the foregoing observations about the results of past development programs (Kothari, 2002;

McMichael, 2008). Various critiques have sought to explain these inadequacies of the development approaches that have been used.

Mixed Results from Past International Rural Development Programs

According to Escobar (1995), development reflects a western dream of global domination, which is replete with apparatus of production, planning agencies, capital, ideas, discourses, and representations that require thinking and acting like the West. That is why development is defined as problems or abnormalities that can only be fixed by specific interventions that stem from industrialization, the Green Revolution, or other integrated rural development practices, whose policies were regarded as basic truths.

Development institutions have become new sites of power and knowledge that rationalizes how people should behave. For instance, development is defined in terms of poverty, population growth, and archaic agriculture systems. These issues are also implemented in a top-down manner with technocrats providing external advice (Escobar, 1995).

Bryceson (1995) faults development programs for promoting piecemeal solutions that can only be solved by monetary interventions. The basis of the interventions is a Western criterion that is not necessarily grounded in the existing material conditions. Most donor programs are often implemented on set targets and deadlines. Parpart et al., (2002) shares the same position that the development enterprise is largely top-down and can only be explained through a North- South lens, with the developed North being the source of knowledge for all programs being

implemented in the South. This expert knowledge is always in conflict with local knowledge in regards to doing development work.

Stiglitz (2002) and Friedman (2002) attribute unequal development to the forces of globalization whose dominant cultures spread inequalities all over the world. Whereas foreign aid has resulted in some success, the failure to honor promises by Western countries has contributed to the persistent poverty conditions. These conditions are further exacerbated by the three main institutions guiding globalization: The International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and World Trade Organization (Stiglitz, 2002). The policies and practices that have been used in development projects largely reflect unequal power between the West and third world countries (Kothari, 2002).

Empowerment and Participation Policies of Development

Beginning in the 1990s and continuing into the new millennium, donors began to shift their approach to rural development programs that confer empowerment and participation on local communities (Ellis & Biggs, 2001; Peet & Hartwick, 2009). The rationale for empowerment is to make development more sustainable and foster the development of effective community infrastructure (Dasgupta & Beard, 2007). Many of these recent interventions have been directed to specific sectors such as agriculture, infrastructure, education, and health. Relationships across sectors create bridges that facilitate shared interest in solving problems thereby improving the livelihoods of poor people. Many developing countries that rely on donor funding are now implementing

poverty eradication policies that align with this shift towards local empowerment (Ellis & Biggs, 2001). This is the premise guiding the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a current global framework for international development.

Millennium Development Goals

In 2000, world leaders at the United Nations Millennium Assembly, through the Millennium Declaration committed to reduce extreme poverty, hunger, poor health, illiteracy, and environmental degradation in developing countries by the year 2015 (Haines & Cassels, 2004). The Millennium Declaration yielded what are now known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The (MDGs) are a set of eight goals focused on fostering development and eradicating poverty.

They are predicated on the premise that rich (developed) countries can help poor (developing countries) attain economic growth through fair trade, increased foreign aid, debt forgiveness and the transfer of medicine and technology (Haines & Cassels, 2004; Maxwell, 2003). The eight MDGs include:

1. Eradication of extreme poverty and hunger
 2. Achievement of universal primary education
 3. Promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women
 4. Reduction of child mortality
 5. Improvement of maternal health
 6. Combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases
 7. Ensuring environmental sustainability
 8. Development of a global partnership for development
- (Easterly, 2006, p. 9).

The Millennium Development Goals are a culmination of the policies and commitments for international development enacted in the 1990s and guided by the

notion that development can be achieved through democratic governance, human rights, peace and security. They are based on time-bound measurable targets, and indicators designed to help monitor progress. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) is the agency charged with the responsibility of coordinating both global and local efforts. The MDGs are supposed to be realized by each country (Peet & Hartwick, 2009).

Sachs (2005, 2008) has argued that extreme global poverty could be halved by the year 2015 through careful planning of increased aid to developing countries. He attributes economic stagnation in developing countries to several factors such as government corruption (governance failures), killer diseases such as AIDS and Malaria, and poor infrastructure among others. Therefore, in order to eliminate extreme poverty, Sachs who headed the United Nation's Millennium Project, emphasized the application of Millennium Development Goals through increased funding from developed countries (Hyden, 2007; Sachs, 2005a; Sachs 2005b; Sanchez et al. 2007).

One of the main challenges in implementing the MDGs is addressing issues associated with national governance structures. Historically, international programs operated on the assumption of the existence of good governance structures, which have often been absent in the developing nations that have been recipients of bilateral and multilateral assistance (Hyden, 2007). National governments, aid agencies, and non-governmental agencies in developing countries have been plagued with corruption, lack effective capacity building strategies, and inappropriate infrastructure. These issues have limited the impact of many national development efforts in the developing

countries (Hyden, 2007). One reason the development community instituted the MDGs and the Millennium Villages approach was because of the poor national governing structures. The Millennium Villages approach provides development aid to communities at the village level directly instead of through national governments in an attempt to enable them to take ownership of their local development needs. Even though there are still governance issues at the local levels, they are different from those faced by national government (Esman & Uphoff 1982). The Millennium villages are part of the United Nations' Millennium Project.

The Origins of the United Nations Millennium Project. The Millennium Project is a commission that was formed in 2002 to provide an action plan for United Nations Secretariat to guide efforts to reverse the global challenges of extreme poverty, disease, and hunger that affect millions of people worldwide. The Millennium Project was premised on the concept of providing quick-impact investments in specific sectors of the economy namely agriculture, education, and infrastructure with the goal of lifting regions from the burdens of extreme poverty. The rationale was that investments could be easily applied, monitored, and adapted to local conditions. In terms of foreign, assistance, this was seen as being reliable aid that could work fast and be monitored easily while avoiding the problems of corruption. This approach was later endorsed by world leaders during the 2005 UN World Summit as a part of the central recommendations of the United Nations Millennium Project, which supports the implementation of the recommendations (Annual Report, 2008; Sachs, 2008).

The two main regions that are experiencing high levels of poverty are East Asia, South Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. Of the three, Sub-Saharan Africa is the region whose development needs rise to crisis proportions. This can be attributed to the interaction between its history of colonialism, the cold war, slave trade, inefficient domestic policies, and the unwillingness of the rich western countries to invest in the long-term development of Africa (Sachs, 2005; 2008). Since they are so poor, these communities cannot make the desired progress towards achieving the MDGs on their own unless they receive external support (Sachs, 2005). This is the notion that led to the Millennium Villages approach.

The strategy of the Millennium Villages includes what Sachs referred to as the “Big Five Development Interventions” identified by the Sauri communities on his initial visit in 2004 and form the basis of the Millennium Promise. The Millennium promise is an NGO formed to facilitate the works of the MVP by focusing on investments in:

- Agriculture inputs such for use provide fertilizers, irrigation, and storage facilities
- Basic health to address issues of malaria, aids, or access of essential health services such as birth control
- Education to provide meals for all children and expand vocational training opportunities
- Electric power, transport, and communications services – electricity, transport, cellphones
- Safe drinking water and proper sanitation in the community.

The Millennium Village Promise as a bottom up/top down approach to development. The Millennium Villages Promise (MVP) is a community-based development strategy designed to facilitate the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MVP investments are directed to the local communities in rural African villages with an emphasis on the key sectors of education, agriculture, health, and infrastructure. This is both a bottom-up and top down approach to community development that seeks to empower rural communities to manage their local development needs sustainably, while harmonizing the activities of all actors involved in the MVP partnership from local, national, non-governmental, and donor agencies (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006; Carr, 2008; Konecky & Palm, 2008).

Millennium Village Promise interventions are found in poor villages in Kenya, Ethiopia, Ghana, Malawi, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Rwanda, Tanzania, and Uganda. These villages were selected based on criterion that reflects Africa's major twelve agro-ecological zones (Baseline Report, 2007; Kanter, Negin, Olayo, Bukachi, Johnson, & Sachs, 2009). Sauri is a Kenyan Millennium Village project located in Western Kenya (see Figure 1). The Sauri project began in 2004 and has expanded to include 10 additional neighboring villages representing a population of about 55,000 in Western Kenya (Annual Report, 2006; Baseline Report, 2007).



Figure 2: The location of Sauri Millennium Village in western Kenya. (Adapted from the Sauri Annual Report, 2006).

Millennium Village Promise and Strategies to Create Sustainable Communities

A number of strategies have been implemented by the MVP in Sauri, Kenya to ensure community development efforts are successful and sustainable. Some of these strategies include institutionalized participation, strengthening the capacity for

collective action, developing a community-based information system, gender equity, and a policy environment that supports a multi-level community development process (Annual Report, 2006; Konecky & Palm, 2008).

Effective participation in the MVP is addressed by bridging partnerships among various interest groups, associations, and sectors in the community (Annual Report, 2006). Participatory methods enhance the mobilization and management of resources to sustain collective action in the community. Best practices have been used to identify participatory methods that could be adapted to the local community while the varied interests of the poor, women, youth, or other marginalized members of the community have been reconciled through the creation of strong partnerships (Konecky & Palm, 2008).

To strengthen the community's capacity for collective action and localize the programs, the MVP uses resource utilization strategies, inclusiveness, conflict management, and the building of networks with local governments and NGOs. Participatory action is a major element for making the MVP development initiatives sustainable, which are tied to strengthening the capacities of local institutions for long-term participation (Konecky & Palm, 2008).

Community institutions are considered strategic institutional entry points to the communities because the local institutional landscape includes a variety of community-based organizations and traditional institutions that influence participatory development in the community. Local institutions (from the community, private sector, government, NGO) play a vital role in the identification of appropriate structures and

mechanisms for service delivery within the villages. These institutions are vital to the life of development during and after the MVP investments expire in 2015. The MVP acts as the link between support agencies and local community structures/institutions that facilitate the development beyond the MVP investment (Konecky & Palm, 2008).

Each sector utilizes specific institutional strategies from the individual, organizational, and system levels. Eight departmental or sector committees and village committees have been formed to facilitate the effective operations of the community. The sector sub-committees include finance, welfare, recruitment, gender, advisory, disciplinary, transport, and security (Annual Report for Sauri, 2006; Konecky & Palm, 2008).

How MDGs Try to Address the Limitations of Previous Approaches

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) have been packaged and promoted as an ideal model to overcome the limitations of previous approaches. However, the MDGs did not just appear. Sachs (2005) acknowledged that the MDGs were revised promises made by the international community over the years. For example, the original plan was to have universal health by 1978 and universal education by 1990 (Sachs, 2005).

The MDGs were thus conceived for the “global family” as all countries are perceived to be part of the international community, an entire world community. As such, all countries are part of this global family that seeks to achieve the MDGs. The MDGs are predicated on a renewed global partnership that binds all nations based on

the collective rationality hypothesis (Sachs, 2005, p. 204). “The key to ending poverty is to create a global network of connections that reach from impoverished communities to the very centers of world power and wealth and back again” (Sachs, 2005, p. 242).

Sachs thesis in *The End of Poverty* (2005) highlights the global divide between rich and poor nations. Poor nations of the world are caught up in a poverty trap that includes diseases, extreme poverty, physical isolation, climate stress, and environmental degradation. These countries are very poor and cannot escape extreme poverty on their own. Therefore, the notion of ending poverty is guided by two objectives: One that seeks to end extreme poverty (which affects 1/6th of the world’s population) and the other to ensure that all people have a chance to climb the ladder of development.

According to Sachs (2005; 2008) previous development approaches failed because of their narrow focus and standardized advice that disregarded specific contexts. In addition, they overlooked urgent issues of poverty traps, leaving burdens of poverty eradication entirely on the poor countries themselves. The MDGs seek to address these limitations by being measurable, people-driven, and guided by a global partnership between rich and poor countries. The MDGs are anchored by political support from both developed and developing countries, civil society, and other relevant development institutions (MDG Report, 2005; 2006).

Existing progress reports and reviews on the status of the eight MDGs reveal mixed results with progress having been made in some areas while more effort is needed in addressing the MDGs that are not being met. The MDG Report of 2005 stated that failure to meet these promises would be tragic to many people who are still poor

around the world. With regards to Sub-Saharan Africa, it was revealed that the number of people living on less than a dollar a day had increased between 1990 and 2001 from 44.6% to 46.6% respectively plunging millions further into poverty whereas other regions such as Asia experienced a decline in poverty (MDG Report, 2005). These disparities in progress are manifested mainly in rural areas, which require developed countries to fulfill their commitments for foreign assistance (MDG Report, 2006).

It has been over ten years since the MDG approach was unveiled and the 2015 deadline for meeting the MDGs is fast approaching. Still, the findings of the MDG progress Report (2010) are consistent with those of previous years (2005, 2006). The pace which progress is being made has been very slow and jeopardizes some of the gains that have been made. The goals have also demonstrated that reconciling national and international development strategies, policies, and programs remains a challenge. While acknowledging the ambitious nature of these goals, Sachs also cautions about lack of commitment to this new approach. The promises made at start of the new millennium risk being lost and if that happened, "... the Millennium Promises might also do little more than join history's cruel dustbin of failed aspirations" (Sachs, 2008, p. 13).

The MVP - A New Approach or "Old Wine in New Bottle"?

There have been contested explanations about what works or does not work with regards to the development interventions of the MDGs. These disputes focus on reducing poverty by half, the millennium development goals, and the MVP approach to

development. They specifically challenge how the MDGs differ from past failed rural development initiatives and effectiveness of increased foreign assistance.

There are two prime schools of thought that have guided the discussions surrounding foreign aid in developing countries. Sachs (2005), an economist, leads the mindset in favor of increased foreign assistance to developing countries while Easterly (2006), also an economist is against foreign assistance being used to fund development in the developing countries.

In the *End of Poverty*, Sachs (2005) argued that millions of people around the world were stuck in poverty traps especially in the developing countries. The poverty traps are as a result of persistent diseases (malaria/AIDS), extreme poverty, physical isolation, climate stress, environmental degradation, and lack of the financial capital to make crucial investments that could enable them to escape the manacles of extreme poverty. Ending poverty traps (Sachs 2005; 2008) required a global network of cooperation and increased funding from the international community.

Sachs (2005; 2008) contended that past global cooperation had been used to bring about change around the world. Examples included the Green Revolution that was donor funded and provided high yields in Mexico and Asia. The World Health Organizations (WHO) is also cited as having relied on global cooperation to initiate successful campaigns that led to the eradication of smallpox in 1950s, campaigned for child survival in the 1980s, eradication of polio in the 1980s, and other immunizations in 1990s. These campaigns began at local levels and were scaled up to global levels with success. This is the kind of approach that Sachs envisions the international community

can adapt to help poor countries meet the specific MDGs using the Millennium Villages approach (Sachs, 2005; 2008).

On the other hand, Easterly (2006) argues that approaches taken by the international community are laced with utopianism and grand big-push plans that have failed to bring about change over the years. Whereas Sachs (2005; 2008) sees the failed promises by the rich countries as being a result of insufficient amount of foreign aid, Easterly (2006) argues that the prevailing economic conundrum in poor countries is a result of the foreign aid system itself.

Easterly views the foreign aid system of development in poor countries as being responsible for many of the tragedies in these countries. Over \$2.3 trillion has been spent by the West over the last five decades yet this type of compassion has failed to bring the desired change. Many children still don't go to school because they cannot afford it, while malaria, which can be treated at a cost of 12 cents is still costing millions of lives of mothers and children. The main reason, according to Easterly (2006) is that the foreign aid system has misplaced priorities that are not effectively addressing specific issues of poverty. Easterly does not advocate for the abandoning of aid to the poor, instead, the issue for him is to make sure that foreign aid reaches the poor people for which it is intended. Advocating for big-push plans (Sachs, 2005) is not effective because such plans indicate the symptoms of a misdirected approach to foreign aid, which has been used extensively in the past, and still persists today. According to Easterly, the "right plan is to have no plan" (p. 5).

Easterly negates the approach of increasing foreign aid to address global development issues as a reincarnation of Western plans that have been used previously to address poverty in developing countries. This plan, according to Easterly, lacks adequate local knowledge, is prone to distraction by other interventions and is implemented by many agencies each with using their own interventions. There is no clear way to tell if the interventions are reaching the people who need them.

Addressing modern poverty issues should be guided by lessons from past failed efforts. Examples include UN Summits that were held in 1990 to ensure free primary education. When the international community failed to achieve this goal they held another summit and extended the goal to 2015 as part of the MDGs. There is no accountability for missed goals on the part of the international community. Similar big-push plans that triggered foreign aid in the 1950s and 1960s continue even now. Aid agencies can make progress by directing assistance to specific tasks instead of focusing on utopian plans where no one is accountable when they fail (Easterly, 2006).

Whereas Sachs (2005) views poor countries as being stuck in poverty traps, Easterly disagrees, he believes there is a lack of evidence supporting the existence of poverty traps. According to Easterly, poor countries became poor due to declining economic growth, not as a result of being stuck in poverty traps. Many countries that were recipients of foreign aid experienced decreased growth for the period they were under the aid programs such as Ivory Coast and Liberia.

The tragedy of the commons in international aid system. Easterly (2003a; 2003b; 2006) notes that the bureaucracy that characterizes the international aid system

fails to turn aid money into the crucial services needed by the poor. It is the bureaucracy of institutions like the United Nations, USAID, World Bank, and other national agencies that cripple development projects in many countries. For instance, Tanzania was made to produce about 2400 reports for its donors in one year and host over 1000 donor officials the same year. Such obstacles impede the interests of poor countries and complicate the aid system. Aid recipients are made to answer to different authorities but there is no accountability on the part of the donors for their share of mistakes.

This is akin to the tragedy of the commons, which Easterly described as being a result of many development agencies doing 'everything' but no one being accountable, despite the aid volume being scarce. Olson (1965) has also addressed these issues by looking at group size. Large groups are less likely to further common interests or provide collective goods. Examples of organizations that face such a challenge include the United Nations (Olson). The tragedy is that each agency lobbies its own goals as a separate aid agency, but they end up duplicating the activities of each other. The need for coordination in the international community is a major deficiency. Easterly and Sachs both discuss the inefficiency of the United Nations and international development. Incidentally, the United Nations is in charge of MDGs. The development enterprise has a lot of agencies each seeking to implement their own interests.

MDGs are goals that are supposed to be funded by rich countries and international aid agencies working together. The question that begs is who will be accountable when the MDGs are achieved or not achieved? Easterly also believes that homegrown solutions should be promoted to help countries develop. He gives examples

of countries like Chile, East Asia Tigers, and Botswana in Africa, which progressed with minimal aid. Foreign aid should be directed to individuals and not governments.

Other scholars have also weighed in the prevailing debate about what constitutes an effective policy because as Besley and Burgess contend, there is no “magic bullet” (2003, p. 20) as far as the MDGs are concerned. Carr (2008) is concerned about what a true bottom-up approach is given that the MVP uses preconceived problem definitions and solutions for use in the rural communities. Clemens, Kenny, and Moss (2004) are also apprehensive about the cost of the MDGs and the 2015 deadline arguing that foreign aid contributes only a limited proportion to development and so some of the targets of the MVP that are unrealistic facilitate perceptions of failure. In addition, programs are estimated to cost \$1.5M annually per village, which brings into question aspects of cost effectiveness (Clemens & Demobyne, 2010).

Cabral, Farrington, and Ludi, (2006) perceive the MVP to be similar to other development initiatives that have been used in the past and have not been able to sustain their rural development initiatives. Sauri had involvement with donor-funded programs for over 15 years before the MVP interventions began. Measuring the impact of the MVP initiative requires more indicators than are currently provided (Clemens & Demobyne, 2010).

Scaling up community-based development interventions presents a challenge because the diverse socio-cultural inequalities of rural communities make it hard to mirror successful programs. Therefore, scaling has to be a slow gradual process that adapts to local conditions because best practices derived from other socio-cultural

communities required sufficient time (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). With regards to real empowerment, Schuftan (1996) viewed that empowerment is a zero-sum game that empowers some and disempowers others in a process that is continuous and product of one single event. Kenya's history with rural development programs reveals similar observations about viable strategies and potential conflicts with international agenda.

Kenya's History with Rural Development Programs

Various national and international policy attempts have been made towards promoting equitable regional development within the broader realm of Kenya's national development including Harambee, the District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) policy, and the Constituency Development Fund (CDF). Each of these national strategies was designed to alleviate poverty and included some engagement of grassroots people and organizations at the community level.

The Harambee Philosophy. The Harambee philosophy was the first national development strategy used for community empowerment and capacity building. It became a rural development strategy upon Kenya's independence in 1963. The Harambee Philosophy was premised on indigenous forms of self-help (Barbara, 1987; Holmquist, 1984; Ngau, 1987). Members of a particular community would mobilize resources and participation for their development needs in key areas such as education and health, and infrastructure development. Apart from contributing to Kenya's rural development, the Harambee Philosophy promoted confidence in local community groups as avenues for harnessing grassroots participation and capacity building

(Barbara, 1987). After nearly thirty years of the Harambee Philosophy as a development strategy, the District Focus for Rural Development was enacted to provide national support to these local efforts.

The District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD). The District Focus for Rural Development (DFRD) policy was established in the 1980s to help facilitate rural development by decentralizing and shifting the development process from the central government (top-down) to the district level. The DFRD attempted to integrate each district's development needs with national development interventions in specific sectors such as infrastructure, health, and agriculture (Wallis, 1990). Development committees were established from the locational, divisional, to the district level in order to facilitate local participation in the identification, design, implementation, and managing of projects. The Harambee Philosophy self-help groups were represented in the district development committees and were vital actors in the district development plans.

The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PSRP). The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PSRP) was used in conjunction with national development plans to prioritize development in the 1990s (Ashley & Maxwell, 2001). A PSRP is a conditional document that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund initiated to provide debt relief to developing countries with a large debt burden, including those from Sub-Saharan Africa. National development plans were implemented that included stipulations that required programs to be implemented in sector-specific areas such as agriculture, human health and environmental conservation. Kenya was one of 32

countries required to implement PSRPs in order to secure multilateral and bilateral funding (Swallow, 2005).

The Constituency Development Fund. The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was established in 2003 to oversee regional development efforts in poverty eradication by providing 2.5% of the total national revenue equally to each of the local parliamentary jurisdictions (constituencies). The Projects of the CDF are implemented by district level departments of the Kenyan government (Bagaka, 2008; Kimenyi, 2005). The Constituency Development Committee, sub-committees, and locational committees oversee and monitor all projects that are chosen by the local communities. The CDF model has helped address specific local needs such as health, agriculture, education, electricity, and water and sanitation (Bagaka, 2008; Kimenyi, 2005).

These examples illustrate that participatory, bottom-up or grassroots strategies development is not a new phenomenon in Kenya. They have had some success in addressing specific issues in rural Kenya but have not had the kind national impact on reducing poverty that is desired.

Rural Development in Western Kenya. One region that has been a focus for many national, non-governmental, and international rural development organizations interested in grassroots development is the region of western Kenya, which includes Nyanza, Rift Valley, and Western Provinces. The three poorest districts in Kenya, with over 50% poverty rate are found in western Kenya (Chianu, & Chianu, 2008; Okwi et al., 2007). Western Kenya is primarily rural, densely populated, with low crop yields, poor infrastructure, and a 21% rate of malnourishment in children less than 5 years old. There

is also a 30% HIV-AIDS prevalence among adults and subsequently many child-headed homes (Chianu & Chianu, 2008; Okwi et al., 2007). Most livelihood activities that local people engage in are pertinent to poverty alleviation (Chianu, & Chianu, 2008; Okwi et al., 2007; Halter, 2008).

It is against this background that many local, national, and international non-governmental organizations have also taken an interest in western Kenya. They have initiated programs to address HIV-AIDS, improve agriculture, provide clean water, and create economic empowerment programs. Some of these programs have been implemented through the self-help groups that are abundant in the region.

The long history of grassroots organizations engaged in rural development in Kenya and the scope of issues these groups are involved in addressing, is evidence that understanding how these groups are supported and engaged is one key to understanding how these people and organizations in rural areas can help ameliorate their social-economic status and mitigate community problems (Thomas, 1987; Halter, 2008).

Esman and Uphoff (1982) argue that local organizations cannot efficiently alleviate poverty that result in rural development on their own without input from national and other external agencies. These relationships are important for capacity building in local communities, for accessing resources and creating strategies for development that are more sustainable. Community organizations are key actors in the development process and the increasing their capacities is an important strategy for improving livelihoods and rural development.

Key international development agencies have already embraced this aspect and are designing programs that are community-driven. For example the World Bank has invested a lot of resources in developing an understanding of social capital and the development of strategies that increase the capacity of social networks to help communities access the resources they need to increase development and reduce poverty (Narayan, 1999; World Bank, 2010). In addition, the millennium development goals were developed to set benchmarks for alleviating poverty and serve as a guide for many rural development efforts aimed at poverty alleviation.

Social Capital and Community Development

There has been much research in recent years looking at the role of social capital in the development of communities. A common thread among existing studies on social capital is that norms, reciprocity, trust, and networks facilitate collective action among individuals and or groups of individuals (Campbell, Hughes, Hewstone, & Cairns, 2008; Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1993; Lochner, Kawachi, & Kennedy, 1999; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Similar studies have found social capital to be a necessary condition for creating sustainable community development programs because social capital provides access to external resources and enhances linkages and ties with outside communities. Social capital influences development through the values, shared knowledge, norms, and social networks in a community (Dale & Newman, 2008; Dale & Onyx, 2005; Dhesi, 2000; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000).

The development process in communities affects patterns of life through social, economic, and institutional changes, which can erode social capital. Some of the literature on community development has argued that development should be sustainable over time (Brown & Ashman, 1996). This notion of sustainability is consistent with the recent shift in development models that require empowerment and capacity building of communities (Bridger & Luloff, 2001; Dale & Newman, 2008; Dhesi, 2000). Social capital is crucial in building communities that are sustainable because a successful intervention becomes a substantial aspect of local life (Bridger & Luloff, 2001). The ability of a community to cope with development changes is determined by the existing stock of social capital (Dhesi, 2000).

Social capital facilitates collective action through the development and maintenance of trust and cooperation (Bridger & Luloff, 2001). Local associations, kinship groups, traditional leadership, women's self-help groups, church groups, and youth groups are some of the community associations that utilize collective action (Pretty & Ward, 2000). The extent of such interactions between communities and institutions also helps explain the development of a community (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). Both personal and professional networks are important in bridging issues across boundaries in communities. Whereas networks are crucial, they can facilitate or inhibit collective action based on the derived meanings and benefits to the members (Dale & Newman, 2008; Krishna & Uphoff, 2002).

Social Capital and the Millennium Village Promise

Studies exist supporting social capital as a vital policy tool for many development initiatives around the world (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002; Stone, 2001; Perez, 2002; Dhesi, 2000; Grootaert & van Bastelaer, 2002; Narayan, 1999; Gittel & Thompson, 2001; Narayan & Cassidy, 2001). Such studies have been conducted in Australia and Canada (Dale & Newman, 2008; Onyx & Leonard, 2010; Stone, 2001), India (Dhesi, 2000), and Ireland (Campbell, Hughes, Hewstone & Cairns, 2008) that corroborate the view of social capital as being a necessary resource for community development to be sustainable. Studies on social capital in Kenya have focused on social capital and community development (Gugerty & Kremer, 2002; Mulaa, 2005; Nyangena & Sterner, 2008). The World Bank has a site dedicated to the use of social capital in development (World Bank, 2009). The development and utilization of social capital is critical to the short and long-term success of the MVP project. In the Sauri project there are relationships within each of the 11 communities, across the communities and between the communities and the external funders that had to be developed and strengthened.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction and Overview

The Millennium Villages Promise (MVP) is a community-based development strategy designed to facilitate the attainment of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The MVP investments target the key sectors of education, agriculture, health, and infrastructure. This is both a bottom-up and top down approach to community development that seeks to empower rural communities to manage their local development needs sustainably, while harmonizing the activities of all actors involved in the MVP partnership from local, national, non-governmental, and donor agencies (Cabral, Farrington, & Ludi, 2006; Carr, 2008; Konecky & Palm, 2008). Sauri, the Kenyan Millennium Village project located in Western Kenya began in 2004 and has expanded to include 10 additional neighboring villages representing a population of about 55,000 in Western Kenya (Annual Report, 2006; Baseline Report, 2007).

Community institutions are used as strategic institutional entry points to the communities because the local institutional landscape includes a variety of community-based organizations and traditional institutions that influence participatory development in the community. Each sector utilizes specific institutional strategies from the individual, organizational, and system levels. The MVP investments are set to expire in 2015 and at that time the communities will be expected to sustain the interventions.

Increasing our understanding of the views of the impact of the MVP on community networks in Sauri is central to developing effective interventions for

development assistance. Stiglitz (1998) argued for a similar understanding of the effect of foreign assistance on communities. Since we know very little about the impact of the MVP on local community networks in Sauri, it is vital to have proper perspective of this program as it is concerned with capacity building, empowerment, and poverty alleviation.

This study intentionally focused on the health and agriculture sectors of the MVP program in Sauri because these sectors were believed to utilize community networks in the dissemination of information and in accessing the resources needed for health and agricultural interventions. By focusing on the two sectors the findings are expected to provide insights into the framework that the Millennium Villages Project is using to form relationships among the communities where the projects are being implemented.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the MVP program on community networks in Sauri and consider how networks in the communities affect the sustainability of development efforts in the 11 communities in Sauri where the program is being implemented.

Significance of the Study

The findings from this study will contribute knowledge important to those involved in policy and practice of international development. As Stiglitz (1998) argued, this information is important in understanding the best way to utilize foreign assistance for international development. Furthermore, development agencies working in rural

communities will benefit from the findings of this study (i.e. the design of development programs).

This research will extend knowledge about the impact of donor programs on community relations and perceptions (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2002; Stiglitz, 1998). Due to the widespread use of social networks in Africa, the findings of this study contribute to the understanding of good intervention programs for rural communities.

Focus of the Research

The overall aim of this research project was to look at the relationships between exogenous and internal organizations in Sauri communities and explore how these relationships are impacting community networks. Therefore, the research aimed at exploring:

- The extent of connections, cooperation, competition within the communities
- The extent to which the community networks contribute to access health and agricultural services
- The distances within their networks
- The interphase between community health and agricultural service providers and the MVP in terms of service delivery
- Whether donor agencies are weakening or strengthening traditional health care infrastructure (conflict between traditional versus western ideas).

Research Questions

This project was guided by a central research question and two sets of sub-questions focusing on personal level networks and community institutions.

Central Research Question. What is the impact of the MVP on community networks and do these networks affect the implementation of the development efforts in the Sauri MVP communities?

Research Sub Questions.

Personal Networks (Individual Level).

- a. What are the existing personal networks in Sauri MVP communities?
- b. What are the connections between personal networks and the MVP?
- c. How have personal networks changed since the inception of the MVP?

Community Institutions (Community Level).

- a. What are the connections among local and between local and extra local institutions?
- b. What are the connections between local institutions and the MVP?
- c. Have these institutional connections changed since the inception of the MVP?

Study Design

This study employed mixed methods. The primary methodology was qualitative that included 30 interviews with key informants in the Sauri community. In addition, a

more quantitative survey was conducted to inform about the community networks. In social capital studies, the integration of both qualitative and quantitative methods has been recommended because it yields results that are minimize biases from a single method (Dudwick et al., 2006).

The study utilized a case study approach, which has been recommended for understanding society and culture based on the in-depth immersion that case studies involve (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The case study approach incorporates data collection methods such as interviews, observation, document analysis, and even surveys (Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Patton, 2002). According to Patton (2002), a case can be a person, group, or program, or a community. The characteristics of this study that qualify it as a case study include the selection of Sauri as the MVP site, the 2015 deadline of achieving the MVP goals, and how the 11 communities interact with outsiders working on the MVP.

Data Collection Procedures

Data collection for this study was guided by the actor-oriented approach, which focuses on the interaction among the actors involved in a project or program (Long, 2001). Based on the concepts of the actor oriented approach, as well as the literature review elements, the two broad actor categories for this study are the local Sauri Millennium Village communities and the external actors drawn from the Government of Kenya, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other agencies working in the MVP site. Data was collected in two phases. The first was qualitative and focused on

individual experiences. The second was quantitative and focused on mapping community networks. The individual level comprises data from individuals on their membership to networks in the community while community level will yield data about the about how community networks in Sauri are influenced by the MVP program.

Phase 1: Qualitative interviews for data on personal networks.

Qualitative research has been found to elicit multiple realities about a subject being studied (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative methods are convenient for explaining potential sources of conflict between policy and, local knowledge and practice (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). With qualitative data, the views of individuals are privileged through their lived experience, which also enhances our understanding of the views (Creswell, 2007; Kvale, 1996). The qualitative methods were therefore intended to contribute to understanding the feelings, thoughts, values, assumptions, actions, and experiences of actors associated with the MVP interventions in agriculture and health.

Interviews helped to examine the characteristics of participants such as attitudes, interests, feelings, concerns, and values. The length of interviews ranged from 1-2 hours as recommended by (Gay & Airasian, 2003). An interview protocol was used in conjunction with structured questions Appendix A). Individual interviews were conducted with the relevant actors in the MVP program.

Qualitative interviews were used to capture detailed accounts of individuals living in communities that are part of the Millennium Village Promise programs in the health and agriculture sectors. The following sub-questions were used to collect data

from existing personal networks in the Sauri Millennium Village Program (MVP) communities:

- a. What are the existing personal networks in Sauri MVP communities?
- b. What are the connections between these personal networks and the (MVP)?
- c. How have they changed since the inception of the MVP?

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with thirty key informants from agriculture (15) and health (15) sectors from May to August 2011. A translator worked with the researcher to conduct the interviews and help interpret in cases where language was a barrier. Key informants for this study were selected purposively.

Purposeful sampling is the intentional selection of sites, actors, or individuals who can provide an in-depth picture about the problem and phenomenon being investigated. A purposeful sample is also recommended when the potential sample is too large as was the case with Sauri (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Key informants were selected intentionally or purposively from the community because of the belief that they hold information that is of use to this study. These key informants were men, women, young people, or opinion leaders who live in the Sauri MVP communities. The intention for selecting them is because key informants are considered to be knowledgeable about the community and the MVP program being implemented. Specifically, these were people who had been targets of the MVP program and have participated in some of the MVP sectors in agriculture as farmers or members of agricultural groups, and community health workers in the health sector.

Agriculture participants comprised six female participants and nine male participants ranging in age from 52 years 86 years of age. Each was actively involved in agricultural production including involvement with MVP programs. Some participants held MVP committee or group leadership responsibilities. Specific information about agriculture participants can be found in Appendix C.

In the health sector, participants were drawn from community health workers, ordinary residents, while some held leadership positions in the village health councils and village health committee. Ten of the participants were female while five were male. Additional information on health participants is found in Appendix D.

The criteria for selecting the key informants were based on the belief that they were the most knowledgeable and involved with the programs. To delineate the networks in the health and agricultural sector within the MVP cluster, the researcher interviewed community health workers, community leaders, MVP health and agricultural sector leaders, and farmers who were members of farmer cooperatives. Gatekeepers such as the local assistant chief, village elders, and sector leaders were used to identify key informants in Sauri.

Interview questions focused on membership in formal or informal groups, understanding the functions of the groups, exploring why they joined groups and detailing how groups were mobilized. In addition, the groups people used to solve conflicts and the number of times an individual attended group meetings were identified. These questions were intended to answer the sub-question on membership in personal networks, and whether participating in the MVP program had influenced

their membership in these networks. An interview protocol consisting of 29 items was used in conjunction with structured questions that were closed and open ended. The interview schedule guiding the collection of these data is in the Appendix (A).

Phase 2: A quantitative survey of community networks. The aim of the **quantitative survey** was to determine the existing connections among community networks in Sauri MVP communities where the interventions are taking place. The use of community networks is specifically vital to the implementation of sectorial interventions of the MVP's targets in agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure development (Annual Report, 2006; 2007; 2009). Therefore, the quantitative survey helped answer the following research objectives on community networks in the Sauri MVP cluster:

- a. What are the connections among local and between local and extra local institutions?
- b. What are the connections between local institutions and the MVP?
- c. Have these institutional connections changed since the inception of the MVP?

Quantitative survey data was collected using a survey instrument that elicited information about the identity of various network members. Key informants for the surveys were identified purposively from the communities where the agricultural and health programs are being implemented. The criteria for selecting the key informants for the quantitative survey yielded the following participants:

- one (1) political leader:

- District Officer (Yala Division)
- one (1) head of the Executive Committee of the MVP
- one (1) most active church/spiritual leader from the leading churches
- one (1) herbalist/traditional birth attendant
- one (1) youth leader from the most active youth group
- three (3) village headmen from the communities with the interventions
- Sauri MVP Staff
- One (1) agriculture sector leader
- One (1) health sector leader
- Three (3) Community health workers

A total of 13 participants were surveyed for data on community networks. Each of the key informants was asked sets of questions relating to their ties and connections to the MVP communities where their organizations or institutions were working. A 1 to 5 likert scale was used to measure most of the responses, with 1 being the least and 5 the most extreme measure. The quantitative survey instrument used is included in Appendix (B).

Challenges encountered during data collection

During the data collection period, several challenges were encountered that affected the quality of data collection, some shaping and reshaping the outcome of this study.

- The researcher did not speak the Luo language spoken by research participants hence the need for an interpreter. A translator, who was also a local village elder with a strong rapport in the community, was hired to assist.
- Most of the participants were actively involved with MVP interventions and were required to attend sector meetings frequently. This caused a delaying in scheduling interviews.
- The researcher had to walk vast distances to connect with the key informants across the communities. The long distances affected the number of interviews that could be conducted in a day.
- Data collection coincided with the planting and harvesting season in Sauri. This led to frequent cancellation of interviews to suit the participant's willingness and availability. Most of the participants were responsible for farm work and felt interrupted when asked to sit down for an interview. Some participants had other household chores to take care of such as preparing meals, attending to children, or doing laundry.
- During interview sessions, research participants would receive visitors who would interrupt interview sessions with their own conversations. The researcher would suspend interview indefinitely while the participant attended to their visitors.
- The researcher encountered some level of indignation from the participants in terms of soliciting for information. Many of the Sauri residents interviewed have

been part of numerous research projects over the past five years. As a result residents may have experienced researcher fatigue due to the perception that most researchers tended to exploit them for information that had little benefit for them or for which they rarely received feedback.

- Most participants misconstrued the researcher's identity to be an MVP worker and would not speak freely on certain matters.
- Yala Division, which happened to be my research site, is one of the malaria endemic areas in Kenya. The researcher contracted malaria twice during the course of data collection.
- The MVP project has a political dimension to its implementation and the assistant chief and MVP team leader avoided participating in the study.
- The sample size for the survey of the network connections was too small to for the results to conclusively define the elements of the local networks. However, it does provide some insight as to how the networks are formed.

Many of these constraints were known or understood prior to implementing the research. To alleviate the impact of these challenges on the outcomes of the study the researcher spent four months in the study area cultivating relationships with community leaders and improve access to key informants.

Data Analysis Procedures

This section focuses on the analysis of data collected from the interviews. Data was collected from 30 key informants in both the agriculture and health sectors.

Analyzing qualitative data. According to Gay and Airasian (2003), qualitative data analysis begins with the initial interactions with the participants. Marshall and Rossman (2011) state that preliminary research questions and related literature review items form the guidelines for preliminary analysis of qualitative data, which is also referred to as early grounding. This approach yields categories by which data may be coded for subsequent analysis. Coding refers to the formal representation of analytic thinking into categories and themes from the data. Codes used may be key words, phrases, or numbers (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Qualitative data analysis is based on inductions during which sense is made about emergent constructs and patterns in the data collected (Gay & Airasian, 2003). Emergent themes, categories, concepts, were then analyzed and relationships between them established (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Gay and Airasian (2003) recommend a procedure that involves reading/memoing, describing, classifying, and interpretation during the data analysis stage.

Interviews were recorded, translated and transcribed for analysis. Gay and Airasian (2003) recommend the use of rich, thick, thorough descriptions to present the perspectives of participants in personal networks, the MVP setting, settings, and phenomenon being studied.

This study relied on descriptions drawn from field notes, observations, and the interview transcriptions mentioned above. Data from interviews was classified into smaller units based on their importance. This procedure is called coding, and it involves classifying data into categories of ideas or concepts formed when concepts are

examined, compared, and connections made. Meanings were characterized according to the meanings/understandings that emerged from the data. Classifications were in response to the sub-questions on personal networks, connections with the Millennium Villages Program, and the impact of participating in the MVP programs on their lives. The common codes were combined into themes, which were organized around the research questions.

By examining participation in community groups and related activities, it is possible to determine whether MVP activities are instrumental in building or preventing ties within the networks in the community or linking community groups with external resources.

These cross cutting links are good indicators of community social capital. Personal attributes and community network characteristics were used to determine the extent to which they impacted the success of implementing community programs.

Summary of Research Methods

The overall aim of this research project was to look at the relationships between exogenous and internal organizations in Sauri communities and explore how these relationships are impacting community networks. This project was guided by a central research question and two sets of sub-questions focusing on personal level networks and community institutions. This study design employed mixed methods. The primary methodology was qualitative that included 30 interviews with key informants in the

Sauri community. In addition, a more quantitative survey was conducted to define the nature of community networks.

Data was collected in two phases. The first was qualitative, focusing on individual experiences. The second was quantitative and focused on mapping community networks. Key informants were selected intentionally or purposively from the community because of the belief that they hold information that is of use to this study. These key informants were men, women, young people, or opinion leaders who live in the Sauri MVP communities. An interview protocol consisting of 29 items was used in conjunction with structured questions that were closed and open ended.

The aim of the quantitative survey was to determine the existing connections among community networks in Sauri MVP communities where the interventions are taking place. Quantitative survey data was collected using a survey instrument that elicited information about the identity of various network members.

Key informants for the quantitative surveys were identified purposively from the communities where the agricultural and health programs are being implemented. A total of 13 participants were surveyed for data on community networks. A 1 to 5 likert scale was used to measure most of the responses, with 1 being the least and 5 the most extreme measure.

The next section looks at the findings that emerged from the qualitative interviews in health and agriculture sectors.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS FROM INDIVIDUAL INTERVIEWS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the Millennium Villages Promise program on community networks in Sauri and how networks in the communities affect the sustainability of development efforts in the 11 communities in Sauri where the program is being implemented in Western Kenya. The research findings are expected to extend knowledge about the impact of donor programs on community relations and perceptions regarding intervention programs designed for rural communities in Africa. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, which include qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey for **community networks**. The focus of this chapter is to present the findings of the qualitative data, which focused on understanding the perceptions of the residents regarding personal networks in Sauri.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with thirty key informants from the agriculture (15) and health (15) sectors from May to August 2011. An interview protocol consisting of 29 items was utilized (Appendix A). Individual interviews were conducted with the relevant actors and key informants in the agricultural and health sectors of the MVP program in Sauri. The length of interviews ranged from 1-2 hours as recommended by (Gay & Airasian, 2003). A translator worked with the researcher to conduct the interviews and help interpret in cases where language was a barrier. The

following research questions were the focus of the interviews regarding the existing personal networks in the Sauri Millennium Village Program (MVP) communities:

1. What are the existing personal networks in Sauri MVP communities?
2. What are the connections between these personal networks and the (MVP)?
3. How have they changed since the inception of the MVP?

Networking Structures

In order to effectively explore the social networks it's important to understand the two primary networking structures operating in Sauri at the time the research was being conducted. The first is the more traditional structure that existed prior to the MVP, which focused on the use of informal family relationships and public barazas. The second is the project structure implemented with the MVP program. In order to understand what is likely to emerge after the MVP it is important to understand the basic structures associated with the villages and with the MVP.

Community barazas. Community meetings in rural communities are popularly referred to as barazas and are part of the responsibilities of the chiefs, his assistants, and village elders. They are often held at community centers set aside in every jurisdiction on specific days of the week or as needs arise. The barazas are sources of government of Kenya policies for rural communities and serve to resolve citizen grievances which range from land boundary disputes, domestic disputes, to petty or major thefts (see Figure3).

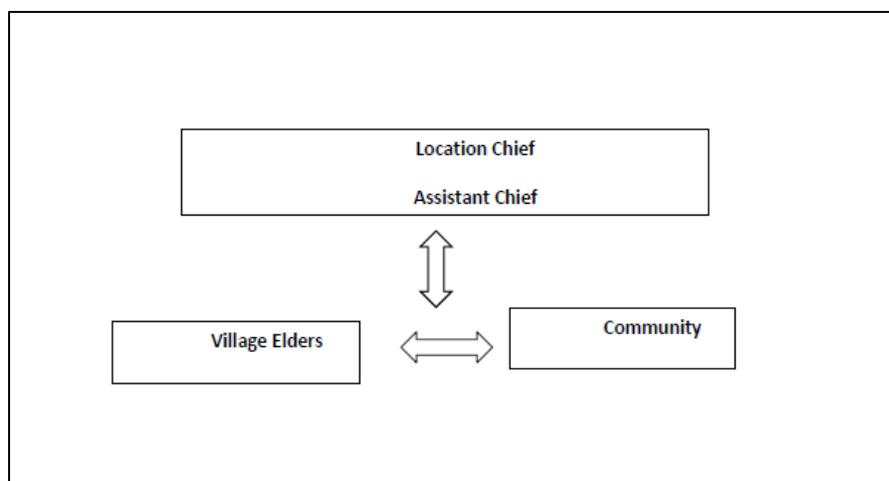


Figure 3 . Perceived community leadership structure in Sauri MVP communities.

These days, a common observation is the declining frequency of barazas and participation in such forums. People are focused on their livelihood strategies and perceive such meetings to be a waste of time. Similarly, radios and television sets have become affordable and most people opt to get information from mass media avenues as opposed to attending a baraza. Many people possess at least some basic education, are aware of their rights, and can challenge any unpopular verdicts or seek redress elsewhere (L. Songole, personal communication, December 28, 2011).

MVP meeting structure. The MVP leadership structure includes the local team leader, sector leaders, community development committee leaders, as well as leaders of community interest groups. The main sectors of the MVP are health, education, water and sanitation, infrastructure, environment, and agriculture. Sector meetings are organized according to the respective sectors under the leadership of sector leaders (see Figure 4). Village committee meetings are similarly organized in the respective

committees with the leadership provided by development committee leaders. The focus of such meetings are mainly on issues relating to the MVP interventions including training sessions for implementing the interventions or accessing resources. Once a month, the sector leaders organize inter-sector meetings for information to be shared across the sectors.

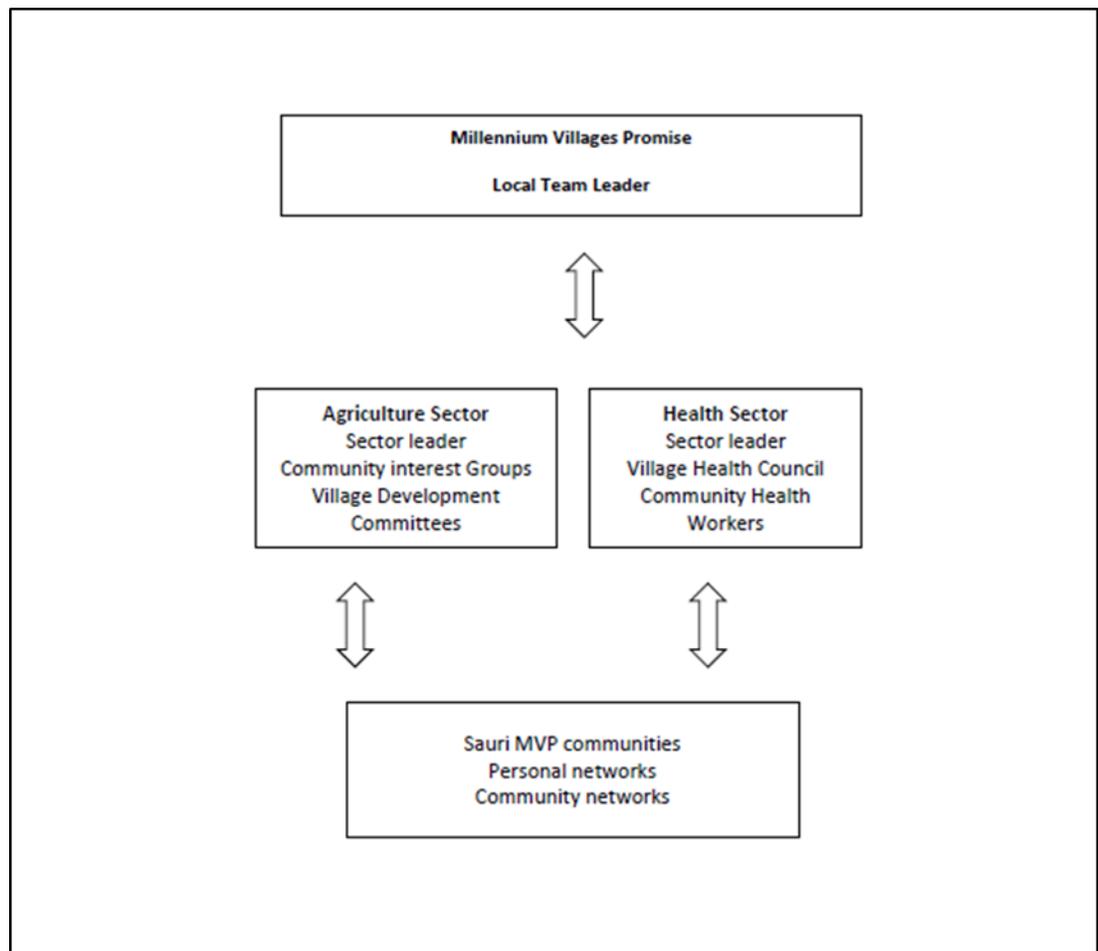


Figure 4. Perceived MVP leadership structure in the communities with health and agricultural interventions

Data collection procedures. Data collected was transcribed and coded into themes around the three research questions. The findings were organized into two groups, one focusing on the experiences of the key informants in the agriculture sector and the other focusing on the experiences of the key informants in the health sector. Seven themes were identified in the agriculture sector and eight themes were identified in the health sectors. The balance of this chapter will focus on exploring these themes.

Agriculture Sector Findings

The agriculture sector was selected because it is a sector that relied on personal networks to implement the MVP interventions in the communities. Most of the interventions in agriculture cut across sectors like education (school feeding program), water, health (protein-rich diets for AIDS care), and environment (promoting soil fertility management practices). Seven themes emerged from analysis of the interviews conducted with key informants from the agriculture sector that will be organized around the three research questions. The themes “perceived personal networks” and “collective action” helped us understand the existing personal networks in Sauri. The three themes, “group activity”, “leadership issues”, and “benefits/importance of the MVP” illustrate the relationships between personal networks and the Millennium Village Project. Two additional themes, “MVP weaknesses” and “transformations due to MVP” explore the changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP.

Existing personal networks in Sauri. This section identifies the aspects that relate to personal networking in the communities where the interventions are taking place in agriculture. It looks at what brings people together, the extent of people collaborating in the communities, and how community development projects elicit conflicts among residents and their influence on the agriculture sector.

Perceived personal networks. This theme focuses on what the participants identified as sources of networking in Sauri. It explains what the participants identified and valued as crucial to personal relations in the communities. Understanding these perceptions is crucial to development efforts in the communities and for fostering welfare interests in the communities.

The participants explained that people came together through community barazas, participation in development projects, and attendance at religious functions. Community barazas were the preferred avenues of networking in the community because the participants felt that these forums gave the members freedom to express their concerns. Barazas are community meetings held in rural areas under the auspices of local chiefs, their assistants, and village elders. Apart from serving as forums for disseminating government of Kenya policies at the local level, they are popular with the local people as open forums for solving disputes in the communities. They were popular partly due to the mobilization ability and appeal of the village elders whom they had a role in their appointment and served as effective link between the government agencies and even the MVP. The participants also expressed satisfaction at the ability of village elders to influence their opinions on development matters in the community.

We just go to the village elders and they bring people together [for barazas]. There are also groups [MVP-affiliated agricultural groups] that you can approach with your problem. We also approach elected officials. If the matter is more pressing, they first report to the village elders who then forward to the elected officials like the area councilor. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamninia A).

[We share our opinions] Through village elders, opinion leaders and [agricultural] group leaders who pass the information to the community when they are asked to do it. If there is an agricultural project, they always do a good job informing the community [through barazas] and people always respond to them. (MORIW, a 67 year-old female farmer from Luero).

Eleven participants discussed how development projects had become viable sources of networking in the communities. They stated that agricultural projects had attracted many interest groups, cooperatives, and, agricultural trainings and sector meetings, which brought people together frequently. Residents were expected to attend meetings, or trainings, and through these interest groups, personal interactions had increased significantly. By participating in the agricultural projects, they were able to access the resources needed to implement agricultural interventions. Every village had a village committee and an agricultural sector facilitator who coordinated the programs.

Yes they have helped [The community development committees and related initiatives] a great deal. Every village has a development committee per the eight MDGs which also facilitate dissemination of information. They host trainings in water, health, education, agriculture etc. which bring people together quite often. [Agriculture] Sector facilitators organize their own meetings. Then there is a sub-location committee [for agriculture] has representatives from every village. (WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri).

Five participants perceived religious organizations as other avenues for networking in the communities because most people had a religious affiliation of some kind. They viewed church organizations as being organized, transparent, and helpful to most needs in the communities. Church activities unified people through congregational activities:

The church institutions are trusted more than any other institution around because of their spiritual role in the community. The Catholic Church is popular here although many others exist. People are very religious around here and that has been the case for a long time. (MOKE, a 74-year old female farmer from Sauri B).

Churches play a major role of bringing people together but this often just networks people within a specific congregation or respective church. The dominant religions around here are the SDA and Catholic churches which tend to attract larger congregations. They help very much. (ABANG, a 68-year old male farmer from Madiri).

Collective action in Sauri. This theme comprises a collection of all the general aspects of collective action in the communities as observed by the key participants in the agriculture sector. According to Meinzen-Dick, DiGregorio, and McCarthy (2004), collective action has been found to play a crucial role in rural development programs focusing on agriculture and natural resource management. The authors used their study on collective action in Kenya to define collective action requirements as involvement of a group of people, with a shared interest pursuing a common action voluntarily including making decisions collectively. To achieve a common goal, members may contribute money, labor or items such as food or wood. Group members or their leaders can facilitate the action.

Extent of community collaboration. Twelve participants gave a description of the progression of collaboration on community projects with the MVP. According to the participants, most people were initially attracted into full participation based on promises made to improve production and these promises had a wide appeal. The unique mobilization of the MVP also played a role in increasing participation, as people were eager to improve agricultural production. Fish ponds, community interest groups, farmer cooperatives, and a cereal bank were some of the agricultural projects that attracted people into participation.

There was a community-wide meeting when the MVP [was first introduced sometimes in 2004] came and people were sensitized about their programs. When the MVP came, they took soil samples and determined the soil nutrient deficiency. Later on, they brought us free farm inputs. I was just an ordinary subsistence farmer who didn't know much about the quality of seeds to plant. There was a lot training that came with the farm inputs. (MOKU, a 56-year old female farmer from Yala).

Some of the key informants felt that collaboration was also enhanced through mutual support to community members during funerals where people often responded with material and financial support to the bereaved families. There were certain welfare groups in the community that focused on such activities.

Yes there are [welfare] groups that help when people encounter problems. For instance, when there is a funeral, people contribute and cook food and also help organize the burial. But this only happens in our village, Sauri . . . because certain problems can be overwhelming to an individual and that is how groups come in handy. (WOGU, a 52-year old female farmer from Madiri).

All the participants expressed concern at the visible declining trend in collaboration on community programs. They attributed this to the growing mistrust in

the MVP over many programs they believe had not been implemented as promised. The cereal bank project was one of the initiatives that the MVP sought to introduce to the community through the agricultural sector. Community members were trained on the advantages of a community-managed cereal bank and how such a project would help in storing or marketing surplus agricultural produce. However, the project did not materialize as was intended due to management issues by those who were appointed as managers of the cereal bank. Such a project had been widely anticipated since most farmers had contributed their cereals needed to make it operational. Consequently, most residents appeared to have lost interest in collaborating as was manifested in low attendance at MVP meetings.

Not so much [participation in meetings] because there is a lot of mistrust among people. Currently, unity has waned because of failed promises. They took us to the cereals boards and showed us fertilizers that they said 'belonged to us'. But not long after they were telling us to buy. This is how people started losing faith and trust in working together on MVP projects because it cast aspersions amongst community members about the trust and transparency issues. People thought they were not transparent in their dealings. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and also the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

Constraints to community collaboration. Thirteen participants articulated their perception that effective collaboration in the community was being constrained by lack of trust in the outcomes, failed promises, lack of transparency with MVP resources among the leaders, and inaccessibility by the MVP team. Most of the people interviewed expected to receive direct individual benefits in exchange for their participation. Others cited their inability to raise the financial resources needed to access the needed agricultural resources.

It's average [not what you would expect] because the people are very sensitive, in case of any small mistake or mismanagement, people lose interest and willingness. When you start another [development project] one and get people, they will not come. For example the failed cereal bank project by the MVP is still fresh in people's minds. We contributed our shares of grain and money for membership and then in the end we didn't see anything, yet this was done through MVP. In future, if you come up with a similar thing, people will just look at you in consternation. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro)

Four participants pointed out what they perceived to be selective compensation by the MVP for participation in the programs. These participants were concerned that most of the paid positions were allocated to people who were not residents of their communities while the Sauri communities were required to serve as volunteers. Consequently, this action had diminished their willingness to participate in more programs.

We are asked to be volunteer facilitators yet the people we work with are paid employees of the MVP (and they come from other tribes). Imagine as the chair for agricultural committee, you are required to volunteer in the community yet they still bring someone to be in charge and this person is paid. The initial promise was that we [facilitators from each department] would be compensated. We have been cheated of these opportunities. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and also the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

One participant described how the MVP local team had become inaccessible to the residents when they needed them. The participant was strongly concerned that Jeffrey Sachs was coming to their communities with policemen, an act that raised fear among the residents. Such an action was perceived as another factor contributing to the growing distance between the local community and the MVP team.

Whenever Sanchez or Jeffrey Sachs comes, they are highly guarded [by local police] with limited access unlike in the first years when the MVP was being

started. These days when Sachs comes he has a very high security team from the provincial administration so it is not easy to approach him as an ordinary citizen. So how do you do community development with policemen or the provincial administration? It is only the project managers who are given the opportunity to speak at such functions and in most cases they misrepresent the information. The more you make noise, the more you are regarded as a wayward. (ARAN, a 52-year old male farmer from Yala).

Conflict over community projects. The community learning resource center (CLRC) is an example of a community project that attracted little interest from the residents in terms of community participation. Three participants explained that the construction of the community learning resource center lacked transparency over its management, the construction process, and that it was being used to fulfill many personal interests by elected officials, interested in personal enrichment. An example is the manipulation of the tender and contracting process, which influenced how materials were supplied by individuals perceived to be well connected.

The community should have participated fully [in the construction] but it has to do with the aspect of selfishness I am talking about. That is [the location where the CLRC was constructed] was where the community cereal bank will be located. The outgoing committee [Executive Committee of the MVP] wanted a cheaper building and has been buying cheap materials at inflated prices, which they report to the community. This is why it has taken so long. But there have been issues also between the constructor and the contractor. There has also been some level of confusion from the MVP and the contractor who was supposed to complete the building in 9 months initially. The tendering process for the contractor was also biased. We had a qualified one from this community but he was disqualified. The contractor is not from this community also. (HAKED, a 60-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

These themes represented the perceptions of the participants regarding personal networks in Sauri. The next set of themes focusing on how these networks enhance relationships to the MVP interventions in agriculture.

Network relationships to MVP. The following themes help to describe the relationships with the MVP, which arose from agricultural groups, interaction with the leaders of groups and community, and what the participants perceived to be benefits to their communities.

Group Activity. This theme explores how groups have facilitated connections between the personal networks in the communities with agricultural interventions. Twelve participants discussed how group activity had increased in the communities since the MVP introduced their interventions. They explained that the MVP preceded the implementation of agricultural interventions by asking the communities to establish new groups, referred to as common interest groups (CIGs). Farmers had subsequently formed and joined CIGs such as tomato growers, beekeepers, fish farmers, or poultry keepers. The rationale was to pool their interests and access resources, information, and training needed for the new programs.

You know we don't have cash crops in Sauri. So when the MVP introduced [crop] diversification programs, they asked us to form [agriculture] Common Interest Groups (CIGs) to facilitate our access to some of these enterprises and grow some of the crops (tomatoes/vegetables) that we had wished to. Examples of CIGs included bees, horticulture, and poultry. There was a lot of interest by the community. (HAKED, a 60-year old male farmer from Sauri A.)

The MVP came in late 2004 . . . They were concerned with alleviating food insecurity in this community, which was being affected adversely. They found when I was already a farmer and the source of our expertise was ICRAF. They looked for people who would be in charge of the sectors. We were asked to form

groups per the eight millennium development goals – energy, water, roads, environment, health, agriculture, gender and environment. (SOTO, a 67-year-old male farmer from Luero).

Four participants stated that these groups enhanced collective action in the community through networking with development agencies and community interest groups [CIGS] assisted in marketing agricultural produce. For example, people worked together to establish fish ponds and now some people were able to produce fish for the local market. They further noted that increased membership in the community interest groups had also contributed to improved agricultural production in the communities because more people could be easily accessed through larger groups. Large groups were found to be effective in sharing information about development in the community.

We stopped using those smaller 20-30 member women groups [informal groups that existed before the MVP initiated ones]. Now we have [agriculture] village committees whose membership ranges from 200-300. It is easier to use large village groups and even transmit information about issues, meetings, or projects. This is what has helped the MVP to reach many people [with interventions in agriculture] because every village has a village committee for development. Whenever there is an issue the group comes together to sort it out. (MOKE, a 74-year old female farmer from Sauri B).

When asked about the value of community interest groups in agriculture, twelve participants perceived them as being significant to agricultural production. As GOCHI, a 71-year old male farmer from Sauri A explained agriculture “is a source of income. People engage in agricultural production in order to be self-reliant too. If you are hungry, you can’t work well with others. Some of the groups have connections with the

elites.” Their prominence was perceived as being derived from their association with the MVP through trainings.

The participants also observed the prevalence of informal groups, especially women groups. As MOKE, a 74-year old female farmer from Sauri B explained, they [informal groups] included “. . . women groups like the SOSO Development Women Group which was like an umbrella organization with many sub-groups in the villages.”

Another observation was made regarding increased interactions among the agricultural groups. According to eleven participants, the groups initiated by the MVP actively interacted amongst themselves, with the MVP facilitators and sector heads, local administrators and even other development agencies from the government of Kenya or development NGOs such as the International Center for Agriculture Research and Agroforestry (ICRAF). AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamninia A explained that they “interact with MVP to find a market for them and also some other individuals in the society to find a market for them in local leading business institutions”. WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri added that “. . . the MVP has facilitators whom we inform about our progress and they also help us to get funding and other assistance that we require from the MVP.”

There was a general consensus amongst all the participants about the possible differences between community groups that existed before the MVP and the new groups initiated by the MVP. The new agricultural groups were considered more popular, active, skilled, knowledgeable, diversified, and were connected to NGOs such as the MVP which facilitated access, capacity building sessions and development in the

community. On the other hand, the old groups were considered to be more informal self-help or welfare-oriented and less organized for development purposes such as agriculture.

There are a lot of differences [between the old informal groups and those initiated by the MVP]. People were very independent [in matters of community development] before the MVP brought the teachings and [we were] not as united. We were just doing things on our own and our farms were not as productive. We have gained a lot skills and the membership in our groups has also increased. (ABANG, a 68-year old male farmer from Madiri).

In the past most [groups] were just for savings with the intentions of sharing the contributions at the end of the year, they did not have future aspirations as such. But the current ones [community development groups initiated by the MVP] interact with the [Kenya Agriculture] ministry and give some returns to the ministry. There is some accountability to the Ministry of Social Services. Based on this requirement, the government also makes follow up on many groups, and such pressure makes them to be active than those ones in the past. (ARAN, a 52-year old male farmer from Yala).

Leadership issues. This theme explores leadership aspects in the community, agricultural groups, and MVP and how they affected networking in the agricultural communities based on their mobilization role of the leaders. Leaders in the community played a major role in mobilizing the residents to participate in development programs. Nine participants felt that the local leaders were effective because they were popularly chosen, had a better comprehension of the community's needs, and provided a better linkage with the village chiefs and development agencies.

That is the work [mobilizing residents] of the local government and community leaders in conjunction with village elders who we call 'Mlangos' and are present in every village. The 'Mlangos' inform people whenever there are meetings. Sometimes the facilitators from the MVP organize when there is a need. (WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri).

HAKED, a 60-year old male farmer from Sauri A, explained that they (other farmers) trusted the “. . . local leadership (village elders/assistant chief/chiefs) because these leaders are easily accessible”. As local leaders, these people live and operate within their communities, which also serve as their jurisdiction areas. Unlike other forms of government in Kenya whose offices are in administrative centers in far away places, all the local leaders tend to operate from their local areas and this makes it easier to be approached when there is an issue.

Compared to the MVP agriculture and team leaders, the participant further argued that the MVP leaders were viewed as temporary development partners who would leave at some point. They were seen as being partners on a mission that was dictated by the availability of funds to sustain their development projects.

The MVP [project coordinators] are just development partners who do everything on their own and just view/perceive us as “pictures” during planning and budgeting [perception that their participation in budgeting sessions is always diminished]. Why do they do everything on their own and then come and tell us they want to do things with us? (HAKED, a 60-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

The local MVP team leaders and agriculture sector leaders were perceived as instrumental leaders because of their role in implementing the MVP interventions. This new aspect of community development leadership seemed to be favorable to the residents because it enabled them the option of selecting their own leaders.

Sector leaders are the most preferred [community development leaders] currently from the time they [MVP] came up with this (chairmen) leadership structure. Sector leaders are selected too. I was elected by the community but I am not in good terms with the MVP which considers me to be so political based on my critical stance. (SOTO, a 67-year-old male farmer from Luero).

However, ten participants expressed reservations at the local MVP leadership team in the community because most were still considered “outsiders” based on the fact that they did not reside in the community and some were of a different tribe. Within the MVP team, the local team leaders were those who came from other tribes in Kenya and were appointed based on their qualifications and some were already working with development NGOs in the region by the time the MVP came. Development expatriates affiliated with development NGOs were easily accepted, although this acceptance was also influenced by local Kenyans who worked for NGOs.

Working with foreigners [development expatriates such as Jeffrey Sachs] is good, but the way our [local MVP] leaders handle their programs is not good at all. Sometimes as the community, we don't get all the information. There seems to be a barrier at the middle level where local [MVP] team is concerned. Resentment for [working with] foreigners could be driven by the practices of their local team here. The foreigners [expatriates] have no problem with the community. We don't know the type of feedback the local team feeds the donors with (Mutuo) [Mutuo was the local MVP team leader who was perceived to be unfaithful]. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

Participants were concerned that such locally appointed MVP leaders were using their positions and influence to enrich themselves with the resources meant for agricultural programs in the communities. Consequently, there was an increasing mistrust for the MVP leaders due to conduct that was perceived as being insensitive to the needs of the community. This could also be exacerbated because the MVP leaders were considered outsiders. The participants further viewed the local team leaders as the obstacles to their relationship with MVP donor community. Participants felt that the

local MVP leadership was also contributing to a declining level of participation because they were not fully trustworthy.

The problem is not very much with the MVP donors. We have high regard for the main donors. The problem lies with the outsiders who work with the MVP Local Team (Jessica, Mutua [current and former MVP team leaders respectively]); they are not very transparent with the community. There are times they have misappropriated resources that were meant for the community [agricultural interventions] yet they reported the contrary. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamninia A).

Not so with foreigners [expatriates]. It is our local Kenyan people from other communities who are used to unscrupulous ways of doing things. The [MVP] team leader (Mutuo, the former director) had a lot of mistrust because he could promise a lot of things and not deliver or was not accountable to the community in most of his expenditures. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Leadership disputes within the agricultural committees were seen as obstacles to community development. Two participants attributed these wrangles to personal interests that had permeated the committees, abuse of positions, and lack of transparency over community resources.

There are several challenges that we have been facing but selfishness is the main one. We have been experiencing a lot of leadership wrangles [within the committees] ever since the MVP program started causing us a lot of obstacles [towards full implementation of the programs]. Once individuals have been elected to certain position [group or committee] that has some [monetary or material from the MVP] resources they just think of their own interests as opposed to group interests. There is a lot of gossiping and selfishness. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Issues of trust bring to the fore some of the underlying aspects of doing things within the communities (without necessarily being a function of the MVP). The community leaders appeared to be competing for influence in access of resources.

Benefits and importance of the MVP interventions in agriculture. The theme highlights how perceived MVP benefits affected personal network relationships with the MVP. These benefits stem from the presence of the MVP and agricultural interventions in the communities. The benefits are related to agricultural production, improved agricultural knowledge, and additional trainings in farming which the participants contended to have empowered them as a community. The following sub-themes help to explain these relations.

Improved agricultural production. Before the MVP interventions in agriculture were introduced, Sauri communities were often faced with inadequate food production despite the area receiving massive amounts of rainfall yearly. Most farmers relied on indigenous farming practices without using farm inputs to augment their produce and crop diversification practices were not common.

Ten participants acknowledged improved agricultural production as a vital benefit that had helped in mitigating consumption needs of the community. They stated that crop production had improved greatly, aided in part by improved soils and abundant rainfall in the area as well as new farming practices adopted from the MVP. The participants identified bananas, vegetables, corn, and beans as the most commonly grown food crops. Fish, dairy, and poultry farming were also popular. Cash crop farming was not being undertaken because most people had very small-sized acreage that could not support both subsistence and cash crop production.

The MVP started around 2005. We did not have good farming practices before, our [crop] production was so low, and other things such as water springs were

not available. We started seeing changes [in agriculture] when the MVP came and introduced training and seminars in agricultural production. They also gave us farm inputs (manure, seeds). So from 2006, the production improved significantly. For those who had large farms, their production was enormous. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

We began the MVP program so well. We started with agriculture and the first year of MVP brought a bumper harvest. We had been given enough farm inputs in 2005 and 2006. The harvest was quite astounding. My farm production rose from eight (8) to 20 bags. We were asked to store some of our produce. I was in-charge of agriculture [village committee]. (SOTO, a 67-year-old male farmer from Luero).

The MVP's approach to disseminating the interventions was predicated on establishment of groups across the communities to help channel resources needed for the interventions across all sectors, and each sector had a facilitator appointed by the MVP. Similarly, the villagers were also introduced to the aspect of initiating development committees in every village per the eight MDGs that the MVP was seeking to implement. Membership in the village committees was predominantly local.

All the participants felt that the MVP group initiatives were beneficial in terms of accessing trainings and also fostering interpersonal connections through frequent trainings and meetings.

Yes they have helped a great deal. Every village has a development committee per the eight MDGs [millennium development goals] which also facilitate dissemination of information. They host trainings in water, health, education, and agriculture, which bring people together quite often. Sector facilitators organize their own meetings. Then there is a sub-location committee has representatives from every village. (WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri).

The MVP has labored to teach us how to work as a community. There are many development programs that come to our communities. They have even taught us

how to form cooperatives to access certain resources such as cooperatives which enable people get farm inputs. (DADIE, a 69-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

The participants stated that networking in the community and with development NGOs had improved because of the trainings, capacity building sessions, and the common interest groups in the agricultural sector. They felt they had become more aware and sensitized to matters of agricultural production unlike other communities that were not part of the MVP interventions.

The MVP has really helped us. We have woken up, because it seems as if we were sleeping. The MVP initiated developmental committees in every village in the MVP cluster according to the eight (8) departments of the millennium development goals (MDGs). They trained us for about a week and even organized tours to other places for us to see what was happening and gave us certificates upon completion. We are now doing our work as that helped us to appreciate what other communities are doing in terms of their own development. (WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri)

MVP trainings. According to ten participants, trainings were instrumental in improving agricultural production in the community. The participants identified crop production, accessing agricultural resources, and the introduction of community interest groups as having been consistent with the trainings from the MVP.

Through training, more programs had been introduced to their communities. An example is a special goat breed that the MVP had enabled them to introduce by working with the Heifer International.

They have helped a great deal. For instance this goat project was initiated by the MVP through Heifer International We have a special breed of goat (that Heifer International gave us) whose milk has special therapeutic/medicinal effects for HIV-AIDS patients and asthma in children. The goat pens were funded by the MVP. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamnina A).

Improved knowledgebase in agricultural production. One recurring observation among the participants was the acknowledgement that prior to the MVP agricultural interventions; most people who engaged in agricultural production had very little specialized knowledge on how to approach the same. Production was always inadequate and the community had not diversified production to counter the food insecurity. According to eleven participants, the MVP had enabled them to acquire specialized skills in agricultural production and also enabled them to pursue other areas of interest including tissue cultured bananas, dairy farming, and the use of farm inputs, and how to form common groups.

I got most of the farming knowledge from the MVP, which has brought a lot of difference. My harvest was often inadequate to sustain my family. But these days my harvest is able to sustain me throughout the year. Before the MVP arrived, I didn't know a lot about farming.[Now] I keep dairy animals, have fish ponds, and grow bananas, and corn and beans [most of which were uncommon]. (ABANG, a 68-year old male farmer from Madiri).

Empowerment. Empowerment refers to aspects of the MVP interventions that were perceived to have empowered the community through participation in the programs. This included being informed and aware about the need of working with leaders or organizations that were faithful to their promises. Whereas some level of empowerment existed, mainly political, it was not a match to that garnered by focusing on community development initiatives. Women participants felt that the MVP programs had accorded them a special sense of empowerment to contribute to the needs of their community.

Fourteen participants stated that felt that by participating in the MVP's interventions they had been empowered in many ways including to holding leaders and institutions accountable for their actions. They attributed this to the training sessions that the MVP had accorded them that had sensitized them about their rights as farmers.

Yes. Through the trainings, the MVP has empowered us to hold them [MVP and other people in authority] accountable [to the community]. We ask repeatedly [about promises that were made to the community]. We are now aware of our rights as a community. That is why we are able to question the activities of the MVP leaders. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

This was a special observation among women participants who felt empowered to participate in the community's development activities, assume leadership positions, and contribute to the economic development in Sauri. Even though women were active prior, their level or activity or recognition did not match that accorded to them by the MVP programs.

There are more women in these village committees. Part of the reason is that women have more obligations in the homes than men [that was why they felt left out of community issues]. [These days] The women feel more responsible and so choose such forum to seek ways of solving their issues, assisted also by the advantage of numbers. [Whereas] Most men prefer to join local beer-drinking groups. . . we now have voices based on the forums that the MVP has created in Sauri. Women can now contribute during community development sessions. They have even taken leadership positions. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamnia A).

Whereas the participants felt empowered, the perception among those interviewed was that the MVP team was not embracing criticism from the community. Examples included the strategy of using local sector leaders to handle disagreements and conflicts that arose in the communities over projects that required the MVP team

leaders to be present. While the key informants preferred the MVP team leaders based in the Kisumu office to address their concerns, it was not necessarily the case. Instead, the MVP relied on the sector leaders' meetings. However, not all members of the community were able to attend the sector meetings when they were held and the focus was primarily on development projects while other issues of concern such as relations with the MVP team were not addressed in the meetings.

No because these [MVP agriculture sector] meeting are only attended by representatives of the MVP or those chosen to implement a program (not everyone) and still it's not an open forum as a community meeting or barazas where we would express ourselves freely. (ARAN, a 52-year old male farmer from Yala)

Changes that have resulted in personal networks. This section explains the changes that have resulted in personal networks in the communities, which could be attributed to the MVP. They focus on flaws stemming from the practices of the MVP team leaders or specifically related interventions as identified by the participants. Other changes are tied to how the MVP has contributed to transformations in information flows, meeting structures, and the shift in locus of control from the chiefs to MVP sector leaders.

Perceived MVP weaknesses. This theme explores the perceived weaknesses of the MVP interventions in the community and their impact on community residents. Subthemes include unfulfilled promises, wrong presentation of the social economic status, lack of transparency, duplicating programs, and monopolizing development in the community.

All participants described that agricultural interventions were premised on the promise of a five-year supply of farm inputs to the farmers, which raised expectations of the MVP significantly. However, the promise only lasted a year and a microloan program was introduced in the second year. The withdrawal of inputs was considered too sudden and premature while the participants felt unprepared to adopt the new micro-loan program. Relationships with the MVP deteriorated when some of those who took the loans failed to repay because they perceived the loans as a strategy to enrich a few individuals.

As I said, people seem to have fallen back to the original state they were in before the MVP came. Many of them can't afford the cost of inputs in the midst of the rising inflation and cost of living. Some of the good crops you see are a result of individual persistence. I am afraid by the year 2015 we will have come back to ground zero. We began by free farm inputs, which were replaced by some form of loan systems that were to be repaid upon harvests. But there are many people whose crops did not grow well and there is no way they could repay. The loan organization was called SAGA [the microloan program that failed]. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

We were promised farm inputs for five years, but only given for two years. The rest of the years we were told to get loans. That is how people started losing trust in the MVP and working together on community projects. There are some people who took loans but did not have enough knowledge on repaying the loans and subsequently it is as if they 'ran away'; they no longer wish to come close to where people are gathered (for fear of retribution). This is one of the main issues that are discrediting the work of the MVP. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamninia A).

The participants pointed out to the decreasing attendance at MVP meetings as an indicator and manifestation of declining collaboration in the community. Initially, people participated in the meetings with a lot of excitement.

These days, the attendance/participation in MVP meetings has really gone down. We can attribute this to the low perception that people have due to many failed promises. They even used to give people free sodas at the meetings but that is no longer the case, because the funds are not there. Now people don't want to go to the meetings. (DADIE, a 69-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

According to the participants, the withdrawal of farm inputs left many participants unprepared to bear the financial cost of fertilizers and other inputs. Consequently, most farmers were reverting back to the old farming practices thereby raising the concern about the risk of food insecurity in the community that was there before the MVP interventions.

Yes because in the beginning the MVP came with the promise of providing farm inputs free of charge for 5 years but they started reducing in the second year. They did not prepare the farmers for these abrupt changes in the reduction of inputs. This is how the MVP agriculture sector started losing trust. (DADIE, a 69-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Similar concerns were expressed about numerous training sessions provided to initiate cooperatives, cereals banks, dairy projects, and poultry projects, which never took off. The failure of cereal bank and cooperative projects had a major impact on participation in agricultural interventions as it affected the marketing of their produce. The participants had thus developed some form of skepticism at adopting new programs when required to do so.

Unfulfilled promises and lack of accountability for such missed promises. For example, when the dairy and poultry farming projects were to be introduced, we were told to form groups, open bank accounts, plant Napier grass, build cowshed, all of which we complied readily. We even contributed towards the purchase of animals, but to this day we have never been told what happened to the animals [dairy animals that were to be supplied by the MVP]. We only hear that dairy animals came but we can't tell where they went and there is no one to

ask or tell us. It was only in poultry where after a long time they brought roosters (MAGIN, a 61-year old farmer from Kosoro).

The MVP insists on forming cooperatives so as to benefit but there are those of us who are joining while others are not joining. I haven't. There are many who are skeptical about forming farmer cooperatives because of the experience with the cereal bank project. (MOKU, a 56-year old female farmer from Yala).

Two participants argued that the MVP was misrepresenting the socio-economic status of the community compared to other parts Kenya that were marginalized by dry climatic conditions. They argued that Sauri was better endowed with natural resources for production to be classified as being poor.

They also make mistakes with the information they collect and convey to us, and the world. I have travelled around Kenya [was a civil servant but has since retired]. For someone to come and tell us that we are very poor, then that person has not known where poverty lies in Kenya. They should visit other areas in Kenya (North Coast, Kwale, Gwanze, and Turkana) [these are some of the poorest and marginalized areas] before making such statements. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

Five participants viewed the MVP as not being transparent with the communities' resources meant for agricultural interventions. They stated that the community was not represented at the budgeting sessions, most of which were conducted in larger towns away from Sauri. They only saw funding information in reports or heard about colossal sums of money having been spent yet very little physical evidence existed to support the same. The participants felt the need of holding such budgeting sessions in the community as a form of allaying the existing fears of misappropriation of funds.

They have tried in most areas – the community learning resource center, health center, agriculture etc. The only thing is the lack of transparency on the side of

the MVP. We don't know much about the planning and accounting for most of these projects. I was the Secretary of the Agriculture committee when the MVP began but I had no record about the expenses and how they were being done. I just used to them deliver things in large quantities without any proof of expenditure or knowledge of the community . . . There are lots of questions about most of the expenditures on the community projects such as the health clinic whose cost was inflated so much. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Six participants expressed reservations at the MVP approach of giving free things as having been a wrong strategy that raised expectations unrealistically. They argued that people easily became dependent on being given free things and felt abandoned when such offers were withdrawn. They felt that the MVP should have introduced their programs by making residents aware that the interventions were not totally free.

Because people are used to getting free things or the MVP doing everything for them. So when they are faced with such responsibility of a repair work [which requires financial commitment], they frown because they are used to things being done for them. Others expect some compensation in return. The MVP program has sort of made people become too dependent and expected things to be done for them. (ABANG, a 68-year old male farmer from Madiri).

They have really tried [to improve the community] and I would give them a 70% grade. But I am of the view that any NGOs coming to [implement development] work in the area should make cost-sharing known ahead of time. The problem [within the community] begins when they come with free things and then decide to make people pay when their NGO funding is over [alludes to the initial MVP approach of giving free farm inputs which only lasted a year]. (DADIE, a 69-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

One farmer explained the habit of attending meetings expecting to be given free things by the MVP:

They did a very good job of bringing people together. They helped initiate many groups – tomato/onion/pepper growing groups. Those were the days when the farm inputs were being given freely. Divisions arose because there were no more

free things as the funding sources started drying. Instead of fostering development, now they seem to be perpetuating lies [alluding to many unfulfilled promises]. (DADIE, a 69-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Six participants expressed concern that the MVP had initiated too many projects, some of which were duplicates without the requisite resources needed to sustain them. The community lacked the time needed to attend the training sessions or implement the programs with limited space on their farms. Dairy farming and tissue cultures were examples of programs that required time and large farm size to implement, inputs which most participants lacked. This was curtailing full participation as people still had their personal chores to attend to.

They have so many projects most of which are duplicated and don't end up being completed. They need to start projects and complete them before new ones are introduced (dairy, cereal). This makes people to be tired. It is best to accomplish one task so as see the benefits before engaging new ones whose success is not guaranteed. They come with lots of restrictions and conditions on participating or accessing some of their resources. (MOKU, a 56-year old female farmer from Yala.)

In agriculture, they have failed mainly because of lack of follow-up. The MVP has so many programs which they bring. I am the same person; you don't come to me and tell me to go for tissue-cultured bananas, then tomorrow or after two months you come and tell me to start horticulture, then next you tell me to start rearing (exotic) goats. These things are not coordinated, because we are the same people [and cant implement all the projects at the same time]. They should separate so that those who want to keep goats to do so, and those who want dairy animals to choose. Then they should make follow up to the end ensuring that it succeeds, but they don't. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

Ten participants pointed out issues that were perceived as contributing to further isolation from collaboration in the community. The participants expressed concern at MVP's hiring of people from other communities to positions that could have

been taken by the community. The agriculture sectors leaders were viewed as being biased in dissemination of services in the community.

When they came to Sauri, and with the political awareness happening in Kenya, you can't go to Sauri and employ a team/staff, all from outside the [Sauri] community or [Gem] constituency. You will get some hostility because those people [hired from other communities] may not readily comprehend the problems facing this community. The MVP came with the understanding that they were coming to help people, so if they bring people (strangers from other communities) to coordinate their projects, that is not good. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

According to four participants, clan relationships were an obstacle to the MVP as people appointed to leadership positions used their kinship clout to benefit those close to them. Sauri is a typical rural community where tribal clan dominance is still manifest.

The problem is with the leaders of these [community interest] groups and not the project [team leader]. They [MVP team in Kisumu] used to visit us [the community] when they started now they have selected committee members some of whom extend their selfish attitudes [clan relations]. Now we must go through these committee leaders and if someone hates your group, even if you call them [MVP] they won't respond. (MAGIN, a 61-year old farmer from Kosoro).

When there is an issue, clan's play a very important role as people respond based on their clans. Most people are compelled to help people who are close to them as their clansmen or family. If the matter is more serious, then they will forward it to the village elder who decides the next level of action. (AYIE, a 61-year-old female farmer from Nyamninia A).

There was also a concern that the MVP was blocking other NGOs that were interested in working with the community to solve their development needs.

Participants noted the need for more partnerships in order to mitigate the myriad development issues facing the community.

In 2007, there was another NGO that requested me to mobilize people from the community to be assisted agriculturally, which I did, but the MVP denied this NGO “freedom/permission” to operate in Sauri and MVP left. We felt so bad. . . . The MVP is so jealousy to other potential development groups yet they can’t eliminate all our problems. With such an attitude they can’t operate develop this area as they envisioned. (SOTO, a 67-year-old male farmer from Luero).

Transformations due to the MVP. This theme is a collection of general issues that emerged from the interviews and contributed to what was perceived to be changes due the MVP. The MVP was perceived to have caused transformations in the community’s approach to development through information sources in developed in the communities and the structure or leadership of meetings in the communities.

MVP committees facilitating community development. There are development committees in all the communities at the village level, which correspond to the sectors of the MVP. These committees were initiated by the MVP with the aim of empowering the villagers to be in charge of the development needs of their respective communities. Membership to the committees is elective and carries no compensation from the MVP. The committees have been effective in rallying the communities to embrace the agricultural interventions especially in facilitating meetings as needed.

According to twelve participants, the MVP initiated village development committees in every village whose leaders were elected by the community. The committee roles were to help mobilize people and resources for the MVP interventions in the communities.

Before the onset of the MVP [interventions], Sauri was just a typical rural poor community that is often dysfunctional in many ways [mainly due to poverty]. But

when the MVP came, they introduced committees in many of the eight departments of the MDGs. Through sectorial committee meetings there were many training sessions with sector leaders in-charge. This provided a loop in which feedback was conveyed to the community regularly. Every village had its own eight committees for each of the eight MDG departments. (WOGU, a 52 year-old female farmer from Madiri)

I grow food crops mainly corn (maize) and beans. I started my involvement with the MVP in 2004 when they started their programs in Sauri. They began by establishing sectors per the eight Millennium Development Goals with a focus on agriculture. For the MVP to succeed, they needed to work with the community. At the very first community meeting or barazas, when they were announcing what the MVP was up to, they asked people to form committees in every village to work in these departments – agriculture, health, and environment per the MDGs. So I joined the agriculture committee. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Villagers were required to attend committee meetings and sessions in order to access the resources needed for the interventions although the frequency of such meetings had become a concern to the residents. Participants noted that divergent opinions these meetings often translated into long-standing feuds amongst the residents who also shared membership across the MVP sectors including health, education, water or infrastructure. Rather than unifying the residents, the participants felt that frequent meetings also served as division points in the community.

The committee meetings were held so frequently that some participants felt some participants expressed concerned that the number of meetings were a source of division in the community because people met very often in the meetings and when conflicts arose, they persisted longer because people know each other. Most of the residents had a tendency to join more than one community interest groups that often brought them together while attending meetings or implementing the programs. It was

possible that a misunderstanding that arose in one group could be extended to other groups because the groups would often recycle their members. That is how the conflicts within the groups contributed to divisions.

People are not as united. The divide and rule approach (sector heads) has caused a lot of disunity. Each village has all the committees/departments. For instance, in my village, we have representatives in all the sectors. We see each other and meet each other regularly, so such a small issue can end up causing disunity for a long time. This is how the MVP is making people to be divided. We are not as we used to be. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

Five participants observed that MVP agricultural facilitators and sector leaders had assumed the status of solving issues in the community. This was considered a beneficial because it made access to resources easy whenever a need arose.

The current groups get MVP [agriculture] facilitators to train them on what they want to carry out. So there is plenty of knowledge. Recall that we have always had agricultural extension services [from the government of Kenya Ministry of Agriculture], but they were never [rarely] accessible [because they were few and most rural communities were expansive]. But the MVP project has reversed things now we have lot information. (MOKU, a 56-year old female farmer from Yala.)

Changes in source of information. Across the rural areas, the common source of information for development or government policies has always been the community leaders including the chiefs and their council of village elders. These structures of accessing information changed dramatically when the MVP interventions began in the communities.

All the participants reported that information access had changed for the period the MVP interventions were introduced in the committees. Previously village elders

were the primary mobilizers for barazas in the community, but currently village committee leaders seemed to have taken over.

The village development committees play a prominent role. In each village there is someone responsible for health, agriculture, water, roads, and all the other sectors. We have sector meetings every first Thursday of the month. This is like a barazas but even when the chief is absent, we just proceed with the guidance of an MVP leader present. This is the forum where we get all of the information we may be in need of. (ABANG, a 68-year old male farmer from Madiri).

The introduction of sector leaders and meetings replaced community meetings as information sources. Sector meetings were different from community barazas because they were coordinated by an MVP appointee and focused solely on agricultural interventions. The sector leaders were responsible for coordinating the MVP interventions providing feedback, training, and relevant information from the MVP. On the other hand, community barazas were open forums whose topics were general and not just restricted to a specific sector. People felt more value out of such meetings as opposed to sector meetings, which were still part of the new ways of dealing with the MVP. Because of the frequency at which committee meeting sessions were held, villagers were not accorded time to attend barazas whose frequency had diminished in response.

Ooh, this one [frequency of holding barazas] has deteriorated so much. We used to have community barazas with the Assistant Chief every Thursday. This was a very important forum where all matters/topics were being discussed (ranging from health, agriculture, education, and even domestic issues/extension services by the GOK). This is no more but neighboring sub-locations still enjoy the privileges of barazas [these are communities where MVP activities are absent]. It is alleged that the assistant chief was appointed unfairly despite lacking qualifications [part of the perception that the assistant chief is incompetent to fulfill the demands of his office]. His appointment to the office of assistant chief

was influenced by his father who works in the Office of the President. Those who qualified for the position were not selected. (SOUG – (an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

Meeting structure. All the participants acknowledged that community barazas were the most preferred meetings in the community. These meetings were mobilized and organized by the community elders in conjunction with the local chiefs to disseminate the policies of the government of Kenya at the local levels and provide access to resources from development agencies. However, this structure had changed as the frequency of barazas was diminished by MVP structures.

I would say it's the MVP supervision, which went wrong and not the community because when they came they formed structures, which used people in groups each with their own committees as per the departments. Then in 2009, they started phasing out the departments. But whoever was responsible was not honest because whatever they have done failed and now they have turned to the District Sub-Development Committee. They are taking it back to the Government Administration. But now when you think of how Kenya has been misrun since independence and then you entrust a project of such magnitude to Government leaders (Chief), it will not work. We need to separate. (SOUG, an 86 year-old male farmer from Kosoro).

Five participants viewed local leaders as being effective mobilizers and sources of information for the community because they were known in every village, and worked effectively with the MVP team in providing information for the community.

In the past, people were mobilized through Barazas and through the leaders like the chief but nowadays the Barazas have become dysfunctional. We don't know why, yet we need the barazas. That is how we used to get information from the authorities and provide feedback on how to help the community. Opinion leaders also used such forum to express the interests of the community. (GOCHI, a 71-year old male farmer from Sauri A).

All the participants were concerned that the increased frequency of MVP meetings weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly was burdensome to their non-MVP related activities and seemed to recycle information. The concern was that since there is not much new information shared at these meetings participation has waned and decreased the value of community time in the meetings. Barazas tended to be less frequent and were only called when there was specific government of Kenya policy information to share and issues to discuss so people understood that there was value in meeting. That sense of purpose tends to be missing from the MVP meetings. However, because there are so many MVP meeting the traditional Barazas are no longer being called, the MVP meetings have in fact replaced the Barazas.

Most of the sector meetings don't have new information compared to the barazas, which are held when there is something new. You know Sauri is big, with very many communities and there is always something new. With the MVP, instead we seem to be recycling what is said. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

It is supposed to be through community barazas but the local administration has been ambivalent on calling barazas. Instead we are now relying on MVP all-sector meetings, which are held very frequently. So we have to use sector meetings, which are scheduled to be held every month. So unless there is a sector meeting there won't be any other forum at that level. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Dysfunctional barazas and community leadership. In terms of political jurisdiction, the sub-location and location are the lowest recognized political units of administration within the provincial administration structure in Kenya. The sub-location and location are headed by chiefs and assistant chiefs tasked with the responsibilities of coordinating government policies and providing feedback for either the communities or

the government. One prime tool that aids their work is the use of public barazas to disseminate their leadership roles as need arises. In Sauri, the general observation was that these forums had lost their allure partly because of the perception that the local chiefs had abdicated their duties to the communities.

All the participants decried the loss of the barazas as open forums for interacting in the community. They attributed the loss of the Barazas to the local chief and assistants for failing to perform their duties effectively and letting sector leaders and MVP groups replace community barazas.

The public barazas have become dormant or a thing of the past [since the MVP meetings became more frequent]. You can take as long as six months without attending a baraza. The sector meetings have replaced them, and sector heads seem to have taken over. At the onset of the MVP in 2005, all these sector meetings and others used to be conducted during Chief's barazas every Thursday. That is where all matters for the MVP were discussed, every Thursday. But the sector meetings are held on a bi-weekly basis. They don't stay long without a sector meeting. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

The barazas were considered open forums that gave community members a voice. The people interviewed did not view the sector meetings as being open forums because they typically had a special agenda to implement through these forums. All the participants felt the assistant chief had abdicated his leadership role as a patron to all the community development projects in the community because of the decline of the Barazas.

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barazas every Thursday. That is where all matters for the MVP were discussed, every Thursday. But the sector meetings are held on a biweekly basis. They don't stay long without a sector meeting. (JOGO, a 68-year old male and the agriculture sector leader, from Sauri A).

It is supposed to be through community barazas but the local administration has been ambivalent on calling barazas. Instead we are now relying on MVP all-sector meetings which are held monthly. The Assistant Chief is supposed to call for barazas every week but he doesn't. (HAKED, a 60 year old male farmer from Sauri A).

Summary of agriculture findings.

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the Millennium Villages Promise program on community networks in Sauri and how networks in the communities affect the sustainability of development efforts in the 11 communities in Sauri where the program is being implemented in Western Kenya. This chapter focused on understanding the perceptions of the residents regarding personal networks in Sauri.

Seven themes emerged from analysis of the agriculture sector interviews organized around the research questions. The themes “perceived personal networks” and “collective action” helped us understand the existing personal networks in Sauri. Personal networking was enhanced through community barazas, development projects, and religious functions. Agricultural projects frequently brought people together through community interest groups, cooperatives, trainings and sector meetings. Most people had a religious affiliation of some kind thus utilized religious functions for personal networking too. Collective action involves a group of people, with a shared interest pursuing a common action voluntarily, including making decisions collectively.

The MVP had increased collective action through its unique mobilization of people in agricultural production. However, mistrust in the MVP's multiple programs has constrained collective action. Other constraints included a perceived lack of trust in the outcomes, failed promises, lack of transparency among the leaders, and selective compensation of people working for the MVP in the communities.

The three themes, "group activity", "leadership issues", and "benefits/importance of the MVP" illustrated the relationships between personal networks and the Millennium Village Project. Agricultural groups facilitated connections between personal networks and the MVP as people joined groups to pool their interests, access resources, information, and training. Leaders of communities, groups, sectors, and the MVP were perceived to play a major role in influencing personal networking. Village elders and chiefs were the most influential leaders while MVP sector leaders were viewed as obstacles to networking because most of them came from other communities. Wrangling within the development committees was another issue that constrained networking in the communities.

Benefits included improved agricultural production, trainings, knowledge and skills in agriculture, and empowerment. In terms of production, the participants credited the MVP for diversifying crop production, formation community development of groups, and enhancing networking with development agencies. Through trainings, the participants were able to engage and expand their production to include tissue-cultured crops, dairy animals, poultry, and use of farm inputs. Participating in the MVP programs was perceived to have empowered the community to be in charge of food security, hold

their leaders accountable, while women participants felt specially empowered to contribute to community development.

Two additional themes, “MVP weaknesses” and “transformations due to MVP” explored changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP. The participants described several perceived MVP weakness. Most were concerned about the unfulfilled promises of a five-year free supply of farm inputs and several projects that never took off such as the cereal bank or dairy animal projects. There were also perceptions of a lack of transparency in the budgeting of community resources and concerns were raised about initiating many programs that tended to be duplicates. Hiring paid employees from other communities outside Sauri was a source of contention among the participants who felt such positions should have been retained locally as a way of empowering the community and most importantly sustaining the programs.

Several transformations occurred that were linked to the MVP including the use of development committees, changes in sources of information and community meeting structure, and dysfunctional barazas. The MVP initiated development committees in every village whose leaders were elected by the residents and these committees managed development and in mobilized the residents to participate in the programs. The use of sector leaders to coordinate trainings, access resources, and solve development issues was another major transformative issue. In terms of information changes, the sector leaders, group leaders, and committee leaders had supposedly “replaced” the local administrators as sources of development information. The

structure of holding meetings in the community shifted from using barazas to MVP sector meetings. Whereas participants preferred barazas because of their less formal structure, MVP sector meetings had become so frequent participating barazas was difficult. Some participants felt the barazas had diminished in part due to the negligence of the assistant chief, who they accused of abdicating that role.

Health Sector Findings

How the MVP structured the health sector: The MVP model for providing health care focuses on a package of services that are considered to be essential to rural populations that are characterized by extreme poverty, limited access to health care, and constrained by high cost and transport (Konecky & Palm, 2008). The model strives to provide health services, which would be accessible, appropriate, and accepted by the communities. The health interventions are also expected to help in building trust and respond to the socio-economic, cultural, and behavioral constraints to health care. The MVP health model is centered on the Reliable, Equitable, Accessible, and Community Healthcare (REACH) model of community-based health care. The MVP strategy thus entails establishing a health clinic, which provides basic services including immunization, antenatal services, and other common diseases. A referral hospital is also required for the sake of providing comprehensive services that focus on critical treatments like AIDS treatments and caesarian delivery.

Community health workers are considered the “cornerstone of the community-based health care delivery system and are a critical link in the REACH health system” (p.

72). The main focus of the interventions is on improving mother-child health, nutrition, and other communicable diseases. To provide the personnel, medicines, and equipment necessary, the MVP seeks a partnership with national and local governments, community members, private companies, international organizations. According to the MVP model the cost is shared between the government, the community members, NGOs, international organizations, and MVP the first five years, after which the project is expected to be publicly sustained with some external donor support (Konecky & Palm, 2008).

The health sector was chosen as an area of analysis because it was believed to be among the sectors that relied on personal and community networks for successful implementation of interventions. Key informants for the health interventions included persons who worked as community health workers, members of the village health committees, and ordinary members in the communities.

Before the MVP interventions in health were initiated in Sauri, access to basic health care services was a major challenge to the residents. For instance, only one health facility existed – Yala Hospital, whose services and reach were too expensive for many people. Incidence of malaria, mother-child mortality, and overall awareness about health issues were all at critical levels. At the onset of the MVP health interventions in Sauri, HIV AIDS and malaria prevalence rates were 30% and 43% respectively (Annual Report, 2005). The introduction of MVP health interventions helped transformed most of these issues. Currently, the malaria prevalence has been reported to have fallen to 8%, courtesy of the MVP interventions (Clemens & Demombynes, 2010; MVP 2010). The

section below describes how the personal networks in the communities affected or were affected by the health interventions. This section describes the findings from the health interviews as according to the participants interviewed. The themes are organized around research questions that guided data collection for this study.

Eight themes emerged from the analysis of the health sector interviews. Four of the themes help us understand the existing personal networks. They include: how people come together to address issues in Sauri; networks people feel obligated to assist; community mobilization influences on personal networking; and trusted institutions in Sauri. The relationship between personal networks and the Millennium Villages Project includes two themes: perceived MVP response to community needs and challenges and enhanced group activity. Two themes explore the changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP. These include changes in information access and community meeting structure and group dynamics and participation in MVP programs.

Existing personal networks. This section explores the perceived sources that enable people to network in the community. This segment addresses forms of networking, some of the popular networks, and institutions that influence networking in the community.

Four themes that emerged from the health interviews that explore personal networks including how people come together to address issues in Sauri; networks people feel obligated to assist; how community mobilization influences personal networking; and the trusted institutions in Sauri.

How people come together to address issues in Sauri. The reasons people come together is influenced by the purpose of the contact, mobilizers, and the location. In the case of Sauri, the fifteen (15) health participants identified various ways of networking in the community. Some of these included traditional ways of doing things as a community and others were specifically as a result of the MVP interventions.

Attending Barazas, development projects, religious organizations, and informal meetings such as funerals were described by the participants as avenues for networking in the communities. Barazas are often attended by all members of the community voluntarily or when required by the local leaders to communicate government of Kenya policies, or to arbitrate local disputes. Barazas are popular with the local people because the informal kind of meeting protocol, tends to give a voice to the residents of the community. They have been used to serve other functions including hosting development-related leaders as dictated by interest.

Barazas were the preferred mode of networking because of the flexibility with which they brought people together and their informal structure. Under normal circumstances, the barazas are held frequently depending on the need and as the assistant chief deems necessary. They are seen as open forums that provide opportunities for residents to voice or express their concerns. Barazas have played a role in the success of the MVP health interventions as they were used to disseminate mosquito nets. As participants observed, barazas handled a diversity of issues including domestic disputes, land disputes, or even the distribution of mosquito nets.

As community health workers, we rely on the village elders to call [mobilize residents] for barazas when we want to distribute [MVP] health materials or introduce new health programs [targeting young children, mothers, and those expecting] in the communities. They are so respected in the community because we can always access them. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

As community health workers, we have always received the support of the [local] community [leaders]. We get a lot of support when we hand out the mosquito bed-nets or when we do community education on many issues related to health and that makes our work easier. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

One participant explained that some people attended the community meetings anticipating to be given free things based on the approach the MVP adopted of many promises of free things.

They have tried to bring people together, although it can't be 100 percent. Previously people didn't like attending barazas but these days people attend meetings with a lot of expectations of receiving free things. People thought the MVP had a lot of money [based on the promises made about bringing change in our communities]. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

Community development projects had become popular as alternative sources of networking especially those initiated by the MVP interventions because of the different sectors that had their own projects and sector leaders in the community. In the health sector, the community health workers were responsible for spearheading the implementation of health interventions in the communities.

It's the CHWs [who have helped the health sector]. They have really helped in taking services to the people in the community. Take for instance deworming children; they have done a very good job. It is more than service because these people come from the community and they tend to know the person they are serving very well and which makes a big difference. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

The development projects focused on health interventions included addressing community health needs such as anti-malaria campaigns, mother-child care, or pre-natal and post-natal clinics. Networking was accomplished through the sector meetings or through the delivery of health interventions in the communities. The CHWs were volunteers, elected by the communities, who served as the representatives of the health interventions of the MVP. In addition to the connections to resources facilitated by the CHWs, training sessions organized by the MVP to implement the interventions of the health sector were perceived by the all the fifteen participants to have contributed to networking within the community.

...we [community health workers] are the people directly on the ground [working in the communities]. The MVP uses us when they want to pass out information. We have been trained to test malaria and administer medication, prevention of mother-to-child transmission infection. We also have a program targeting males in family planning campaigns. It is called "Male Champions". You find that women were the ones who responded positively to family planning programs. (JOLUO, a 34-year old male community health worker from Anyiko village).

I am the Sauri sub-location health committee chair, the village health committee chair, and also serve as a CHW. I started working with the health sector in December 2004 when the MVP was conducting a recruitment exercise. They were recruiting people from the villages at the recommendation of the village elders and the assistant chief. We were given a one-week seminar of training for one week at Bar Sauri Primary School. After the trainings, people elected to join their sectors of choice according to the 8 MDGs upon which I joined the health sector. People in this village wanted me to serve in health and education committees. MVP then followed up with trainings per sector. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri)

Once community health workers received a basic set of training they selected a program area defined by the MVP health interventions. They include:

Prevention Services

- General health outreach and education, including behavior change communication (e.g., hygiene, basic sanitation, healthy living, family planning, nutrition, prevention of HIV/AIDS, and other communicable diseases).
- Prevention and control of endemic diseases (e.g., distribution of long-lasting insecticide treated nets, deworming, Vitamin A distribution).
- Mobilization for immunization campaigns and conduct immunizations.
- Promote using safe drinking water and secure home environment including environmental control of breeding sites for larva of mosquitoes.

Basic Curative Services

- Treatment and follow-up of common diseases and injuries, including first dose of antimalarial drugs, antibiotics for pneumonia, and oral rehydration for diarrhea.
- DOTS for TB.
- Compliance with treatment of chronic conditions (HIV/AIDS, hypertension, etc.).

Reproductive and Maternal Health Services

- Family planning (counseling, continuous supply of commodities, and referral).
- Antenatal, post-partum, and neonatal care, including promotion of immediate and exclusive breastfeeding for first six months, *kangaroo* care, etc.
- Promotion of institution-based deliveries and, if not possible, promotion of a clean delivery with guidance of a skilled birth attendant.

HIV/AIDS Services

- Home-based care for people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) including adherence support, nutritional support, and psychosocial counseling.

Health Systems Strengthening

- Re-supply of essential drugs.
- Epidemiologic and demographic data collection.
- Accurate and timely referrals to higher levels of care and follow-up.
- Strengthen linkages and communication between health services and local communities.
- Liaise with volunteers, CHWs, and supervisors to prioritize households according to demographic and epidemiological variables.
- Monthly birth/death recording of all such events, with follow up verbal autopsy that is used to identify gaps in public health services.

(Adapted from Konecky and Palm, 2008 p. 72-73).

Once the CHWs selected a program area they received additional training specific to that program area and began their work as community resources on a range of health topics and services.

Religious functions and funerals were identified as other venues that brought people together in the communities and facilitated the exchange of ideas and views in the community. Eight participants explained that religion was a strong social force in the community and most people ascribed to some form of religion or spiritual faith. The two

dominant religions identified were Seventh Day Adventist and the Anglican Church of Kenya whose weekly meetings were often attended by many people. Participants argued that the church was more transparent in its activities compared to other institutions that engaged in community development.

The church has more trust because of transparency as compared to local officials [elected or government officers]. Within the church are opinion and group leaders from all the communities in Sauri. I consider myself as a religious leader too because of my strong faith, which assists me when it comes to mobilization. I also serve on the health committee. (DASIB, a 69-year old male and member of the village health committee from Sauri A).

RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee and also active in her church felt that religious institutions had a “wider appeal because they know how to address youth, couples, and other groups through various conferences and seminars.”

Funerals had become alternative avenues used by the community leaders because they were considered ‘indispensable’ meetings that people attended as a show of concern. Sauri residents belong to the Luo tribe, which has various cultural practices including respecting their dead. It is a common occurrence to find a whole village involved when there is a funeral in the community as part of their social obligations. Based on the propensity of people to attend these types of functions easily, certain people found attending funerals as enhancing networking because people came together to contribute various items such as food, water, or money to support the bereaved. There were various funeral self-help groups whose mission involved raising

support for such occurrences. Most funerals were conducted by the local churches where the deceased were members.

Here in Sauri, getting people together these days has become quite a big challenge even to the administrators. Unless you attend funerals or church functions it may not be easy. People come only when there are free things to be given out (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

With African culture, it is not easy to abandon them . . . You see, recently, our member of parliament was talking to us to stop spending a lot of money on funeral expenses. But it is not as easy because moment someone dies he or she falls in love with everybody and people have to give him a good send off. (DASIB, a 69-year old male and member of the village health committee from Sauri A).

Informal groups were mentioned as other sources of informal networking in the communities where the health interventions were being implemented. The participants identified numerous women's groups in the area and one youth group that was active in health issues in the communities. The women's groups were focused mainly on welfare-oriented activities and held meetings frequently in the community. Women also felt freer to express their views freely during their own meetings:

There are so many [informal] groups around here . . . We prefer working with women groups because they already have a structure of some kind which we just fit in easily. Besides, most of the community health workers are women and that helps explain why we do things that way. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A).

Kalanyo Youth Group was mentioned by all the key informants as the most active and organized youth group in the community. The community health workers acknowledged the role this youth group played in spreading health information and awareness to the youth in the community. Even though it was not initiated by the MVP, the youth group had worked with the MVP to implement some programs for the MVP

including peer education for behavior change among the youth. Behavior change mainly focused on promoting safe sexual relationships among young people in order to curtail sexually transmitted infections or unwanted pregnancies. Because of their popularity as a youth group, even the local government departments often approached them with other potential community development projects.

Kalanyo Youth Group is the main active group in this area. The group interacts with a lot of people from outside the community. They have been involved with HIV-AIDS, girl education, and peer education among the youth. Kalanyo was there even before the MVP project began. (FAGIN a 59-year old female community health worker from Kosoro Village).

Several NGOs were mentioned as having contributed to networking in the community based on previous or current health programs. Each of the NGOs was said to have trained their own community health workers although the MVP had strengthened their roles through increased training and programs. Examples of these NGOs included CARE-Kenya, Mild May, Pathfinder International, and Heifer International. However, it was pointed out that most of the NGOs had left since the MVP programs were initiated in the community.

CARE-Kenya used to work here, although they have since relocated from this area [to pave way for MVP programs]. Now we have the International Center for AIDS Programs (ICAP), which is also from Columbia University. They are working with the Sauri Health Clinic and the MVP to implement interventions for AIDS. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A).

Networks people feel obligated to assist. Community health workers are individuals who were elected by their respective communities to work with the MVP to

implement health initiatives. Upon their election, the MVP accorded them numerous trainings in community health with a main focus in anti-malaria, mother-child health, and pre-natal and post-natal services for expectant mothers. Each community health worker was assigned a number of households where they collected health information and assisted those households in accessing specific services. These individuals had a rotating presence at the Sauri health clinic where they responded to issues pertaining to their assigned areas.

Participants felt drawn to assist certain networks in the community based on their popularity or the nature of their outreach programs. Accordingly, all the participants acknowledged that most people in the community were drawn into assisting community health workers. This network was widely accepted, because the community health workers were elected by the community and therefore attracted residents to participate in the programs that included the community health workers. Part of their effectiveness was attributed to training sessions that the MVP had accorded them in order to implement the health interventions. The community health worker outreach programs targeted mothers and children and were more easily accepted in the community because of the perceived value and relevance for these programs in the community.

I started working in 2009 upon election by the village community. My community was looking for another person to assist the only then CHW, so I was chosen. I serve on the Kosoro VHC program. My duties on the VHC include supervising CHWs and helping them get accepted in the communities. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

The mode of operation used by the community health workers was also perceived as appealing to most participants. For instance, their outreach services required them to employ door-to-door visit strategy of sensitization. This was mainly observed with distribution of malaria nets and the sensitization of expectant mothers into accepting pre-natal visits:

Because of their mode of operation they go door-to-door monitoring health of children, mothers and other conditions. They have contributed significantly to the issues of child mortality in this area. They do a very good job in carrying out community sensitizations. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

It's the CHWs. They have really helped in taking services to the people in the community. Take for instance deworming children; they have done a very good job. It is more than service because these people come from the community and they tend to know the person they are serving very well and which makes a big difference. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

How community mobilization influences personal networking. Mobilizers in the communities wield significant influence on the residents based on their popularity and acceptance as leaders in the community. According to ten participants, community leaders, chiefs and their assistants, and health sector leaders had an influence on how people participated in personal networks in the community. The local community leaders comprised of the chiefs and village elders were perceived as the popular mobilizers in the community primarily because of their role in coordinating barazas in the community, which were perceived as popular sources of personal networking. With the exception of the chiefs, the village elders were elected by the residents in the

communities they came from. Community leaders were also crucial to initiating the community meetings needed by those working in health interventions.

We work with the village elders. You can't just come and start working in the village [initiate development programs] without [first] getting the blessings [acceptance] of the village elders . . . People have learned a lot from these [health] meetings such as using the mosquito nets. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

At times, when there is a breakout of malaria or measles . . . when we send out word they [village leaders] often support by implementing them what we do. We also find a lot of support working with the village elders who assist us when we have information to pass across. (FAGIN a 59-year old female community health worker from Kosoro Village).

I started serving on the Village Health Committee (VHC) in 2009. . . I was elected to this position [community health worker] by the community and as long as the MVP work is still on, I will continue working. Even if I resign, someone else will be elected to my position. It is just a voluntary service. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

Six participants identified health sector leaders as having had considerable impact on networking in the communities by virtue of their supervisory roles in coordinating the health interventions, providing training sessions for the health workers and community members, and facilitating overall access to MVP health resources within the community. Sector leaders were paid employees of the MVP and held senior roles over others involved in the communities. One participant helped us understand the how sector leaders were introduced. Based on their conduct while administering the health sector, they were found to influence how people perceived MVP initiated networks for health programs. One participant noted some health sector leaders were

biased in their services and this contributed to resentment of some of the MVP programs:

There was training in 2004 when the MVP came. People were then grouped according to the eight departments – agriculture, health, water, environment, energy etc. After these grouping, heads were selected for each sector, and we have eight sector heads in total. Sector heads are from the community while facilitators are the overall leaders and are employed fulltime by the MVP and the GOK. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

When the MVP came in 2004, they wanted to get to the community by connecting the administration and the grassroots levels. I was elected by the community to represent them on health. I did not know much about community health but I was interested in representing the community. I was thus elected and the MVP has been leading us. I have been a Community Health Worker since then. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A village).

There are certain sector heads that work against the project. Others peddle falsehoods about what is happening in the community. I used to be a community chair for the education committee and there was always the perception that we were swindling funds meant for the MVP. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

The trusted institutions in Sauri. The three main levels of institutions involved in the community identified by the participants were local, national, and international institutions. Thirteen participants mentioned the national institutions as having the greatest impact on personal networks. The participants considered the national institutions as having permanent presence, unlike the international agencies whose presence was tied to the life of their programs. The chiefs and their assistants, together with the village elders represented the government of Kenya.

It is the GoK institutions because of the services such as security that the GoK provides for the community. Even the MVP goes where the GoK approves and provides security. They can't go where these items are missing . . . These GoK institutions acts a bridge for all these others. (JOTWE, a 62-year old female community health worker from Luero).

. . . it is mainly the government of Kenya institutions [that are most trusted] because they are here to stay unlike other development organizations that come with numerous promises but only fulfill few as they wait for the project to expire and then leave. (JAMOL, a 51-year female community health worker from Sauri A).

One participant noted that the decline in trust for other institutions was attributed to MVP's failure to fulfill most of the promises made for the community.

The MVP used to be popular in the earlier days but these days it has changed completely. It is only the health sector that still has a wider appeal in the community compared to other sectors. This because the health sector has several programs that people like such as net distribution, the health center, and other community outreach programs. (IRONYA, a 39-year old female community health worker from Nyamnina B Village).

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represented international development institutions. Sauri communities had a history of working with foreign NGOs and this had influenced their perceptions about networking with NGOs. However, eight participants identified NGOs as playing another major role on personal networks. Despite having worked with several NGOs before, the MVP was the most popular NGO that had shaped personal networking ties in the community mainly through trainings and their related programs.

Obviously, it is the MVP [NGO which has been working on many programs simultaneously]. They have really helped us. They have built about seven health centers, improved our roads, and helped us with the knowledge in many issues. They have built so many water springs. So they have really helped us. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

Network relationships to MVP. The relationship between personal networks and the Millennium Villages Project is explained by two themes namely perceived MVP response to community needs and challenges and enhanced group activity.

Perceived MVP response to community needs. This theme explores the connection that arose from MVP's response to some of these needs in the communities. The participants identified several needs that posed challenges to the successful implementation of health interventions in the communities. Two participants mentioned poverty as major socio-economic obstacle in the community. Due to poverty, most people could not afford the cost of treatment in case special treatment was required. The participants viewed poverty as being a cycle that also was intertwined with inadequate food production and even the ability to access education and health resources.

Poverty is the main obstacle limiting people's abilities. For instance, if you don't have enough land to cultivate you may not be able to develop yourself as desired. We have people who are still poor Sauri such that they cannot be able to educate their children. Many people can't afford to send their children to those high schools that they qualify for due to lack of funds. (FAGIN a 59-year old female community health worker from Kosoro Village).

We have a lot of unemployment in Sauri. There are many people here who can't afford the cost of treatment at the hospital. At the clinic, we don't have specialized personnel like dentists yet the need exists, so people have to travel to other institutions. (LISHI, a 52 year female community health worker from Sauri B).

Two participants stated that people still expected to receive free treatment at the health center despite the MVP having subsidized the cost of treatment to Kshs. 20,

which most people still considered to be costly. The participants also agreed that the MVP had reneged on the promise of giving people free treatment.

Our challenges in Sauri stem from the fact that most of the MVP promises were not fulfilled, in health, agriculture, and even roads. Previously, they used to treat people for free. These days they introduced a small fee of 20 shillings which most people resent while some people can't afford that and just opt to stay at home while sick. They have even turned away children who are orphaned. There has also been suspicion of embezzlement by the Health Management Committee. (JOTWE, a 62-year old female community health worker from Luero).

That [fees for health services] was also a bone of contention in the community. They told people that this health center would treat them freely and so people became so excited but when they introduced the Kshs 20 flat rate, there was a lot of complaining. However, that helps to pay the casuals who work there. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

According to nine community health workers, successful implementation of target health interventions was also being curtailed by some members of the community who refused to change attitudes towards doing certain things in ways that were considered healthy and safe. They singled out expectant mothers who refused to seek pre-natal and post-natal visits or hospital delivery and choosing traditional birth attendants despite the MVP having made arrangements at Yala Hospital. Such expectant mothers shunned hospital delivery because of the mandatory HIV-testing required imposed by the MVP as part of the grant for hospital delivery.

The traditional birth attendants [TBAs] used to assist with home deliveries. But ever since the AIDS scourge came, TBAs are no longer allowed to continue with their work because of the risks of contracting the sickness [endangering their patients]. There has been a talk of according the TBAs some training. We still work with them and in fact they help to recommend pregnant mothers to hospitals. (IRONYA, a 39-year old female community health worker from Nyamnia B Village).

On the side of health, we have some expectant mothers who still don't want hospital delivery because of the requirement of HIV-testing. Many people still fear getting tested. But it is our duty to track pregnancies and convince those people about the health for the mother and the baby. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

All the community health workers expressed concern about the poor working conditions they encountered. They spoke strongly about being required to walk for long distance on foot, being assigned large areas, understaffing, and frequent trainings. They also noted lack of proper remuneration for their services and being regarded as part-time volunteers despite doing the bulk of the community outreach.

As community health workers, we also experienced our own share of challenges. Some of us have families, like in my case I have five children. When you are taken away for training [by the MVP] for a whole day without any plan on how to support your family, it becomes very hard to convince your family that you are "working". Instead they regard you as one who is just wandering at the expense of his/her family. All along we have been regarded as volunteers yet no one cares how we support ourselves. We have to clean the Clinic in Sauri and do a lot of work, which transcends the role of a volunteer. Sometimes when the MVP has openings, they would look at one's qualifications locking many of us out [because of lack of qualifications]. (SOKUM, a 32-year old male community health worker from Kosoro).

The only issue is that CHWs tend to be overworked. They [MVP] had trained 30 but they reduced the number to 10 yet we have 11 villages. What was the point of training 30 CHWs when they can't be absorbed despite the demand? . . . they [MVP] always cited budget constraints but it is if it was a conspiracy among the local MVP leadership team because the MVP knew about the need of having many CHWs and that is why they trained that many people. . . There is a lot grumbling within our circles. Imagine, my village has only one CHW despite the high population that the CHW has to serve. It gets tough when you think of doing deworming by yourself. You can't reach every household or under five children on your own. We have raised this concern during our CHWs meeting but they keeping saying they have no money for training additional CHWs yet there are people sitting idle with the training they got. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

Six participants described the challenges of getting people together based on the declining interest in MVP programs over what they regarded as being a result of failing promises. They noted that people had lost interest in more meetings hence they had to use other avenues, such as the funerals, to pass their messages.

Here in Sauri, getting people together [for development] these days has become quite a big challenge even to the administrators. Unless you attend funerals or church functions it may not be easy. People come only when there are free things to be given out. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

One participant was concerned about the interference by dominant clans in the community, which tended to meddle in the appointment of leaders to key community development committees. Sauri has three main clans that tended to produce leaders to most positions in the communities based on their family sizes although with disregard to their acceptance to the residents. These leaders were found to have less influence in mobilizing the community for development purposes.

People in this community appear to have lost interest in community development activities. There is no seriousness about community development [initiatives of the MVP] when called to barazas for development projects, there is very little interest. In our village, people are not as united and it has to do with pride or enmity within and between families. We still have clan dominance problems. Some of the leaders are unpopular based on the same perception of belonging to the unpopular but larger clans and incidentally, these are the ones that produce leaders all the time. Aila, Agina, and Kamagumbo are the main clans. Aila clan produces leaders all the time because they have the advantage of numbers and always seek leadership opportunities despite being disliked by the smaller clans. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

The introduction of development committees was hailed as a positive step in helping the community take charge of their development needs. The MVP executive

committee was considered the 'supreme' level of mitigating all the MVP-related interventions in the communities and the MVP used this committee for such reasons. Membership to this committee was elective and highly acclaimed based on the influence on distribution of MVP resources. Membership and term limits to this committee were guided by a constitution that the community had enacted under the guidance of the MVP leaders. But as it was pointed out by those interviewed, apart from unifying the residents, disputes within the executive committee had persisted to the extent they were having a negative effect on the community's perception of the MVP.

In Sauri, there are two different MVP executive committees running parallel to each other. The legitimate one is led by Mary Wasonga, which took over from Hosea, who is an imposter. They don't work together. Hosea is the former area Assistant Chief during the time the MVP came and was not popular at all in the community. He used to serve on the executive committee. When his term (two years) was over as the chief and also on the executive committee, Hosea still wanted to continue working but the MVP [and the residents] refused. The MVP convened a general meeting and the community elected the Wasonga-led team. So there is confusion. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

All participants expressed gratitude at the improved access to basic health care as the MVP had constructed seven health centers. Similar expressions were made regarding the health outreach services that targeted children, mothers, and anti-malaria interventions. They also felt that the MVP had managed to provide adequate access to the drugs needed, unlike public hospitals. The cost of treatment was also viewed as being affordable and thanked the MVP for helping subsidize the cost.

Previously, there was just one health facility, the Yala Hospital whose rates were not affordable per the local economic standards. However, with the construction of Sauri Health Clinic, accessing health services have really improved for our community. In fact, Sauri health center has better supplies than real hospitals in

the area. Initially, we used to be treated freely but now they have a flat rate, which is much more affordable and good services are offered. Were it not for the MVP program, we wouldn't be affording the health costs at the Yala hospital whose requirements and costs are too much. If your wife has to deliver, they demand you provide hand gloves, medical file, bed, and other hidden fees. The MVP subsidizes some cost for delivery at the hospital. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

Two participants acknowledged the MVP for introducing ambulance services that helped people access treatment during emergencies. The Sauri Health Clinic closes at night and during such times the ambulance services became crucial to the community

There is an ambulance at the Yala Hospital that serves the community sponsored by the MVP. The health clinic in Sauri has improved greatly they work seven days a week although they don't work at night because there are no residential facilities for the health workers. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

Two participants commended the MVP for introducing special health services close to the community. The close proximity to the residents had improved access to basic health care and enabled people resolve some of the vexing health needs including malaria and HIV-AIDS. Based on such perceptions, the participants felt the health sector had succeeded in meeting intended objectives.

This [Sauri] health center has changed access to health services very drastically by bringing services to the community. There are times when we had emergencies but there was very little we could do. This [Sauri] health center has really solved that. Malaria has been contained. People now come for HIV testing voluntarily. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

The health sector has established resources in the community and is now the most acceptable popular resource. In the fight against malaria, they [community health workers] compiled information about incidences, introduced fumigation, and then introduced the bed nets and Coartem drug for curing malaria. We now have laboratory tests right here in the village [Sauri]. (JOTWE, a 62-year old female community health worker from Luero).

Key informants noted the MVP trainings in community health practices had benefited them and the community. They felt the knowledge gained would last long even after the life of the MVP-funded health interventions.

Even when the MVP leaves [the program funding expires], we shall benefit greatly in the health sector from their community health outreach programs. CHWs and the community will get to retain the vast knowledge and skills they have gained in community health over the years. They do a lot at the health clinic and in the communities. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

According to several women key informants, the opportunity to implement certain MVP health interventions in the community was perceived to confer special empowerment to women, which they would not have easily accessed had it not been for the MVP recruitment. Through the trainings, the women felt more knowledgeable and skilled in addressing mother-child health issues including deworming, malaria, and diarrhea, which used to escalate mortality cases for children under the age of five.

As a woman, I feel empowered to deal with so many [health] issues in life. They have empowered with trainings, farming techniques, health problems, and many more community issues. If they left, the knowledge left with us would be everlasting, and no one can steal that from us. We might just need some resources to sustain ourselves and be independent. For example, we never used to deworm our children, and the malaria effects in our community. People didn't know the sources of malaria or diarrhea. Before the MVP came, child mortality was very high, but now we have been able to control malaria through various campaigns of sensitization and trainings. Before the training, pregnancy-related diseases were equally high as mothers chose to deliver from home. People now appreciate the importance of hospital delivery after the sensitization and awareness campaigns. (FAGIN a 59-year old female community health worker from Kosoro Village).

Enhanced group activity. The most visible groups in the health sector, which the MVP had initiated were the community health workers who worked under village health committees. This group became instrumental in facilitating accessing the basic health resources of the health sector of the MVP. There were three community health workers per village who traversed the assigned areas in the communities interacting with the residents on health issues. They became the major contacts for the residents to work with in accessing the resources of the health sector.

Although informal group activity was evident prior to the MVP, groups affiliated with the MVP had transformed the community and helped connect the community to the MVP. All the participants discussed the enhanced activities of development-related groups in the communities, which they attributed to the MVP's approach of using groups to implement health interventions in Sauri. The participants identified the community health workers (CHWs) and village health councils (VHCs) as the most influential groups that had improved networking and facilitated the dissemination of health interventions. The door-to-door mode of operation had more easily enabled the community access to resources because they were placed in direct contact with the people they were serving. Consequently, MVP contributed to making the health sector earn a wider appeal in the community.

With the coming of the millennium project various groups in the community have expanded. They have learned to mobilize the community thus empowering more people. They are in direct contact with the community members through talking and working together. CHWs maintain regular meetings for people to meet and talk about the village health affairs such as visiting health centers, free distribution of mosquito nets for malaria prevention. (JAMOL, a 51-year female community health worker from Sauri A).

Being a CHW, it implies that we have to work in the communities helping them with the minor problems that they encounter. There are many people in the villages who are not interested in visiting the hospitals, so it is our duty to go and persuade them. Many people need information to get medical assistance. It is our duty to go and remind them. We also sensitize expectant mothers about the need for pre-natal cares. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A village).

The participants lauded the training they had received from the MVP which had enabled them to help resolve some of the outstanding health issues including convincing expectant mothers to seek pre-natal and post-natal services, testing for malaria, and sensitizing people living with AIDS about the importance of adhering to their routine of taking medication. Their knowledge of the community members and frequent visits helped them resolve such issues:

I call meetings to discuss health matters in this community. We help take sick to the hospital, monitor latrines or hygiene in the community and help take blood sampling for the CDC's Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) . . . On the side of health we have managed to cut down incidences of malaria compared to other diseases. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

Another aspect that the MVP had accorded them through the training was the opportunity to network with government of Kenya agencies, local administrators, and development agencies in the regions such as Center for Disease Control (CDC).

The CDC people have done a lot of work here. They are among the first to have trained the CHWs even before the MVP came. In fact, we just elevated them to the MVP. They would even award certificates at the end of training. They seem to be more concerned and you can see that in the way they compensated those who

worked with them. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

Changes since the inception of the MVP. The two themes that explore the changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP are changes in information access and community meeting structure and group dynamics and participation in MVP programs.

Changes in information access and community meeting structure.

Information access. As is typical with rural areas in Kenya, local administration comprising village chiefs, their assistants, and village elders form the core source of information on government policies or development issues. These functions are part of the overall roles local administration within the communities. They also serve as crucial links to external agencies interested in working or implementing projects in their areas of jurisdiction. Prior to the MVP, the community used chiefs and barazas as their primary mode of operation.

However, with the MVP entry, accessing information in the communities had changed significantly, as the fifteen key informants observed. In the health sector, the community health workers had become the main sources of information. This change was attributed to the mode of operation that the MVP adopted; that of using development committees, sector leaders, and the introduction of groups in every sector with interventions replacing community barazas.

Before the MVP, we used Chief's Barazas to get information. These days all sector meetings seem to have replaced barazas. We also use cellphones provided for community health workers. They give us a lot of training that we use in our work. After training, we go back to the community to implement the training. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A village).

We used to have sector meetings. Then they started the idea of using an executive committee. Now they [MVP team leaders] want to eliminate that and use the Assistant Chief. But people feel the deputy chief has a lot of administration duties and should only serve as a patron to community development projects. They used to visit my home frequently in the past but from the moment I became critical, they started avoiding me when I started serving on the executive committee. We used to prefer the executive committee since most of the sector heads also serve in the executive committee. So why do they keep changing the leadership structures? It is akin to having two centers of power within one. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

A participant described the roles of village health councils and community health workers as being different in the following ways:

They [village health councils] act like our supervisors on the ground and also help in mobilization as required. Every community health worker works under a village health council assigned his/her area. They are community residents selected by the Sub-location Development Committee. Some used to be Traditional Birth Attendants whom we are trying to eradicate while others have worked with the Ministry of Health. Majority are women, like in my case [the village I work in] we have two men and six women. (JOLUO, a 34-year old male community health worker from Anyiko village).

Community meeting structure. The structure of holding public meetings in Sauri communities is primarily through the use of barazas. These are public meetings organized by local administrators including the local chiefs, their deputies, and village elders. These meetings are often informal in their structure and how they are conducted. Anyone in the community can contribute. However, the chiefs maintain

order and their rulings are often unchallenged based on the powers vested in their position or because of the traditional respect for those in authority. The venues for such meetings are often in open community spaces or may be chosen randomly depending on the issue at hand. The frequency of such meetings depends on the discretion of the local administrators, although they are required by the Chief's Act to hold at least two barazas in a month. There are certain cases when barazas would be called for specific purposes or during emergencies in the community. In fact, when the MVP leaders sought to introduce their health interventions in Sauri, they began by using the existing barazas to mobilize the residents.

According to the fifteen key informants, the structure of holding meetings within the communities had changed drastically since the MVP interventions began. The participants pointed out that the MVP had "bypassed" the barazas and instead introduced health sector meetings, which focused mainly on health interventions. Because of the multiple health programs being implemented, the frequency of health sector meetings increased as the health sector coordinators sought to increase attention to the MVP programs. Key informants reported that health sector meetings were held on a weekly, bi-weekly, and monthly basis. According to those who worked as community health workers, this new meeting structure had become burdensome because they were required to attend continuous training sessions while still fulfilling their obligations as community health workers and their domestic responsibilities. Fulfilling all these obligations while still being considered a volunteer worker for the

MVP was considered by some of the key informants as contributing to poor working conditions for the community health workers.

It is a big problem. I leave my home very early in the morning and spend the whole day here for almost no compensation at all. Yet I must still attend to my household chores because I can't hire labor with the (200 shillings) given. Our working conditions are despicable. We don't get any lunch and there is not even a kitchen facility for us to prepare our meals. (JOTWE, a 62-year old female community health worker from Luero).

There are times we even have to take trainings from very distant places and in those circumstances you are just required to make your own transport arrangements including using your personal resources. By the end of the day, we still have to provide for our families. Sometimes when they choose to compensate for transport, they are not equal. At one time we were asked to take HIV positive people to help educate the masses but when it came to reimbursing them for their transport, they did not do it fairly, some were even left out. This became a major concern to us and we find it very hard to work through such conditions. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

Because of the frequency of health sector meetings, the key informants felt that there was little time left to organize and participate in the regular barazas. Residents were either attending training sessions or implementing health interventions in their communities. One participant felt this was partly due to the poor performance of the local chiefs who were supposed to be in charge of community meetings.

There have been a lot changes in the frequency of our [barazas] meetings. We used to meet about twice or thrice a month. But these days, we don't have these [barazas] meetings anymore. It is the [health] sector meetings which have become popular partly. . . We can't blame the government. The blame lies with the Assistant Chiefs who are not willing to call barazas [as required]. They need to stop using the funerals to pass information and instead call for barazas which appear to be forgotten or collapsing. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

Changes in group dynamics. According to twelve participants, there had been a significant change in dynamics surrounding group and collective action communities. This was attributed to the MVP approach of using groups in every sector to implement the interventions. The MVP introduced the aspect of forming and joining groups based on a personal interest. Membership to the groups is voluntary although group leaders are elected by the residents and are supposed to serve a term of two years. Groups can make decisions but the ultimate decision resides with the health sector and other health sector facilitators. Through the MVP trainings, the new groups had emerged as more knowledgeable and development focused with a clear formal leadership structure. On the other hand, the old groups that existed prior to the MVP inception were less connected than those that arose after the MVP. Old groups mainly women self-help groups were mainly informal in nature and focused only on welfare purposes. However, some of the participants felt that that the old groups were more embedded in the community than the MVP groups. These changes were described as a shift from the cultural or traditional patterns of collective action in the community.

For example in the health sector, the community health workers (CHWs) had successfully replaced the practices of traditional birth attendants (TBAs). Traditional birth attendants were responsible for assisting women with the delivery of babies, but MVP had trained the CHWs and the communities to rely on CHWs instead. These traditional caregivers were mainly relying on local knowledge whereas the CHWs had been exposed to training.

There have been a lot of changes based on the numerous training changes from the MVP . . . in health many people now know how to use the bed-nets. This is courtesy of the MVP. The former were not as hard working as the ones we have these days. May be it has to do with the training we have been given. (SOGUT, a 66 year old male community health worker from Madiri).

With increased training, the roles of the CHWs were expanded, effectively diminishing the role of traditional birth attendants. According to the established procedures of group formation by the MVP, the CHWs were chosen by the community in every village and given training to provide effect health programs in the communities. Their outreach program focused on expectant mothers, children under the age of five, anti-malaria interventions, HIV-AIDS programs, and sensitizing patients to the health facilities in Sauri. The CHWs worked under the supervisory role of a Village Health Council (VHC) was also initiated by the MVP.

Changes in participation in MVP programs and collective action. The level of participation in community projects at the onset of MVP programs was at its peak. Ten participants pointed out that people had collaborated well during the construction of the Sauri Health Center, maintenance of water springs, and implementation of health programs such as the distribution of nets. This was attributed to the numerous forums organized by the MVP that had fostered unity through increased interaction during sector meetings or training sessions that had transformed people's perceptions to development.

After the inception of the MVP programs, there has been a lot of collaboration. One thing the MVP has done for us is that they have enabled us to have a forum where we can meet, quarrel, or talk; which we didn't have earlier. We just used to have local assistant chiefs barazas. But right now we are able to meet because

of development in this community, which is very important. (DASIB, a 69-year old male and member of the village health committee from Sauri A).

When we were constructing the health center in Sauri, people came out in real large numbers to assist in the construction of the health facility. Others even cooked food for those working on the construction. Everybody was eager to participate in the project that was coming to our community. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A village).

The extent of collaboration on community projects was visibly declining because of what was perceived by some to be MVP's failure to tolerate critical voices within the community. Those found to be critical in MVP meetings would eventually be sidelined from further participation in community activities. This led to a perceived lack of transparency in some of the projects that the MVP was involved with in the community. The construction of a community learning resource center, which the key informants felt had not been meaningfully explained to the community about its overall management and construction is an important example. As one participant argued, the relevance of a community learning resource center was premature given that other programs were still being implemented.

That is where the problem begins. If they [MVP] see you being vocal or critical in their meetings, they won't give you an opportunity to serve or talk again. Take for instance, the community learning resource center that is being constructed, we never saw the plan or the budget, or the bill of quantities and the contractors working on it. Everything related to its construction seems to be a preserve of the executive committee. We just see things being built without much knowledge of what the cost is or the budget. We have never seen the building plan. In fact, we never requested for a community learning resource center. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

Most of the participants stated that their trust for working with foreigners on development programs had improved during the time the MVP programs had been in

Sauri. Another participant argued that people were too busy with their work to be involved in all the MVP programs. Additionally, some felt that the leaders chosen impacted the level of participation in the programs. Personal differences were also identified as contributing to reduced collaboration.

It is lack of commitment. People claim to be busy and lack time for other community activities. Also, some of the people chosen to lead are not as popular with the locals, so whenever they are associated with an activity people don't respond quite well. (CEOTI, a 32-year old female community health worker from Sauri A village).

People are not as united in our village due to personal differences. There are people who don't trust others and they have their own 'little boundaries' because of the involvement of "X", "Y" or "Z". Unfulfilled promises also contribute to the lack of interest. Similarly, these programs take a lot of time to attend the trainings and do related community outreach. (RONGE, a 27-year old female member of the village health committee).

Seven participants felt the use of sector health leaders was increasing divisions within the community and compared this to a "divide and rule" strategy. There was growing mistrust for this approach since some of the leaders were seemingly serving their personal needs with less accountability to the community.

That is a difficult question. When the MVP arrived, there was a lot of trust in what they were doing. But as you know it's like after a woman has been married for a long time, you start seeing faults in her. From 2005-2007, the MVP received overwhelming support. But later on when people started understanding the project and were raising questions about the MVPs resource use, the MVP changed tact and started using the "divide –and-rule" approach in response to the community's inquisitiveness. They would let people work for a year or two then transfers them, and when we make a follow up we discovered they embezzled some funds meant for the community. There was no transparency and whenever we made inquiries, they would not tolerate that. They just want to supply us with things (inputs) without being asked about the cost. (IGWAR, a 48-year old male community health worker from Yala B village).

Other things identified as causing divisions in the community included the allocation of paid positions to people from outside communities whereas most residents were asked to volunteer. Four participants were concerned by the fact that the MVP team leaders and sector leaders were commuting from other towns and did not reside in Sauri. They further expressed concern about the scaling of resources to the cluster of 11 communities as opposed to the original place – Sauri, which they interpreted as a loss of attention to their community.

Summary of health findings

Eight themes emerged from the analysis of the health sector interviews. The themes were organized around research questions that guided data collection for this study. Four of the themes helped us understand the existing personal networks. They include: how people come together to address issues in Sauri; networks people feel obligated to assist; how community mobilization influences personal networking; and trusted institutions in Sauri.

People come together based on the purpose, location, and the people in charge of mobilization. Barazas were the conventional way of addressing issues but the MVP's presence had initiated development projects that brought people together in other ways. People also came together through participation in their informal groups by women and youth. Some NGOs were also using their health interventions to bring people together. Examples included the Center for Disease Control and CARE-Kenya although their activities were not as established as those of the MVP.

People felt obligated to assist the community health workers because they played a crucial role in disseminating the interventions in the communities. Mobilizers including the community leaders and MVP leaders had a significant influence on joining personal networks. Community leaders including the chiefs and village elders influenced the opinions of their constituents and were used to mobilize the communities. On the other hand, the health sector leaders had considerable impact on the community by the way they coordinated the health interventions, training sessions for the health workers and the community. Among the local, national, and international institutions of development that had a presence in Sauri, the participants perceived the national institutions represented locally by local leaders as most trusted because they were ever present and easily accessible when a demand arose. International development agencies such as the MVP were perceived as “development partners” whose presence was predicated on availability of funding for their programs. Their relationship with the communities was perceived to be transient.

The relationship between personal networks and the Millennium Villages Project were stressed in two themes: perceived MVP response to community needs and challenges and enhanced group activity. Based on the poor socio-economic status, the participants felt their relationship with the MVP was connected to the response to most of their socio-economic challenges as evidenced by health interventions. Additional connections also occurred through groups working to implement the health programs especially the community health workers who utilized a door-to-door approach of mobilizing the communities. The specific focus of health interventions in malaria,

mother-child health, and HIV-AIDS further contributed to the communities' receptiveness.

The two themes explored the changes that resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP include changes in information access and community meeting structure and group dynamics and participation in MVP programs. Previously, the core source information was through the local leaders who included the chiefs, assistant chiefs, and village elders who were charged with the responsibility of organizing community meetings.

However, with the inception of the MVP, there was a shift to the use of development projects and sector meetings to access information and resources. Health sector leaders and village health councils had taken the lead in providing information. The frequency of meetings had changed in the same manner such that the health sector leaders had become responsible for mobilizing communities to attend meetings and training sessions. The frequency of sector meetings had become so frequent such that the conventional barazas had ceased because people were participating in development programs.

Group dynamics had also changed based on the MVP influence. The residents were responsible for electing leaders to the groups and the committees and even the people who served as community health workers. This was also reflected in the level of increased participation in development programs of the MVP. As a result participation in development programs had improved significantly.

The next chapter will focus on the quantitative survey conducted to explore how community networks had been impacted by the MVP programs.

CHAPTER 5: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY OF COMMUNITY NETWORKS

Introduction

The quantitative survey was conducted to explore the existing connections among community networks in Sauri MVP communities where the interventions are taking place. The use of community networks is especially vital to the implementation of sectorial interventions of the MVP's targets in agriculture, education, health, and infrastructure development (Annual Report, 2006; 2007; 2009). Therefore, the quantitative survey helped in answering the following research objectives on community networks in the Sauri MVP cluster:

- a. What are the connections among local and between local and extra local institutions?
- b. What are the connections between local institutions and the MVP?
- c. Have these institutional connections changed since the inception of the MVP?

Quantitative survey data was collected using a survey instrument that elicited information about the identity of various network members. Key informants for the surveys were identified purposively from the communities where the agricultural and health programs are being implemented.

A total of 13 participants representing different MVP groups in the health and agriculture sectors of the MVP programs were surveyed for data on community networks. Each of the key informants was asked questions regarding their ties and connections in the MVP communities where their organizations or institutions are

working. A scale ranging from 1 to 5 was used to measure some of the responses, with 1 being the least and 5 the most extreme measure. The quantitative survey instrument is in Appendix (B).

Analysis Procedures for Quantitative Survey Data

All survey data was perception data focused on self, community, group, the MVP, and networks with leaders. Therefore the five themes that emerged from the focus of the data are self-perception; community perception; perceptions about the group; MVP perceptions; and perceptions about networks with leaders. The following are descriptions about the elements of the five themes.

Self-perception. Participants were surveyed for their perceptions about how they viewed themselves and their roles in the community. This included perceptions about satisfaction as members of their communities; control over making decisions about their daily activities; the people with whom they were likely to discuss a problem; people they sought out for help; and the extent to which they would contribute money or time to a community project; information and communication networks; past, current, and interest in participating in community development programs in the community; working with others to benefit the community; and whether individuals or groups sought their help for funds or resources.

All participants indicated that they had been approached by individuals or groups in need of resources for their projects. Amongst those seeking help, women group and youth groups were the most proactive, while one participant who was a

traditional medicine woman was approached by clients in need of herbal medicine treatment. The mean knowledge level of 4.6 indicates that the quantitative survey participants knew the people or groups in need well.

When surveyed for their current involvement level, they were found to be actively involved (M=3.92) as compared to previous years. Participants were surveyed regarding their participation in past and current development programs as well their interest in participating in future programs. The participants pointed out that they were somewhat active (M=3.31) in past development programs in the community (see Table 1). Regarding their perceptions about interest in future development programs initiated by other agencies, the participants expressed their interest at (M=4.38).

Table 1

Perceptions about personal involvement in development programs

Perception	Mean	N
Past involvement	3.31	13
Current involvement	3.92	13
Future involvement	4.38	13

Information and communication were intended to provide perceptions about the information and communication networks (see Table 2). The participants had several sources of information, which included cellphones, community baraza, or “other” sources including church or funeral. Community barazas and cellphones were the favorite sources of information (M=3.92) and (M=3.76) respectively. Similarly,

communication network included face-to-face meetings, phone calls, community barazas or “other”. Of these, the participants preferred face-to-face meetings (M=4.31) and cellphones (M=4.08). These options were used on a monthly basis (M=4.19).

Table 2

Perceptions regarding information and communication networks in the Sauri MVP communities

Communication Mode	Mean	N
Face to face meeting	4.31	13
Phone	4.08	13
Community Meeting (Baraza)	3.92	13
Overall Mean	4.19	13

Information Source	Mean	N
None	3.77	13
Phone	3.92	13
Community Baraza	4.69	13
Overall Mean	4.13	

All the participants were not in favor of contributing money (M=2.75) for community development projects, but appeared to be in favor of contributing time for community projects. On the issue of working with others in the past year to do something in their neighborhoods, all the participants (92%) had worked on a project in their communities.

When confronted with a problem that needed someone to discuss with, 61% preferred talking to the local chiefs and their assistants because they felt they knew them well (M=4.62). Only 23% felt they knew the MVP sector leaders well enough to discuss problems with them. Fifteen percent preferred relatives or church leaders.

Similarly, when asked about whom they would approach for help, 53% preferred the MVP sector leaders while 30 % would go to the community chiefs and their assistants. Regarding making decisions that affected their daily lives and activities, they indicated that they had some control (M=3.23). Concerning perceptions about satisfaction as members of their communities, the participants were found to be satisfied (M=4.30) with where they lived.

Perceptions about the community. This theme identified the participants' perceptions about their communities or villages, the role of their community, and how people are committed to their communities. Participants explored their perceptions regarding how well people in the communities helped each other; trust; the likelihood of people cooperating to solve problems in health or agriculture sectors; and the proportion of people that contributed time or money for community development purposes.

Perceptions about trust in the community indicated that most people were not trustworthy. Only 31 % of the participants felt people in the community could be trusted so according to 69% of the participants, most people in the community could not be trusted. When asked about how people helped each other these days, the participants found the people to be helping each other only sometimes (M=2.69).

If there was a problem in either agriculture or health sectors in the community there people were somewhat likely to cooperate to solve the problem (M=1.92). More than half (M=2.69) of the people in the community were likely to contribute time or

money for a common development project in the community. Table 3 illustrates some of the foregoing perceptions about the community.

Table 3

Perceptions about collaboration in the MVP communities

Perception	Mean	N
Satisfaction level	4.31	13
How people help each other	2.69	13
Likelihood of cooperation	1.92	13

Perceptions about groups. The participants selected to participate in the quantitative survey were organized into four types: ordinary residents in the community (4), four village elders (4), MVP sector leaders (3), and MVP community health workers (2). The perceptions of the quantitative survey participants focused on their interactions with MVP groups in their communities or outside communities; perception of decision-making in their MVP groups; sources of expertise for their MVP groups; perception of how MVP group membership has changed over the past five years (during the presence of the MVP) and community participation in MVP groups or organizations.

MVP group membership over the period of participation in MVP programs had also increased (M=1.23). Perceptions about group membership over the past five years, the period during which the MVP had been present, indicated that community members participated in more community groups or 77% participation rate.

All the participants acknowledged occasional interactions (M=3.61) with other groups that had similar development goals in their communities. The participants also

felt their groups occasionally interacted with external groups that had similar goals (M=3.38).

On matters pertaining to source of expertise for the groups, the participants indicated that their sources were within their communities (M=2.06). When it came to making decisions within the groups, the participants explained that group leaders made decisions after consulting their members (M=4).

Perceptions about the MVP. This theme describes the participant's perception about the MVP's interventions in their communities with regards to the benefits and drawbacks of participating in MVP's programs.

Benefits included an ability to work with outsiders, capacity to serve the community, access to resources, and enhanced influence in the community. Drawbacks included loss of control over decision-making, strained relations in the communities, difficulty working with people from outside the communities, and fewer benefits to the communities over time.

Perceptions about the benefits of participating in MVP revealed that working with outsiders, serving the community, accessing resources, new knowledge, better use of community resources, and enhanced influence in the community were generally good (M=4.06) as depicted in Table 4.

Table 4

Perceived benefits of participating in the MVP

Perceived Benefit	Mean	N
Ability to work with outsiders	3.92	13
Capacity to serve the community	4.46	13
Access to resources	4.31	13
Acquisition of new knowledge and skills	4.69	13
Better use of community's resources	3.92	13
Building new relationships	3.62	13
Enhanced influence in the community	3.77	13
Enhanced personal relations	3.77	13
Overall Mean	4.06	13

Participants felt some drawbacks existed when it came to decision making, relations, and even resources needed (M= 3.03) to participate in the MVP programs effectively (see Table 5).

Table 5

Perceived drawback of participating in MVP programs

Perceived Drawbacks	Mean	N
Takes too much resources (e.g. time)	3.54	13
Loss of control over decision-making	2.54	13
Strained relations in the communities	3.62	13
Difficulty working with outsiders	3.08	13
Less benefits to the community	2.38	13
Overall Mean	3.03	13

Summary of the findings from Quantitative Survey Data

Perceptions about self, community, groups and the MVP. They perceived themselves in possession of resources that individuals or groups in the communities needed and people approached them for help. They joined groups with others whom they knew. They were more involved in groups currently than the previous years. People would be more interested in participating in future development programs. Information networks in the community were primarily comprised of cellphone contacts and barazas. People prefer face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and attending barazas to access information in the community. They preferred contributing time and work with others regularly on community projects. If they had a problem, they would rather discuss it with their local leaders who included the chiefs and the village elders. However, when it comes to seeking help, they prefer approaching the MVP leaders. Overall, most people are satisfied as members of their community.

Over the period that the communities have been participating in the MVP programs, there has been increased group membership. More people participate more in group activities. The MVP contributed to groups and increased participation. They used the groups to seek interactions with other groups that are involved in similar goals of development within and outside of their communities. Whereas they groups interacted a lot, the community was still the major source of expertise for development needs. The perception among the quantitative survey participants was that the

community was actively involved in the making of decisions related to the issues of groups even though they had appointed leaders.

Most people are likely to cooperate to solve community problems while more than half the community members would contribute money or time towards a project in the community. However, most people don't trust each other in the community. In terms of benefits, the MVP is perceived to be beneficial to the community in various ways such as improved work relationships with people from outside the community or expatriates. People in the community were now aware about community service. This implies that by participating in MVP program, they were likely to benefit from new knowledge, use community resources more efficiently, access more resources, and change their influence as a community. There was a perception that working with the MVP was likely to result in a myriad of drawbacks in the community. The community views the MVP as having contributed to diminished control over making decisions in the community, and straining relations in the communities. They also found it hard to work with people from other communities.

How networks are formed and used the community. Networks in the community are formed by people who perceive themselves to possess resources that could be lent to individuals or groups. Personal knowledge, previous and current involvement in community development and the history of involvement with development organizations in the community influence involvement in development programs.

Community networks are used to engage local leaders when there is a problem in the community. They also utilized community networks to seek assistance for community problems from agencies such as the MVP. Participation in networks also conferred some level of satisfaction to living in the community. Networks are used to harness group membership and participation and have been used to connect with MVP for development purposes. These connections have provided benefits to the community that included improving working relations with people from other communities, service to the community, new knowledge for development, access resources, and boosting the influence of the community.

These networks promote interactions and help link groups with other groups pursuing development and they help to tap into community reserves for expertise on how to handle the development needs as a community. Networks facilitate the making of decisions in the community and help members realize the importance of contributing resources needed to solve their community needs. This promotes cooperation in the community and the building of trust.

Networks also enlighten the community about potential drawbacks of working NGOs on community development projects, which includes loss of making decisions for community programs, straining relations within the community, and problems working with people from other communities.

The next section is focused on analyzing the findings from both qualitative and quantitative data.

CHAPTER 6: ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the impact of the Millennium Villages Promise program on community networks in Sauri and how networks in the communities affect the sustainability of development efforts in the 11 communities in Sauri where the program is being implemented in Western Kenya. The research findings extend knowledge about the impact of donor programs on community relations and perceptions regarding intervention programs designed for rural communities in Africa. This study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, which include qualitative interviews and a quantitative survey for community networks. The focus of this chapter was to present the findings of the qualitative data, which focused on understanding the perceptions of the residents regarding personal networks in Sauri.

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with thirty key informants from the agriculture (15) and health (15) sectors from May to August 2011. An interview protocol consisting of 29 items was used in conjunction with structured questions that were closed and open ended. Individual interviews were conducted with the relevant actors and key informants in the agricultural and health sectors of the MVP program in Sauri. The length of interviews ranged from 1-2 hours as recommended by (Gay & Airasian, 2003). A research assistant worked with the researcher to conduct the interviews and help interpret in cases where language was a barrier. The following

research questions were the focus of the interviews regarding the existing personal networks in the Sauri Millennium Village Program (MVP) communities:

1. What are the existing personal networks in Sauri MVP communities?
2. What are the connections between these personal networks and the (MVP)?
3. How have they changed since the inception of the MVP?

The research questions used for investigating community institutions were:

1. What are the connections among local and between local and extra local institutions?
2. What are the connections between local institutions and the MVP?
3. Have these institutional connections changed since the inception of the MVP?

Summary of agriculture findings

Seven themes emerged from analysis of the agriculture sector interviews organized around the research questions. The themes “perceived personal networks” and “collective action” helped us understand the existing personal networks in Sauri. Personal networking was enhanced through community barazas, development projects, and religious functions. Agricultural projects frequently brought people together through community interest groups, cooperatives, trainings and sector meetings. Most people had a religious affiliation of some kind thus utilized religious functions for personal networking too. Collective action involves a group of people, with a shared interest pursuing a common action voluntarily including making decisions collectively (Meinzen-Dick, DiGregorio, & McCarthy, 2004). The MVP had increased collective action through its unique mobilization of people in agricultural production. However, mistrust

in the MVP's multiple programs was also constraining collective action. Other constraints included perceived lack of trust in the outcomes, failed promises, lack of transparency among the leaders, and selective compensation of people working for the MVP in the communities. These are some of the reasons that contributed to the conflicts surrounding the community learning resource center.

The three themes, "group activity", "leadership issues", and "benefits/importance of the MVP" illustrated the relationships between personal networks and the Millennium Village Project. Agricultural groups facilitated connections between personal networks and the MVP as people joined groups to pool their interests and access resources, information, and training. Leaders of communities, groups, sectors, and the MVP were perceived to play a major role in influencing personal networking. Village elders and chiefs were the most influential leaders while MVP sector leaders were viewed as obstacles to networking because most of them came from other communities. Wrangling within the development committees was another issue that constrained networking in the communities.

The benefits of the MVP interventions identified included improved agricultural production, trainings, knowledge and skills in agriculture, and empowerment. In terms of production, the participants credited the MVP for diversifying crop production, formation of community development groups, and enhancing networking with development agencies. Through trainings, the participants were able to engage and expand their production to include tissue-cultured crops, dairy animals, poultry, and use of farm inputs. Participating in the MVP programs was perceived to have empowered

the community to be in charge of their food security and hold their leaders accountable. Women participants felt especially empowered to contribute to community development.

Two additional themes, “MVP weaknesses” and “transformations due to MVP” explored the changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP. The participants described several perceived MVP weakness. Most were concerned about what they considered the unfulfilled promises of a five year free supply of farm inputs and several projects that never took off, such as the cereal bank or dairy animal projects. There were perceptions of a lack of transparency in the budgeting of community resources and they felt the MVP initiated many programs that tended to be duplicates. Hiring paid employees from other communities outside Sauri was another source of contention among the participants who felt such positions should have been retained in the community as a way of empowering the community and more importantly, sustaining the programs into the future.

Several transformations occurred that were linked to the MVP, including the use of development committees, changes in sources of information and community meeting structure, and dysfunctional barazas. The MVP had initiated development committees in every village whose leaders were elected by the residents and these committees managed development and mobilized residents to participate in the programs. The use of sector leaders to coordinate trainings, access resources, and solve development issues was another major transformative issue. The sector leaders, group leaders, and committee leaders had supposedly “replaced” the local administrators as sources of

development information. The structure of holding meetings in the community shifted from using barazas as the main arena for the sharing of information and resources to the use of MVP sector meetings. Whereas participants preferred barazas because of their informal structure, MVP sector meetings had become so frequent they had the effect of replacing the barazas. Some participants felt the barazas had diminished in part due to the negligence of the assistant chief whom they accused of abdicating his role by not convening barazas.

Summary of health findings

Eight themes emerged from the analysis of the health sector interviews. Four of the themes helped us understand the existing personal networks. They include: how people come together to address issues in Sauri; networks people feel obligated to support; how community mobilization influences personal networking; and trusted institutions in Sauri.

People come together based on the purpose, location, and the people in charge of mobilization. Barazas were the conventional way of addressing issues but the MVP's presence initiated development projects that brought people together without using the barazas. Women and youth also came together through participation in their informal groups. Some NGOs were also using their health interventions to bring people together. Examples included the Center for Disease Control and CARE-Kenya, although their activities were not as established as those of the MVP.

People felt obligated to assist community health workers because they played a crucial role in disseminating health interventions in the communities. Mobilizers such as

the community leaders and MVP leaders had a significant influence on joining personal networks. Community leaders including the chiefs and village elders influenced the opinions of their residents and were used to mobilize the communities. Health sector leaders had considerable impact on the community because they coordinated the health interventions and provided training sessions for the health workers and the community. Among the local, national, and international institutions of development that had a presence in Sauri, the participants perceived the national institutions represented locally by local leaders as most trusted because they were ever present and easily accessible when a demand arose. International development agencies such as the MVP were perceived as “development partners” whose presence was predicated on availability of funding for their programs. The relationship of these development partners with the communities was perceived to be transient.

The relationship between personal networks and the Millennium Villages Project included two themes: perceived MVP response to community needs and challenges and enhanced group activity. According to MVP Reports (2006; 2007) Sauri became eligible as an MVP site due to the then prevailing poor socio-economic status. The participants felt connected to the MVP through the MVP’s interventions that aimed at improving the socio-economic status as was evidenced by the health and agricultural interventions. The connections were further reinforced by the MVP’s community interest groups, which were used to disseminate the interventions. In agriculture, the groups facilitated access to training and resources needed while community health workers helped mobilize community to adapt the health interventions to the communities. The specific

focus on health interventions in malaria, mother-child health, and HIV-AIDS further contributed to the communities' receptiveness.

The two themes explore the changes that have resulted in personal networks since the beginning of the MVP included changes in information access and community meeting structure and group dynamics and participation in MVP programs. Previously, the core source information was through the local leaders who included the chiefs, assistant chiefs, and village elders charged with the responsibility of organizing community meetings. However, with the inception of the MVP, there was a shift to the use of development projects and sector meetings to access information and resources. Health sector leaders and village health councils took the lead in providing information. The health sector leaders had become responsible for mobilizing communities to attend meetings and training sessions. Sector meetings had become so frequent that the conventional barazas had ceased because people were participating in development programs.

Group dynamics also changed based on the MVP influence. The residents were responsible for electing leaders to the groups and the committees and even the people who served as community health workers. This was reflected in the level of increased participation in development programs of the MVP. As a result participation in development programs had improved significantly.

Summary of the Findings from Quantitative Data

Perceptions about self, community, groups and the MVP

The survey participants perceived themselves in to be in possession of resources that individuals or groups in the communities could approach for help. They joined groups with others whom they knew. They were more involved in groups currently than the previous years. People became more interested in participating in future development programs. Information networks in the community were primarily comprised of cellphone contacts and barazas. People preferred face-to-face meetings, phone calls, and attending barazas to get information in the community. They also preferred contributing time and work with others regularly on community projects. If they had a problem, they would rather discuss the issue with their local leaders who included the chiefs and the village elders. However, when it came to seeking help, they preferred approaching the MVP leaders. Overall, most people are satisfied as members of their community.

Over the period that the communities have been participating in the MVP programs, the quantitative survey participants largely believed that group membership had increased. That is more people were participating in more group activities. They believed that MVP contributed to this phenomenon. They used the groups to seek interactions with other groups that are involved in similar goals of development within and outside of their communities. Whereas they groups interacted a lot, the community was still the major source of expertise for development needs. The community was actively involved in the making of decisions related to the issues of groups even though they had appointed leaders.

The quantitative survey participants felt that people were likely to cooperate to solve community problems and more than half felt community members would contribute money or time towards a project in the community. However, most of those included in the quantitative survey don't trust others in the community. In terms of benefits, the MVP is perceived to be beneficial to the community in various ways such as improved work relationships with people from outside the community or expatriates. People in the community were more aware about community service. This implies that by participating in MVP program, they were likely to benefit from new knowledge, use community resources the best way possible, access more resources, and change their influence as a community. However, there was a perception that working with the MVP was likely to result in myriad of drawbacks in the community. They perceived the MVP to have contributed to diminished control over making decisions in the community, and straining relations in the communities. They also found it hard to work with people from other communities.

How networks are formed and used the community

Networks in the community were formed by people who perceived themselves to possess resources that could be lent to individuals or groups. Personal knowledge was another credential for forming networks in the communities. Previous and current involvement in community development also influences formation of community networks. A history of involvement with development organizations in the community also influenced involvement in development programs.

Community networks were used to engage local leaders when there was a problem in the community. They also utilized community networks to seek assistance for community problems from agencies such as the MVP. Participation in networks also conferred some level of satisfaction for living in the community. Networks were used to harness group membership and participation and have been used to connect with MVP for development purposes. These connections yielded benefits to the community that included improving working relations with people from other communities, service to the community, new knowledge for development, access resources, and boosting the influence of the community.

Networks promoted interactions and helped link groups with other groups pursuing development. They helped tap into community reserves for expertise on how to handle the development needs as a community and facilitated the making of decisions in the community. Members realized the importance of contributing resources needed to solve community needs. This promotes cooperation in the community and the building of trust.

Networks also enlightened the community about potential drawbacks of working NGOs on community development projects which included the loss of decision making for community programs, strained relations within the community, and problems working with people from other communities.

Analysis

This study was guided by the actor-oriented approach (AOA) in data collection and analysis. Used in the context of the MVP programs, the AOA was intended to facilitate understanding of the processes by which particular social forms emerge, are consolidated, and reworked in the daily lives of people. The MVP program is replete with multiple heterogeneous practices whose interpretation results makes and remakes the lives of the actors involved. Similarly, the associated processes of the development projects lead to insights that are crucial to the processes that lead to construction and reconstruction of livelihoods that can be understood by looking at the relationships between the actors involved.

The Millennium Villages, which are aimed at implementing the Millennium Development Goals, bring to the fore how macro-micro or global-local relations are manifested through development programs. The AOA was further used to explain how local or small-scale interactional settings interlock with frameworks, resource fields, or networks of relations of broad magnitude, as is the case with MDG/MVP. In this manner, key concepts that constrain, structure, and restructure development interventions can be re-examined while issues related to change and sustainability can be explored.

The AOA argues that social action takes place in network relations where human and non-human components are involved. The data provided by personal and community networks are examples of this kind of scenarios. The intervention programs

of the MVP, the people implementing, and the resources needed are exhibits of the intricate relations of the social action. Whereas meanings and values are culturally constructed, they are differentially reapplied and interpreted in sync with existing behavior possible or changed by prevailing circumstances. Therefore, through the MVP project in Sauri, data yielded actor's perceptions, cultural presentations, and discourses that have influenced or could have been transformed by the development interventions.

The perceptions of actors are defined by the actions of policy makers, researchers, intervening private or public agents or local actors themselves. The issues and situations are perceived and interpreted very differently by all the actors involved. Unfamiliar and strange encounters put local cultures to test thereby triggering a struggle among the actors to give meanings to their own experiences. The challenge then is how to represent such situations amidst multiple voices and contested realities. The perceptions of actors and agency are important because they shape their own behavior, which may influence expectations in the outcomes of particular interventions. For example, the two sectors used in the study, namely agriculture and health were yielded perceptions that have shaped the expectations of the communities in the outcomes of the MVP significantly.

As actors struggle, 'sense-making' over their experiences varies and is often framed by cultural perceptions, which are shared and subject to reconstruction and transformation. Analysis therefore incorporates the intricacies and dynamics of the relations between differing lifeworlds and the processes of cultural construction. This

will help understand the outcomes of the interplay between different domains to map out cultural differences, power, and authority.

According to the AOA, a discourse is a set of meanings, embodied in metaphors, representations, or narratives that advance a particular version of the 'truth' about objects, versions, events, and relations between them. Discourses affect meanings and frame the understanding of life experiences of the actors. The prevailing political or ideological position of an institution tends to influence a discourse. For example, this prevailing discourse in this study focused on the MDGs and the MVP, which are premised on the functions of the United Nations. The MVP discourse is also being promoted by emphasizing local participation. The MVP follows the MDG prescribed approach of what constitutes development problems and solutions.

In tandem with the foregoing objectives of the AOA, two types of analyses were thus used namely lifeworld and interface and analyses.

Lifeworld analysis. In lifeworld analysis, a lifeworld is defined as a 'lived-in' world, and largely 'taken-for-granted world' social world centering on particular individuals" (Long, 2001, p.241). The Sociology of the everyday life of the actors involved in shaping the process and outcomes of rural development programs is needed for developing adequate understanding of the significance of human agency in such situations. To understand production, reproduction, and transformation of knowledge, it must be situated in lifeworld of those groups and individuals involved.

Social life is best understood by focusing on the notion of lifeworlds, which appears in the ways people manage their social relationships and in how they

problematize their situations. The MVP interventions have impacted both the community and those responsible for the implementation. The community has invested a lot of time in trainings, meetings, and working to implement the programs. In the process, old knowledge has been shed while new knowledge has been acquired. Most important is the locally rooted knowledge that has been produced out of the interactions among the actors involved with the programs. The lifeworld analysis was limited because this study did not collect data for the other lifeworlds. Instead, lifeworld analysis was used in a more heuristic way to analyze the data.

Data from health participants reveal a lifeworld that is typical of a rural Kenyan community whereby networks are influenced by a variety of issues. Apparently, community mobilizers, leaders, group leaders, development agents or non-governmental agencies influence how networks function. Additionally, in this lifeworld, the location of a community event will also have a bearing on how well people attend. Funerals, development meetings, barazas, and church events in the communities elicit varied responses networks.

In the Sauri lifeworld, tradition still influences the community's approach to community development work and relations with external development agencies. Clans, kinship ties, and gender roles are some of the traditional aspects that influence how people network in the communities. Village elders are part of the traditional leadership structure that are still prominent in the community and continue to play a crucial role in how people relate in Sauri. Whereas such traditions are part of the community life, they present potential obstacles to effective implementation of the MVP interventions. For

instance, some residents especially women, continue to rely on traditional birth attendants (TBAs) for services instead of embracing the benefits that the MVP health center in Sauri has to offer. Barazas are also an extension of the traditional lifeworld pattern of networking in Sauri at personal and community level. The barazas are perceived to be free and open forums whereby participation is not channeled to a particular purpose but in response to the common issues facing the community. During barazas, the residents perceive themselves as part of the process especially where decisions have to be made. The sector meetings, on the hand are more focused on development issues and do not address those issues that cut across the community.

In this lifeworld, the MVP health interventions represent a break from tradition to modern way of responding to health challenges facing the communities. The MVP interventions are focused on the prime challenges of HIV-AIDS, malaria, and mother-child health issues facing the community. This type of focus and targeted interventions has been hailed as being effective in combating these challenges in the community. This is the same extension to the agricultural interventions that are seeking to improve food production in the rural community.

Additionally, the MVP has a sectorial approach whereby all the resources needed to implement interventions are channeled into the respective sectors with their own appointed leaders. These sector leaders are individuals with skills and qualifications to facilitate the implementation of the health interventions without necessarily being residents or members of the community. They represent the face of the MVP in the communities.

For the period the interventions have been in place, the residents of have learned to bridge their relations with the MVP leadership so as to help address their challenges as a community. By nominating and electing individuals to be community development committees, the lifeworld is now embracing new structures being used to implement the agricultural and health interventions in the communities. Despite being the main development agency, the practices of the MVP also point to a lifeworld that has been permeated by NGOs involved in development activities for a long time. The issue of NGOs bringing long-term change is still debatable in this lifeworld of Sauri, which has had association with different NGOs over time, yet agricultural and health problems still persist.

The approach used by the MVP to introduce the health interventions to the communities reveals a structure that has been deemed acceptable compared to the agricultural sector. The decision to use community health workers who are elected by the residents is an indicator of some the efforts made at empowering the residents with the power and knowledge to decide who assists them in terms of addressing the health challenges. The lifeworld of the community health workers reveals a group of individuals who have gained significant amounts of knowledge and power that has seen them transform the status of health care in Sauri. The CHWs have also contributed to networking in the communities because they are easily accessible to most people in the community. They visit most households interacting with the residents at a personal level, and as such they have helped enhance awareness in the community about health matters. The residents have also embraced working with the CHWs because they

elected them and their services have been found to be so effective. Hence they have been accepted and the community supports their activities and assists where needed. This type of interaction is an example of a best practice needed to implement development programs in a rural community.

In the Sauri lifeworld, there are institutions that operate and have a bearing on the networking capabilities of the residents. Local and national institutions of governance are the most trusted and which have the greatest impact on how people network. This is because the leaders associated with local and national institutions are perceived to be representative of the community relations with their leaders. The local and national leaders serve as gatekeepers in this rural lifeworld and whenever they open the community gates to any project; it is likely to be accepted by the residents because they influence the opinions of their subjects. Thus local institutions of governance will go a long way in determining the success MVP because they represent the locus of power and knowledge and the local level where the interventions are taking place.

In a development setting of this magnitude, different relationships develop with those who have larger requirements or expectations. In Sauri lifeworld, it is evident that leadership plays a crucial role in influencing personal networking in the communities and ultimately the way the community responds to interventions of the MVP. Essentially, local leaders represent centers of power in the community and the institution to which they represent. Community leaders who include the local chiefs and village elders are considered more embedded in the community because most of them

represent the face of the community. They are perceived to be more sensitive to the needs of the community. It is against this understanding that MVP sector leaders are likely to encounter some challenges in the community because of the perceptions that they are outsiders.

The agriculture sector is an example of how leadership issues are affecting continued participation in the MVP programs due to mistrust in MVP leadership in the communities. Based on declining interest in participation, it is evident in this lifeworld that mistrust is affecting the implementation of development programs of the MVP. Mistrust is a major constrain to the communities as the residents exhibit doubt in the final outcomes of the agricultural interventions. The focus is on MVP's failed promise of supplying farm inputs for five years, which the community took very seriously as a breach of trust with their development partners. This is also an indicator of the power play being exhibited by the MVP. The power is in the resources, knowledge and their leaders working in the community implementing the interventions.

Issues of mistrust are extended to the high-handedness practices by the MVP local leadership team, which has been accused of failing to include the community in budgeting matters. As a rural community, there are also issues of power play and internal competition over access to community resources. Dominant interests appear to prevail even where the MVP resources are concerned. For example dispute over the community learning resource center has exposed some of the fissures the MVP projects have brought to the community. Additionally, the failure of the MVP to address such shortcomings or conflicts is what is seen to be contributing to growing dissatisfaction by

the residents in continued involvement with the MVP. According to the lifeworld analysis, the lifeworlds of the bureaucrat and the peasants contrasts significantly. Demands of dealing with locals and those of the MVP is still a challenge to the implementation of the project.

The lifeworld analysis also helps to understand how personal networks in Sauri facilitate the community's connection with the MVP. The health participants found connections exist through the MVP's response to the community's development needs as well through the development groups initiated by the MVP.

The development needs of Sauri are a major issue in the lifeworld as presented by the health participants. It is therefore evident that any development agency attempting to respond to some of these needs will definitely steer some connections with personal networks in the communities as has been the case with the MVP. Sauri is a poor lifeworld in most aspects and the socio-economic needs of the community have attracted responses from private developmental agencies that try to mitigate the needs of the community. As a poor rural community, access to health care services is hampered by distance from established health centers, poor infrastructure, and lack of the economic means to afford the required health services.

The health needs in Sauri lifeworld are related to malaria, HIV-AIDS, and maternal-child health. All development agencies that have sought to respond to these issues have ended up becoming connected with the community. That is the same reason that the MVP designed interventions targeting these areas and has since contributed to further connections with the community. The residents face similar challenges posed by

the foregoing health concerns and the interventions that the MVP has instituted have contributed to further connections with the MVP.

Critical experiences and learning opportunities take place through interface encounters and dealings with other domains, within the village and beyond. Another source of connection is the training sessions in health that the MVP has endeavored to provide for the community, especially programs on how to address and manage malaria, HIV-ADS, and mother-child health. In this lifeworld, health trainings embody the crux of the MVP knowledge that has been transferred to the community. It is a lifeworld where residents have fully embraced the Sauri health center facility so well. The trainings associated with the agricultural interventions have contributed to improved agricultural production, which further served to connect the community with the MVP. Trainings represent the shedding off of traditional knowledge and the assumption of a new coat of knowledge and approach and perspective of doing things in the community.

Benefits derived from participation in the agricultural interventions also serve to connect the community with the MVP. Lifeworld analysis reveals that the community is not just keen on participating in programs that do not bring any meaningful gain in the community.

Agricultural production is an important aspect in Sauri lifeworld and when the MVP introduced interventions aimed at improving production, there was excitement. Production implies empowerment against poverty, hunger, and food insecurity. However, in the agriculture sector, people have the belief that development is a source of free things due to the approach that the MVP adopted initially; that of promising

people free farm inputs. In the agriculture sector, people became too dependent on the MVP for resources, which the MVP could not provide. This expectation was amplified in the first year when the agricultural programs were incepted with the promise of a free supply of farm inputs for a period of five years. However, the MVP only supplied inputs for one year and instead required the community to use micro-loans to obtain agricultural resources, which the community members viewed as being expensive. As a result, there is a high likelihood that the agriculture sector may never be sustainable because the scale and income potential in Sauri are so low.

The lifeworld analysis reveals that development groups initiated by the MVP to facilitate the interventions have further helped to connect the community with the MVP. The groups embody the new approach to development according to the structure espoused by the MVP. Whereas groups were present before the MVP interventions, the MVP has given the current groups a new “face” and provided training that enabled them to focus on development matters. Agricultural participants also agree that development groups have reinforced networking in this community. The community interest groups are seen to have enhanced the collective action in the communities. However, there was more group activity attributed to agricultural interventions which were also used to access resources, trainings, and information needed.

Groups have been central to the implementation of the MVP interventions in Sauri MVP communities. The lifeworld analysis reveals that the dynamics of groups changed significantly when the MVP reinforced the role of community groups in development. The MVP has given groups a new dimension, meaning, and empowered

their role and contribution to community development. Many residents can now join, nominate, or elect members to the groups in the community. They also symbolize the dawn of a new approach to collaboration in the communities as the MVP uses to groups to access resources, provide training, and mobilize community members to participate in the interventions. Through the groups, there is a sense of a lifeworld in which power is shared, as is the flow of information in the communities.

Bridging the gap between different lifeworlds can be a challenge for the actors involved from local, national, and international levels. If caution is not taken, it can result in further separation of the two worlds. The lifeworld analysis was also used to determine how the relationships between the communities and the MVP changed information flow and meeting structures. Sources of information for the community were previously limited to local chiefs and the village elders who mainly conveyed information from the government of Kenya in their areas of jurisdiction. Although the chief worked with other government agencies and departments, on their own, chiefs did not have any development plans for their areas of jurisdiction and depended on established government departments such as health and agriculture.

Chiefs have no specified development plan for the villages. Chiefs adapt to work with any local, national, and international development agencies. The lack of a development plan symbolizes the traditional way information flowed in the communities. It is also another example of how rural areas are still part of the vertical information flow in the communities. However, based on the importance of the office of the chief in the rural lifeworld, in matters pertaining to development, they still serve as

key sources of information needed for networking in the communities. As such, they are still powerful centers of information in the rural lifeworld arrangement.

The MVP structure uses sector leaders, development committees, and frequent sector meetings to disseminate information for the health interventions in the communities. This is a symbolic shift from the traditional approach to development by incorporating some expert source of information and leadership in the decision-making process. Another important aspect is that the sector leaders are not residents of the community but have been appointed based on the merit of the skills they possessed. This is a demonstration on the side of the MVP that those people in charge of leading development need not necessarily have some social ties to the community. However, as the health participants noted, it is also a bone of contention, since training outsiders to work in the community is not necessarily helpful for empowering the community to be in charge of their development matters.

Interface analysis regarding the question of scale: According to the AOA perspective, “social interface is a critical point of intersection between lifeworlds, social analysis, or levels of social organization where social discontinuities, based upon discrepancies in values, interests, knowledge and power are most likely to be located” (Long, 2001, p.243).

Interface analysis is used to explore how the relationship between micro-scale interactional settings and localized arenas are connected to wider-macro scale phenomena. This analysis seeks to determine whether the local is shaped by global or if the global (MVP) is an aggregation of the local. The MVP interventions were designed

using a universal framework of the MDGs, which are global but are being implemented at the local arenas. The actors involved possess different sets of knowledge, which influences their practices.

The agricultural and health interventions reveal projects whose actors are seeking to enroll each other. This causes contests that are ongoing over the meanings, values, and the intentions of all the actors involved. In these settings, networks are essential in gathering information, forming opinions, and mobilizing resources needed to implement the MVP interventions. However, there is also a potential for conflicting social and normative interests over the prevailing interpretations of models. In the case of Sauri, the sources of conflicts emanate from the local citizens, development professionals, and local politicians. As the interventions are being embedded in the community, they generate social processes that re-structure power, authority and legitimation in the MVP communities.

The cultural differences and conflicts between the social groups involved with the interventions prohibit the establishment of common perceptions and shared values. For example, the agriculture sector has elicited a lot of contentions and conflicts more than any other sector in the MVP communities. The MVP professionals are keen on implementing programs in a community that harbors many unrealistic expectations.

While the MVP aims to promote strategies that are people-driven, the development professionals and the programs being implemented still operate on external power connotations. Thus, the whole aspect of empowerment is a dilemma

because the interventions are occurring through expert knowledge as opposed to bottom-up development.

Summary of Analyses

This study used the actor-oriented approach (AOA) as espoused by Long (2001) in explaining structural changes in personal and community networks associated with the MVP interventions. The AOA argues that structural changes are not a result of external forces alone, but are also influenced by social actors. According to Long, when external interventions enter the prevailing “life-worlds” of individuals or groups, they are equally altered and mediated by the same actors (p. 13). The lives and individual behaviors are altered by the action of external forces operating on their daily life experiences and perceptions for the concerned groups (and this happens directly or indirectly). For example, the health interventions have greatly improved access to health services, which was a challenge previously. The agricultural training contributed to improved food production. While utilizing the health services or implementing the agricultural programs, individual behaviors have also been impacted. This enabled the delineation of social relationships, networks, meanings, and values that were generated within different arenas and scenarios (p. 242). The AOA further explores the critical interfaces between local actors and ‘intervening’ actors from institutions that are likely to bring contestations among the actors involved (p. 242).

Theoretically, the interaction between development actors revealed aspects of power, knowledge and agency. As a rural development program, the MVP is guided by

practices that are likely to reconfigure the local communities' aspects of human agency, knowledge, and power as highlighted by the findings of this study. Since the MVP has multiple actors involved in the planning, design, and implementation, aspects of AOA emerge from the existing power, relationships, interactions, and the shift from short term to long term goals of the MDGs and MVP in 2015.

The key concepts guiding the AOA are agency, knowledge, and power construction in social arenas. Agency refers to the mixture of social, cultural, and material elements that shape the perceptions of actors. Knowledge process construction refers to the ways in which actors appreciate their world (surroundings) based on their experiences and understandings. Power is configured by the ideas of the actors' projects that are comprised of different values, meanings, and notions regarding authority, control, domination, subordination, and how resources are distributed. In this vein, power is considered a product but not a 'given' (empowerment) (p. 242-243).

Therefore, the findings of this study yielded three essential lessons about the impact of the MVP interventions on networks in the community. These themes include: a shift in the locus of control, the emergence of linking social capital, and network empowerment issues.

Shifting locus of control. According to Eversole (2010), in community development local knowledge is still an important supplement to expert knowledge that characterizes most donor development initiatives. Communities use their local knowledge to respect local customs of doing things while local community leaders use local knowledge to bring about change without causing offense because some of their

solutions tend to be embedded in the community. This type of knowledge is accrued via lived experiences, which help to understand the connections and interrelationships more clearly than experts who tend to be guided by conceptual programs of a particular program.

Similarly, Craig and Porter (1997) have argued that in development, most projects, professionals, and organizations are enmeshed in processes and practices of control rather than of participation. A shift in control occurs when development programs that are intended to promote community participation or bottom-up approaches end up becoming top-down because of the tendency to make the communities forego their local knowledge and institutions. Ultimately, programs that are intended to promote empowerment force communities to enter into new forms of dependency with external agencies for resources needed to maintain the programs because participation in the programs is often guided by the objectives of the programs (Botchway, 2001). Training for participation in anti-poverty programs elicits new knowledge, values, skills, as well as the capacity needed to become agents of change. Participation rates in anti-poverty programs are often hinged on power, privilege, and resource access (Bowen, 2007).

In this study, changes in the locus of control are explained by changes that were found to have occurred among the personal and community networks in the communities where the interventions were being implemented. Consistent with the actor-oriented approach framework, most of the changes exhibited aspects of power, knowledge, and perceived empowerment (Long, 2001). All the changes in community

meeting structure, sources of information, and leadership issues that were identified by the research participants pointed to a shift in locus of control within personal and community networks. The most notable is the introduction of development committees in the communities.

The use of development committees. The use of village development committees is a major testament to the shift in locus of control of development projects in the communities. The agriculture sector had the village agricultural committee while the health sector had village health council. The communities were empowered to elect leaders to these committees who in turn assisted in making decisions related to their respective sectors in the communities. The committees also played a major role of mobilizing the residents to participate in development interventions of the MVP. The development committees together with the respective sector leaders thus become part of the new locus of control in the communities.

These new structures of leadership in community development were responsible for coordinating access to the MVP's resources, trainings, meetings, and facilitating connections with the MVP leaders. The sector leader wielded power that influenced how resources were distributed in the communities according to the MVP's objectives. Using the sector leaders as the main link between the MVP and the community meant that community members had no 'direct contact' with the MVP unless they went through the sector leaders. As several interview participants pointed out, this strategy brought mixed reactions to the MVP programs. There was a perception that sector leaders and the local MVP team leader had become obstacles between the community

and the MVP, as they felt some sector leaders promoted selfish interests. This was a major issue for the key informants in the agriculture sector, which was perceived to harbor a lot of complaints over access to resources needed for the programs. Others felt that the MVP used sector leaders as a deliberate design to counter criticism in the communities where the interventions were being implemented. Some participants observed that the sector leaders only presented the MVP with positive feedback that was intended to protect their positions and that of the MVP. They would not report any dissenting views from the community. Additionally, some of the sector leaders had become unpopular with the residents and this was contributing to decreased participation in MVP programs.

Another key element resulting from the use of the village development committees and sector leaders included the trainings that were instituted by the MVP at the onset of the development programs. The MVP initiated a lot of trainings in the communities where the implementations were taking place and the sector leaders eventually had responsibility for these programs. Eventually, sector leaders became authoritative officers in the MVP leadership structure. Through frequent sector meetings and training sessions, the sector leaders thus became responsible for most of the daily activities of the MVP interventions in the communities. They were also empowered to handle any development-related disputes as they arose in the communities.

The use of village development committees and sector leaders is an example of how the new locus of control in the community has resulted in new sources of power,

knowledge, and agency in the communities. It has become evident that the role of local administrators including the chiefs and village elders has changed to accommodate the MVP's objectives in the communities.

The role of community development within the rural villages is part of the formal function of the Chief's Act. Chiefs are required to coordinate development efforts including providing information and mobilizing their communities to adopt new policies from the government of Kenya. The MVP project appeared to have had an impact on the local leadership structure as was observed by the participants in the study. The declining role of the local chiefs in sustaining community barazas was the major observation that contributed to the argument that local administrators had lost their effectiveness in the community. Barazas are key forums in the communities that served the important role of mobilizing the communities as needed. Barazas are different from sector meetings because they were organized by the local chiefs and would address the common needs of the community. Sector meetings, on the other hand were focused on implementing the MVP interventions. There were few opportunities to raise other community issues in sector meetings. The participants took issue with the frequency at which the sector meetings were held, which they felt were burdensome. This observation could be explained by looking at the historical development of the institution of the chief in Kenya.

The institutions of village chiefs emerged as viable units during the colonial days when the British sought to exert their dominant policies and change in Kenya. The chiefs were part of the indigenous systems of administration and so the British had to conform

to the prevailing cultural forms of administration in order to co-exist with these societies (Ochwada, 2007). Currently, chiefs and their assistants are still government of Kenya appointees and a crucial arm of the provincial administration, which was adopted from the colonial mode of administration. They also participate in various activities such as environmental protection programs and are responsible for coordinating all government of Kenya activities in their areas of jurisdiction. Chiefs and their assistants facilitate development committees by availing the regional development plans and in turn providing feedback to the government. However, they don't administer funds for development but can help distribute relief resources during a crisis such as hunger, flooding, or any other natural disaster.

The perceived shift in power and influence from the local chiefs and barazas to MVP's development committees and sector heads highlights some of existing challenges that extra-local development agencies grapple with in the rural development landscape. As a rural community, there is the tendency to continue doing things the old way or relying on local knowledge while the MVP or similar development agencies focus on implementing development in sync with their own development objectives and frameworks. As a rural community, there is the tendency to propagate traditional practices and approach to development. The MVP is keen on implementing what is considered to be universal best practices of community development that are modern.

At stake were cultural sources of resources and information regarding the needs of community in the community. The preference for local leaders is vested on the view that such local institutions appear more embedded in the community than donor

programs which align to the objectives of the program and are less embedded in the community. This provides valuable lessons to development agencies about the locus of control in such settings and also where to focus when seeking engagement with local communities. As the study pointed out, these are the institutions with powers that have significant influence on personal networks in the community. To development practitioners, they act as crucial entry points to the local communities when new programs are sought.

It also points to the power and influence of local knowledge in rural communities and how it shapes perceptions of engaging in development work with extra local relationships. Development agencies willing to working with rural communities thus have to make provisions for such powerful and influential institutions in the communities even though a need for external connections exists for development to be realized.

Whereas overcoming such challenges is crucial to the successes of MVP programs, the trainings have proved that such challenges can be overcome, when there is good will by the community. However, as the study pointed out, sustaining new structures of development similar to the MVP development committees remains a challenge in the absence of continued relationship between the new structures and the development agency. This is due to the fact that such establishments would require additional resources to sustain them and their affiliated programs which the local communities cannot do on their own (Botchway, 2001; Bowen, 2007; Essama-Nssah, 2004).

A total of eighteen key informants spoke about the value of community barazas and expressed the perception that these vital meetings were losing their place in the community. In the health sector there were seven while in agriculture sector there were eleven key informants who spoke about the barazas. Their gender included three females and eight males in agriculture while in health it was three females and four males respectively. There were some variations in the responses based on sector and age. Age differences between the sector participants in the health sector and the agriculture sector may account for why there were fewer people in the health sector concerned about the fading influence of the barazas. The overall average age for all health key informants was 46.86 years while the overall average age for agriculture informants was 63.56 years.

Comparing the responses, it was evident that the health sector respondents were younger than those in agriculture sector. This could be attributed to the fact those who served as community health workers were younger. In the agriculture, it appeared that the older members of the community, most of whom were more resident, preferred to be engaged on their farms and in agricultural production. It follows that the older members were more likely to prefer attending barazas compared to the younger members who may be more open to other sources of meeting where they may have more influence.

The younger key informants in the health sector perceived themselves as being less interested in barazas as the main source of community meetings. As community health workers, and those responsible for door-to-door health campaigns of the MVP,

they felt that barazas were only useful in recruiting the community members when needed to disseminate the outreach programs in the community. Based on the nature of their duties as community health workers, they were required to be mobile in order to attend trainings and engage in the door-to-door health outreach activities. Increased mobility also exposed them to additional sources of information and communication with leaders and the MVP instead of just relying on barazas.

There was also the perception that that barazas were serving individual needs of clan leaders. This was in reference to the issue of using community elders to resolve community disputes. According to an informant, the dominant clans always prevailed when such issues arose during community meetings and such a practice appeared distasteful to the younger members in the community.

On the other hand, the responses by key informants from both health and agriculture sectors above 50 years of age seemed to differ from those of younger informants. These informants perceived barazas as vital forums for addressing issues affecting the community and lending a voice for the community to raise their concerns freely. This was due to the fact that, during barazas, the participants felt more engaged and free to criticize some of the practices in their community and also take part in mitigating village disputes. Consequently, these are the community members who felt a void when the barazas became infrequent. They argued that Sauri was an expansive rural community where barazas played a major role in highlighting things as they happened.

For barazas to function effectively, the key informants felt local chiefs and their assistants needed commitment to their duty and the community that they represented. Dispute resolution is a major component of barazas and in line with the cultural traits, local elders often plays a role in such disputes in the community. Accordingly, they viewed the barazas as the forum for to participate in community development by helping resolve disputes in their areas.

The older key informants perceived their local chiefs and assistants as having neglected the commitment to barazas in Sauri communities. Despite being government of Kenya appointees at the local level, the key informants felt that the chiefs also played a crucial role as leaders who the community ascribed special recognition. Amongst the older informants, it was the perception that this important leadership position in the community was being obscured by the MVP leaders who were overlooking and bypassing the role and duty of village chiefs thereby initiating alternative sources of authority and information in the form of sector leaders.

However, the MVP was acknowledged as having been aggressive in initiating the sector meetings in communities, which had been used to disseminate the interventions in the communities. Based on the responses of older key informants, there was also an indication that the older members in the communities attended barazas with the expectation that the MVP or another agency would be distributing resources freely. The older generations have a proclivity for community meetings of this kind. Whereas these meetings had contributed to the acceptance of the MVP programs, the older key

informants felt that the MVP meetings had become burdensome because they were so frequent.

It was also evident that by participating in MVP meetings the participants had been empowered and the need for having accountable leadership had become manifest. In contrast, Kenyans are known to be tolerant towards failing political leadership yet they wanted to hold the MVP accountable for failed promises.

Network empowerment by the MVP programs. Empowerment has become the organizing concept behind development programs, discourses, and policies. Empowerment occurs when resources and new knowledge are acquired and also through increased participation in collective action (Essama-Nssah, 2004). According to Narayan (2002), poor societies become empowered when they are able to “participate, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold institutions accountable” (p.14). Participation confers a feeling of interconnectedness and a sense of belonging which results in a level of commitment and cooperation (Wilson, 1996). Participation by citizens is essential to poverty eradication and development agencies because it helps to build a strong consensus and commitment, which are required for sustaining development programs. This is what leads to new programs and the use of new services to be adopted (Bowen, 2007).

The overall goal of the MVP is to adapt global goals to local conditions based on increased local participation (Konecky & Palm, 2008). According to Konecky and Palm (2008), rural development programs in the past “...hindered their potential for success when local stakeholders did not participate adequately in the development process.” (p.

4). Consequently, using a community-based approach, the Millennium Villages Project aims to facilitate the achievement of the MDGs using priorities recommended by the United Nations Millennium Project. This approach embodies the principles of participation, equity, social and gender inclusion, and local stakeholders' ownership of the decision-making and development process.

Empowerment is another crucial aspect that has impacted networking in the communities. The idea of working with community groups and village development committees seems to have empowered the community to take charge of development issues. Prior to the MVP's intervention, most groups were informal and focused on welfare matters. However, the MVP helped popularize groups by introducing community interest groups. Both agricultural and health groups were found to have revitalized how the communities perceived groups and community development. Participation in community development groups could be further attributed to the improved level of collective action in the community.

The MVP's approach of using groups further contributed to enhancing mobilization of the community to participate in development programs. Local MVP interest groups facilitated connections between personal networks and the MVP program as people joined groups to pool their interests, access resources, information, and training. In agriculture, interest groups included tomato growers, onion growers, poultry keepers, and fish farmers among others. In health, the main group was the community health workers, which worked under the village health council. Leaders of communities, groups, sectors, and the MVP were perceived to play a major role in

influencing personal networking. Among key informants from agriculture and health, village elders and chiefs were considered the most influential leaders while MVP sector leaders were viewed as obstacles to networking because most of them came from other communities.

According to Craig and Porter (1997) and Eversole (2010) the perception, preference, and acceptance of local leaders in the community embodies the local knowledge, which the communities have developed over the years. This is knowledge that has been accrued through connections and interrelationships over long periods, which enables them to understand their local problems much better compared to development experts akin to the MVP's practices. The local leaders have a more permanent presence and their relationships with the residents are more beneficial because most of the changes they are affiliated with rarely result in frictions. The MVP sector leaders portray what the authors referred to as the expert knowledge which sets out to promote empowerment but ends up as a top-down process because they neglect the input of local knowledge and institutions.

For long-term sustainability of the MVP programs, embracing such local institutions is paramount because they influence mobilization and membership to personal and community networks. As the study found out, local residents trust such institutions more than any other because they perceive them to be their own whereas other development agencies only serve the objectives of their programs. This is the case with the MVP.

A look at the way the community was able to adopt the new approach to development further sustains the view that the programs were empowering to the community. The MVP had a diverse pool of agricultural programs. The community was expected to attend the pertinent training sessions and implement the interventions. For instance, agricultural production had been diversified to include tissue culture bananas, fish farming, and dairy and poultry production. These are programs that the community was not actively involved with before the MVP agricultural interventions. In the health sector, the focus on malaria, mother-child health, and HIV-AIDS as the major health needs contributed to the perception that the community had been empowered to mitigate the health challenges.

The women who participated in the study acknowledged that participation in the development projects had empowered them to participate and contribute more in the community's development. For example, most of the community health workers were women and more women had taken up leadership positions on the village development committees. Equally empowering were the connections that resulted from participating in such high profile interventions of a global dimension.

The enormous knowledgebase that the community had acquired points to the empowerment aspect of the MVP. In the health sector, women with less education had been trained to diagnose malaria and administer medication on the spot or refer patients to the health facility. At the community level, it is evident that community esteem had been enhanced because of their participation in the interventions.

Empowerment through the research process. Kenyan development projects are not historically known for being transparent, yet the key informants expressed concern about MVP's lack of transparency. This could have been a function of being included in the research process or the having to deal with an empowered community. Most development projects initiated by the government are known to take exceptionally long periods to complete and become susceptible to abuses and lack of accountability. Demand for transparency is complicated by the fact that resources for rural development are still controlled by the central government through regional offices. Finding the right people to demand answers can be an arduous task. Other projects are often implemented with political interests and so the communities being bound by such interests may not feel comfortable in challenging the government or raising concern for fear of retribution.

There is also a shortage of extension agents and services from the government departments so the rural communities are often deprived of viable forums to regularly express their concerns. Additionally, on a limited number of projects take place in the rural areas and the leaders rarely accept criticisms. On the contrary, the MVP had multiple development projects to be implemented in a short time, which required a prolonged presence and engagement in the community through the services of sector leaders. Therefore, when they found the MVP sector leaders always present, the residents were bound to demand such accountability. On the positive side, extended interaction between the sector leaders and the community also spurred increased awareness about community development projects.

Those who were able to access some of the MVP reports had divergent views about the budget and the amounts reported as invested in the Sauri communities. Sauri has been a target of numerous development interventions in health and agriculture for over fifteen years. The key informants, however, seemed to have been specifically empowered by the MVP programs compared to other agencies that worked in their communities previously.

First, the MVP invested a lot of resources in trainings that provided people with new information and knowledge about community development. This is also intertwined in the MVP's strategy of bypassing government institutions and opting for rural communities that are perceived to be less corrupt. Thus, based on the standards that the MVP set and promised, the residents appeared inclined to hold the MVP to very high standards, including those of transparency. Secondly, there were multiple forums organized and facilitated by the MVP sector leaders where the residents would contribute to development committees, community interest groups, or sector meetings of the MVP. Whereas government extension agents are rare, the MVP had a constant presence in the community and residents would attend sector meetings with the intention of raising concerns about unfulfilled promises or some of the practices that the MVP local leaders engaged.

Ideally, it appeared to signal a break from the normal way of life that most Kenyans are used to in rural areas, that of condoning malpractices in community development. Typically, most development projects in rural areas, whether initiated by the government or other non-governmental agencies are not known to be fully

transparent and most residents have a tendency of tolerating such practices without necessarily demanding accountability and transparency with the transactions involved.

Perhaps, the research process was also empowering to the community as manifested in the responses of the key informants. The key informants appeared free and courageous to point out some of the issues they perceived as lacking transparency.

Disempowerment effects of the MVP interventions. Not all development projects result in empowerment of communities. Schuftan (1996) perceives community empowerment to be a zero-sum game that empowers some and also disempowers others, particularly those who held some power. This is because the same action could be empowering to different local contexts but at other times not. By the same token, Schuftan argues that empowerment is a continuous process which that makes people appreciate, upgrade and use their capacity gain power and better control over their own lives. It is not a product of a single event. Whereas most community driven development help reverse existing power relations and allow poor people to be in direct control of their development assistance, there exists skepticism whether participation really empowers marginalized people (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). The feasibility of scaling up community-based development is often constrained by the difficulty of mimicking success because of the differences in the social-cultural inequalities across poor societies (Mansuri & Rao, 2004). As Botchway (2001) stated, most empowerment programs make holistic references and assumptions of villages and communities as being homogenous. Thus, empowerment that is effective takes time to gradually adapt to the local conditions (Mansuri & Rao, 2004).

Whereas the MVP had endeavored to empower networking in the community, there are also certain practices that were perceived to be disempowering to the networks in the communities. The decision to stop the free supply agricultural farm inputs before the five-year promise elapsed was a major source of discontentment. Others include a farmers' cereal bank project and the dairy project that never materialized despite the community having invested time and finances preparing for the project. In addition, the decision to initiate and implement multiple development programs within a short time under a limited budget further contributes to the disempowerment school of thought.

Apart from directly contributing to declining interest in participation in MVP interventions, too many programs resulted in growing mistrust of the MVP's outcomes and the perception that development agencies are just partners in development whose presence is dictated by the funding cycle. Another issue was the perception that the MVP had locked out other organizations from working in the communities while MVP interventions were still active. To the participants, this monopoly had not served the community well, as they would have wished to continue working with other organizations to mitigate the agricultural and health needs in the community.

The decision to use frequent sector meetings diminished the role of barazas as the preferred choice of networking in the community. It is not possible to attend all the training sessions and still find time to attend a baraza when a need arose. Wrangling within the development committees was another issue that constrained networking in the communities. As it was reported, those appointed or elected to MVP leadership

positions were engaging in wrangling and failing to serve the community. Such wrangles were affecting community projects like the community learning resource center which the community appeared less involved with because of wrangling. It is also a perception that development interventions of the MVP have been used for corrupt purposes. The perception that the MVP is not transparent with the budgeting process is another attribute of disempowerment.

Linking social capital. Linking social capital is an additional form of social capital along with bonding and bridging forms of social capital. Trust and cooperation between members with similar characteristics is known as bonding social capital while the relations that occur between groups with different characteristics is known as bridging social capital (Blakely & Ivory, 2006). An example of linking social capital is the relationship between local government and citizens and health planning authorities. Such vertical ties between institutions of power and citizens empower citizens to confront challenges arising in their societies and secure the needed resources (Blakely & Ivory, 2006; Szreter & Woolcock, 2003). Linking social capital is essential for influencing welfare and well-being in communities that are poor. Linking social capital across agencies of power or representatives of institutions responsible for delivering essential services is a crucial element to improving outcomes in programs such as community health and requires ongoing direct interactions (Szreter & Woolcock, 2003).

According to Poortinga (2011), linking social capital is helpful in expanding and diversifying social networks. A major function of linking social capital from formal institutions includes leveraging resources, information, and ideas (Woolcock, 1998).

Muir (2008) posits that bonding, bridging, and linking social capital improves social relations in the community. Similarly, Ferlander (2007) contended that bridging and linking social ties facilitates access to new external resources and information thereby enhancing people's ability to control and solve their problems. However, linking social capital can also breed social vices such as corruption, nepotism, and intimidation (Szreter & Woolcock, 2003).

The MVP has transformed the approach to community development significantly in various ways. Frequent sector meetings have been used to offer trainings and link people with resources needed for implementing the interventions in the communities. This has helped to improve the poor socio-economic status of the community as it is reflected in improved agricultural production and access to health care facilities in the communities.

Another major facet of linking social is the enormous knowledge base that the community has acquired over the years. Using the networks, the community has been able to leverage resources, information, and ideas needed to improve standards of living in the community. Through increased group membership and participation in development functions, it can be argued that such involvement has improved social relations in the community. For example, the quantitative surveys identified the building of new relationships and enhanced personal relations in the communities as some of the major benefits of the MVP programs. In agriculture sector, improved relations contributed to increased participation, which led to improved agricultural production.

The networks have enhanced relationship with other local government agencies in the community especially connections with the local leaders.

As linking social capital has been found to facilitate access to new sources of information and resources to solve a problem, the same can be said about how the MVP has transformed access to new information in the communities by using sector heads and meetings. The health sector was considered to have won a wider appeal because of the outreach services and the door-to-door approach used by community health workers to disseminate resources for the health sector.

Limitations of the study

There are several limitations that emerged in the course of this study. There are three main factors that limited the generalization of the findings of this study namely the sectors used, access to the desired participants, and financial and time limitations. First, the sample size was relatively small in comparison to most studies of this magnitude. Further, data collection focused on two sectors namely agriculture and health. Most of the key informants were older members of the community while a majority of the data in health came from community health workers. The results could have been different if all the eight sectors that have been part of the MVP interventions namely water and sanitation, energy, infrastructure, education, and environment could have been included in the study. Because of a limited sample size, the findings may not be generalized as a representation of the community or transferred to other sectors.

Also, data collection coincided with the local prime agricultural planting and harvesting seasons in the communities. This limited access to the desired research participants because the community was actively involved in crop planting, cultivation, and later harvesting. Similarly, comprehensive assessment of the community networks was curtailed by the sensitive nature of the MVP project to the community and all those involved with the MVP local leadership team were apprehensive about volunteering information about a project that had been a subject of intense scrutiny from all quarters. Lastly, financial and time limitations confined the scale and scope of the study thus the findings may not be fully representative of the views of the community.

Implications for Practice and Future Research

Overall, while the findings of this study extend our knowledge on the MVP phenomenon and community networks, it is still clear that more detailed studies are still needed. The MVP programs in Sauri have been in existent for less than ten years and so more rigorous studies are yet to be undertaken to determine meaningful trends and relationships within the communities. This is an indicator of the need of additional studies from lessons that have been resulted from by the project.

Most of the available studies exist in the form of baseline and annual reports prepared by the MVP organization. There was no prior research on personal and community networks and this calls for such specialized studies in the future. The study could only include a limited number of research questions, which upon analysis revealed the need to have expanded the questions. Perhaps an expansion of the AOA to include

all the lifeworlds would help elicit more information about the relationships between the MVP and the communities in future. Most studies and reports tend to focus on the positive impacts of such a project but few on the mistakes that MVP portends in Sauri to Sauri. Future studies on some of the errors in the MVP approach could provide valuable lessons for all those involved in international development policy.

Similarly, there appears to be no clear exit strategy by the MVP against a backdrop of numerous interventions, which begs the question of sustainability beyond the funding frame 2015. This presents the policy makers with valuable lessons about the ramifications time-bound development approaches on local communities.

Sociological insights. In trying to understand the causes of social problems, sociologists often focus on the patterns of human interactions, consequences, and changes that result from those interactions. Similarly, while addressing development issues, the focus is often on the interaction between micro and macro elements of development, which include project design and implementation, community involvement, and the ramifications of policy designs on societies at the center of an intervention program.

This study is an example of a sociological inquiry into a development project that exhibits both micro and macro dimensions. At the micro level are the local communities and actors that have been targets of the MVP interventions while the MVP and its affiliated international agencies represent the macro level. The main macro elements are the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that the MVP has been attempting to implement in the local communities in Sauri.

The findings of this study yield interesting lessons about the intricate interactions and the relationships that have taken place between the MVP and local communities. By focusing on the relationships and the interaction between the MVP and the local communities, social scientists would help inform policy makers about how universal development policies such as the MVP transform rural communities. The MVP strategy for rural development is still a new scheme. The consequences and changes that result from interactions with societies are yet to be understood. For the period the interventions have been in place, there have been changes in perceptions about sources of community resources, information, and knowledge for community development.

These changes have shaped and reshaped both the community and the development professionals involved with the MVP. This raises the important question of what constitutes the best practices for empowering rural communities while at the same time trying to meet the global objectives of the MVP. While this relationship seems to have yielded some benefits for the local communities in terms of knowledge and access to health services, the main challenge facing the community and the MVP professionals has to do with sustaining these changes beyond the 2015 when funding ends.

Another concern to social scientists lies in the task of sustaining the interventions and the relationship between the MVP and the local communities after the 2015 deadline. It is a development project with multiple stakeholders and interests at stake unless a clear exit strategy has been instituted by the MVP. The 'big picture' here includes the potential for conflicts that could arise if the community is unable to

sustain the interventions into the future despite having invested heavily in the programs during the time the MVP has been implementing interventions in their community. Sustaining these global policies while empowering local communities is a prime challenge facing the MVP.

Empowerment has been one of the central objectives of the MVP, which sought to empower the local communities to achieve the MDGs and ultimately their own development needs. Agriculture and health sectors have revealed interesting traits of what it takes to empower a rural community in agricultural production and access to basic health care services. The approach of empowerment using a multiple sector approach highlights the challenges the MDGs as a framework for development has to contend with. The challenge lies in localizing development policies that are universal and global in their design, which subjects them to the problem of reconciling the local and the global needs.

Other insights about the MVP that were not related to the research design. During data collection, the MVP yielded several insights that were not necessarily part of the research design for this study but which are useful to this analysis. These included the construction of a community learning resource center, setting up a community cereal bank, Kalanyo Youth Group involvement in the community, ‘telemedicine’ or the use of mobile telephones in rural health, introduction of a school feeding program, failure to integrate local churches and universities, and lack of recognition or publicity beyond the project boundaries.

Most rural communities have a deficiency of social amenities where meaningful community events could be hosted. The trend in many rural communities has been to meet under a tree or on open ground where they are subject to interruptions from the weather or public. Meeting under such conditions can affect the quality of participation in community events. Thus the decision by the MVP to construct community learning resource centers in the cluster villages is a noble idea that will transform how the communities participate in social events. Other rural communities could learn from Sauri and work with their leaders and development agencies to initiate these kinds of amenities in their communities.

Agricultural production and attempts to reverse food insecurity in rural areas has always been derailed by lack of proper storage facilities for harvested grains especially maize which is a staple food in Kenya. As a result, most rural farmers lose a significant part of their harvest due to geographic isolation, which makes it hard to access grain storage facilities. If not sold at cheap prices, the grain is often attacked by vermin or stolen which makes it hard to store grain for future use. The cereal bank project for the community was a timely intervention by the MVP that should be promoted in other communities experiencing similar challenges. If the cereal bank idea is supported by the government and the local communities, it has the potential of helping address food security in the region.

The use of mobile phones through the telemedicine program is an additional measure that the MVP instituted in tackling the health challenges in the rural areas. Most people in Kenya have access to a cellphone and the community health workers in

the MVP clusters were given cellphones and testing kits and collected information, which they relayed via text messages. They help speed up the registration of child births, facilitated the accurate diagnosis of diseases such as malaria and HIV AIDS, and improved the provision of family planning and immunization services for mothers and children below five years of age. This is an example of how to leverage technology and access to health care in the rural areas. It is a program that can be easily expanded to other areas since many rural residents have mobile phones and are in need of health care. The telemedicine program has also facilitated information access by the agencies interested in designing the viable community health programs. Other remote areas in the region can learn from this kind of invention and be able to accord their residents information needed in addressing the health challenges of their communities.

One area that the MVP neglected in the use of technology is the use of computers at the Sauri Health Center. Most of the records were still handwritten and existed in piles of files in an office at the Health Center. This exposed health information of patients to various risks such as fire, theft, or loss. It would be helpful if a computer or some other electronic record keeping process was used at the facility to help in such purposes.

During interaction with the community, there was a youth group that was identified as having excelled in the community. Though not affiliated with the MVP, Kalanyo Youth Group has been recruiting members, establishing key outreach programs, and engaging in income-generating activities that appealed to the youth in the area. As a result, they had grown to be the most popular group in the area to a level that gave

them recognition by regional leaders who took pride in the group and even the MVP was partnering with Kalanyo Youth Group on some youth health programs given the recognition in the community, it offers a good model of how to initiate youth groups in the rural areas.

The school feeding program in the community is also another interesting feature of the MVP in the Sauri where there is a partnership between the MVP, parents, and teachers to produce food for the schools in the MVP cluster. The MVP introduced the school feeding program in order to boost education standards which were being affected in part due to poverty and lack of the ability by most families to provide elementary school children with lunch. There have been reports of improved performance at the schools that participated in the school feeding program because of the lunch program at school. This is a demonstration of how partnership with donor agencies, communities, and local leaders can help address food security and education standards in the communities. It also provides a stimulus for the youth to engage in community gardens and learn about the value of nutrition and gardening processes. The Sauri case demonstrates that the school feeding program can be adapted to other rural schools in Kenya.

The lack of integration of local churches and universities in the project was also evident. Western Kenya has long a history of working with church missions to initiate agricultural, education, and health institutions for a long a time. The Church of God, Seventh Day Adventist, and Catholic Church are some of the prominent religious institutions that continue to contribute to community development in the region.

Whereas the church institutions play an important role in the region, it was evident that they have not been actively involved in the MVPs programs despite having similar goals of development for their congregation. A similar monopoly extends to Columbia University where most of the MVP programs and Jeffrey Sachs and the Earth Institute are based. There have not been enough attempts to recruit local Kenyan universities in the region to help design homegrown solutions for the communities. Maseno University, Moi University, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology are some of the leading higher education institutions in the region, which could provide extension support to the MVP programs. It is likely the impact and sustainability of the project would be greater if the churches and higher education institutions of education were included in the MVP partnership as a way of localizing the interventions.

The Sauri MVP gained world attention in 2004 as the first Millennium Village established to help implement the MDGs. Since then, the village has hosted people from all walks of life and from all over the world. However, it was also evident that the project and its interventions were not recognized beyond the communities in which the interventions were taking place. It appears the MVP in conjunction with the government of Kenya has not done enough to publicize the programs in the region despite having operated in the region for close to a decade now. There was evidence of several international media activities and visit by high profile personalities interested in their own interests. It is not clear why the local media has not done enough to promote the programs for Kenyans to learn about the MVP. The risk is that by 2015, when the MVP

funding expires, most of the region may not be aware about the interventions which will complicate any attempts to scale the programs to other areas.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, several conclusions regarding the impact of the MVP on networking in the communities can be underscored. This includes the shift in locus of control, cultural dimensions of community development, fitting global into the local, best approaches to community development, and sustaining community development on a time-line.

Prior to the arrival of the MVP programs networking within the communities was primarily centered on the institution of the local chiefs, assistant chiefs, and village elders. Barazas were the common mode of personal and community networking in the communities, which the residents attended for dispute arbitration or accessing local government of Kenya policies for development at the grassroots. This was still the preferred choice for information access and community meetings. This form of control had shifted significantly when the MVP introduced a new structure of leadership, which had the effect of replacing the conventional barazas. The use of development committees, sector leaders, and community groups were part of the transformations that provided new structures for accessing information, resources, and even conducting community meetings. Ultimately, the MVP structures of leadership became the new centers of power and influence in matters of community development in the Sauri MVP communities. It remains to be seen whether or not these structures are sustainable.

Once the funding for the MVP ends in 2015 there will likely be further changes in structure. Many of the sector leaders were hired from communities outside the MVP area. Once the funding is complete it is not likely they will have as much influence in the MVP communities unless continued funding for their positions is secured. In fact, most will likely move on since they have few direct ties to the community. The sector leaders are the driving force behind the MVP programs so without them power structures will likely be disrupted and shift again. Power structures may revert back to the more traditional leadership positions and the barazas may reemerge or some other meeting structure may develop. Movement back to the barazas is possible because most people who live in the rural areas are the older generations who prefer this mode of community meetings.

Another related aspect that emerged from the study is the conflict between the cultural dimensions of doing community development and modern ways. This is particularly true about the desire to maintain barazas as the mode of community meetings and also as sources of community development resources. As a typical rural community, culture played a major role in the community perspectives towards development. As the study reported, the MVP has had to contend with issues related to attitude change and an expectation that all resources for the programs would be provided free of charge. Some of these attitudes and expectations were related to the local culture of doing development work in the community. For example, in agriculture, not all people had embraced the modern farming techniques that the MVP had initiated while in health there are those who still believed in traditional medicine. Similarly, there

was the expectation that participation in the MVP programs would result in direct personal benefits.

Fitting global development with the local needs was another important derivative of this study. One of the most pressing challenges facing the Millennium Development Goals as a development framework is being able to translate the global goals to specific targets and objects that can be adapted with ease (Hayman, 2007). Cabral, Farrington, and Ludi (2006) identify similarities between the MVP approach with past development initiatives that failed to sustain rural development. These models of development are guided by the global notion that participation and empowerment result in sustainability although community involvement as a required component of sustaining projects is not necessarily the case (Botchway, 2001).

Botchway (2001) further observes that whereas most of the development programs in Africa are intended to promote autonomy and self-reliance, the local resources are not sufficient to meet the local needs required to sustain such programs. For instance Sauri communities have had an involvement with international aid groups that spans over 15 years prior to the MVP interventions being introduced yet the development needs in these communities still persist (Clemens & Demobyne, 2010).

It is such anomalies that manifest in the MVP efforts of establishing a bottom-up approach of achieving the MDGs while conferring the development process to local ownership (Hayman, 2007). Currently, what constitutes a true bottom-up approach is still a matter of contention because the MVP relies on pre-conceived definitions of solutions and solutions for the communities (Carr, 2008). According to Clemens, Kenny,

and Moss, (2004) there is a limit to which donor assistance can contribute to development especially when the cost of implementing the MDGs is considered. Even as the 2015 deadline for meeting the MVP targets approaches, there is a possibility that most countries may not meet the deadlines partly due to the cost of the interventions.

In order to synchronize global efforts with local, Hayman (2007) reiterates the need for making a distinction between the priorities of host and donor countries regarding viable priorities, strategies, and potential conflicts between global and local efforts.

The MVP, which follows a universally prescribed framework for community development has thus revealed certain shortcomings in its implementation. The main one related to allocation of funds needed to meet the financial costs of the programs to the communities. Whereas the aim of MVP is to empower the local communities to be in charge of their development needs, the challenge of reconciling the diverse needs with limited funds was evident.

This brings in the issue of best practices for implementing community development plans with a universal dimension. The MVP programs resulted in certain positive outcomes to the community such as improved knowledge, agricultural production, and access to basic health care but there was no clear definition of the best practices for implementing all the new programs. This was a problem because it resulted in new programs and knowledge that will require prolonged duration and even additional resources to be successfully adopted by the community. The health and

agricultural programs provide an impression of how the programs could be overwhelming to implement against the MVP's timeline.

Another issue that affected networking in the communities was the fact that the MVP interventions were being implemented on a timetable. The year 2015 is when funding ends and the communities are expected to be fully empowered to sustain the programs initiated by the MVP. The lack of a clear exit strategy as the deadline approaches further served to decrease trust in the outcomes of the MVP and ultimately had a bearing on personal and community networks.

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APPENDIX A: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

PERSONAL NETWORKS (INDIVIDUAL LEVEL)

A. WHAT ARE THE EXISTING PERSONAL NETWORKS IN SAURI MVP COMMUNITIES?

1. What do you think are the main resources available in this community?

- i. Infrastructure
- ii. Agriculture
- iii. Health
- iv. Other _____

2. How do you (individuals) access these resources?

3. What do you think are the primary obstacles or challenges facing the community?

- i. Environmental
- ii. Geographic
- iii. Ethnic tensions
- iv. Poor markets
- v. Other _____

b. Can you describe an experience where you felt like you were denied

access to community resources and/or services?

4. What are some of formal groups, associations, and networks in this community?

a. What are some of their functions? _____

5. What are some of the informal groups, associations, and networks in this community? What are some of their functions?
6. How do people come together to address issues?
 - i. Religious organizations?
 - ii. Ethnicity
 - iii. Development projects
 - iv. Gender-based associations
 - v. Other_____
7. How are people mobilized in the community?
 - a. Opinion leaders
 - b. Group leaders
 - c. Government Leader
 - d. Other_____
8. Who plays a leadership or mobilizing role in the groups or networks?
 - a. Who are the leaders in the groups you associate with?
- B. WHAT ARE THE CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PERSONAL NETWORKS AND THE MVP?
9. What networks or groups do people typically rely on to resolve issues of daily life?
10. What groups, individuals, or networks do people feel morally or socially obligated to assist?
11. How often do you attend group meetings?
12. Which institutions are trusted among individuals in this community?

- a. national
- b. governance
- c. International
- d. Other_____

13. To what extent do community members collaborate with one another to meet community needs?

14. What kinds of constraints limit peoples' ability or willingness to work together

- a. Lack of time
- b. Lack of trust
- c. Confidence in outcomes
- d. Suspicion toward the mobilizers
- e. Other_____

C. HOW HAVE PERSONAL NETWORKS CHANGED SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE MVP?

15. What is the recent source or access to information in the community?

16. Have new groups recently begun in the community?

17. What led to their formation?

18. Who do they interact with?

19. How different are they from the ones that existed before?

20. Which institution(s) would you say has led to this change?

- i. Local organizations
- ii. National organizations

- iii. International (UN) organizations
 - iv. Other _____
21. Do they facilitate or constrict people's ability to work together?
 22. Are there any patterns of mistrust and suspicion for working with foreigners?
 23. Have cultural, social, or community traditions of mutual assistance, cooperation, and collective action changed in the past five years?
 24. Describe any recent examples of people working together for the common good that have taken place in the community (or a segment of the community).
 25. Where do people local get information? (Sources and channels)
 26. What information is available through different networks?
 27. To what extent can members of a community hold public or private institutions and officials accountable for their actions?
 28. Which groups or segments of the community have the greatest influence over public institutions?
 29. What is the source of influence of these groups (e.g., group size, ability to mobilize members or expand member base, connections to power elite, economic importance)?

APPENDIX B: QUANTITATIVE INSTRUMENT

MVP Perception

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements.

We would like to know the **BENEFITS** or **DRAWBACKS** that have arisen by participating in MVP programs.

Perceived benefits:

Perceived Benefits	Worse 1	2	No Change 3	4	Better 5
Ability to work with outsiders					
Capacity to serve the community					
Access to resources					
Acquisition of new knowledge and skills					
Better use of community's resources					
Building new relationships					
Enhanced influence in the community					
Enhanced personal relations					
Other					

Perceived Drawbacks

Perceived Drawbacks	No Drawback 1	2	Some Drawback 3	4	Serious Drawback 5
Takes too much resources (e.g. time)					
Loss of control over decision-making					
Strained relations in the communities					
Difficulty working with outsiders					
Less benefits to the community					
Other					

Community participation or involvement in development programs

Generally, how would you describe your level of PAST involvement in community development programs?

- 1 Not at all
- 2
- 3 Somewhat active
- 4
- 5 Very active

Generally, how would you describe your CURRENT level of involvement in community development programs in Sauri?

- 1 Not at all
- 2
- 3 Somewhat active
- 4
- 5 Very active

How interested are you in participating in FUTURE community development programs?

- 1 Not at all
- 2
- 3 Somewhat interested
- 4
- 5 Very interested

Characteristics of Relations

Listed below are leaders/individuals/organizations believed to be actively involved in some way with the MVP programs in Sauri. We would like to know your involvement with them and their projects in these communities.

Leaders/Individuals/Organizations	Hostile 1	2	Not Involved 3	4	A lot of involve ment 5
MVP Team Leader					
Chief					
Assistant					
Village Elder					
NGO (_____)					
District Commissioner					
Constituency Development Fund Officer					
Women Leader					
Health Sector Leader					
Agricultural Sector Leader					
Other (e.g. Church Minister)					

Shape of the Network

For each of the people on the list:

How often do you **WORK** with them? (e.g. face to face meetings, emails, phone conversations)

How often do you **SOCIALIZE** with them? (e.g. eat lunch together/non-work conversations/attended a social gathering together – funeral/church/wedding/child-naming/political rally).

Individual/Organization	WORK Frequency	SOCIALIZATION Frequency
	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Never <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Every year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 1-2 times a year <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Every month <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Every Week	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 Never <input type="checkbox"/> 2 Every year <input type="checkbox"/> 3 1-2 times a year <input type="checkbox"/> 4 Every month <input type="checkbox"/> 5 Every Week
MVP Team Leader		
Chief (Sauri Location)		
Assistant Chief		
Village elder		
NGO (____)		
District Commissioner		
CDF Officer		
Women Leader		
Health Sector leader		

Agriculture Sector Leader		
Other (e.g. Church Minister)		

Information Network

Please indicate from the list, your source of information for community development programs in Sauri.

Information Network

Source of information	Frequency				
	Never 1	Every year 2	1-2 times a year 3	Every month	Every week 4
None					
Phone					
Community Meeting (Baraza)					
Other _____					

Communication Network

Mode of communication	Frequency				
	Never 1	Every year 2	1-2 times a year 3	Every month	Every week 4
Face to face meeting					
Phone					
Community Meeting (Baraza)					
Other _____					

When you have a problem, who are the people you are likely to discuss the problem with?

Who _____

How well do you know them? _____

1 Not very well

2

3

- 4
- 5 Extremely well

When you need help with a problem, who are the people you go to for help? How well do you know them?

Who _____

How well do you know them? _____

- 1 Not very well
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extremely well

Are there any people/groups that come to you for help (e.g. funds, material resources, projects).

Who _____

How well do you know them? _____

- 1 Not very well
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 Extremely well

How satisfied are you as a member of this community?

- 1 Not at all
- 2
- 3 Neither satisfied or dissatisfied
- 4
- 5 Extremely satisfied

Does your group work or interact with other groups with similar goals IN the village/neighborhood? (Y/N)

- 1 No
- 2 Rarely
- 3 Yes, occasionally
- 4 Yes, frequently
- 5 Yes, very frequently

Does your group work or interact with other groups with similar goals OUTSIDE the village/neighborhood? (Y/N)

- 1 No
- 2 Rarely
- 3 Yes, occasionally
- 4 Yes, frequently
- 5 Yes, very frequently

If a community project does not directly benefit you, but has benefits for many others in the village/neighborhood, would you contribute time or money to the project?

- 1 Will not contribute time
- 2 Will not contribute money
- 3 Will contribute time
- 4 Will contribute money
- 5 Other _____

When there is a decision to be made in the group, how does this usually come about?

- 1 Decision is imposed from outside
- 2 The leader decides and informs the other group members
- 3 The leader asks group members what they think and then decides
- 4 The group members hold a discussion and decide together

5 Other (specify _____)

What is the most important source of expertise or advice which this group receives?

- 1 From within the membership
- 2 From other sources within the community
- 3 From sources outside the community
- 4 Don't Know
- 5 Other_____

In the past 12 months, have you worked with others in your village/neighborhood to do something for the benefit of the community?

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

What proportion of people in this community contribute time or money toward common development goals (e.g. health or agriculture project)?

- 1 Everyone
- 2 More than half
- 3 About half
- 4 Less than half
- 5 No one

Compared to five years ago*, do members of this community participate in more or fewer groups or organizations? (* the time that the MVP programs began in this community)

- 1 Yes
- 2 No

In the past five years*, has membership in your group declined, remained the same, or increased?

- 1 Declined
- 2 Remained same
- 3 Increased

3 Don't Know

4 Other _____

How well do people in your village/neighborhood help each other out these days?

1 Always helping

2 Helping most of the time

3 Helping sometimes

4 Rarely helping

5 Never helping

If there was a (health/agriculture) problem in this community, how likely is it that people will cooperate to try to solve the problem?

1 Very likely

2 Somewhat likely

3 Neither likely or unlikely

4 Somewhat unlikely

5 Very unlikely

How much control do you feel you have in making decisions that affect your everyday activities? Do you have...

1 No control

2 Control over very few decisions

3 Control over some decisions

4 Control over most decisions

5 Control over all decisions

APPENDIX C: AGRICULTURE PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Pseudonym	Village	Gender	Age	Profile
ARAN	Yala	Male	52	Has a good vegetable farm where he tries to implement some of the trainings gained. Very active in his local church activities.
AYIE	Nyamninia A	Female	61	Also involved with youth group activities. She is a beneficiary of a special goat project that is aimed at helping HIV-AIDS patients.
ABANG	Madiri	Male	68	Grows corn and beans on his farm. Considers himself a spiritual/cultural leader in the community.
DADIE	Sauri A	Male	69	Also participates in agro-forestry programs in the community. Also keen on tissue-cultured fruits especially the mangoes which he sells the seedlings in the community. He also works with the MVP environment committee.
GOCHI	Sauri A	Male	71	Very knowledgeable about the agricultural groups that were initiated by the MVP. He is also an active in local political party activities.
HAKED	Sauri B	Male	60	Also active in the agriculture committee for the village.
JOUM	Sauri A	Male	53	He is a retired communications engineer. One of the few farmers who have excelled in fish farming. Has several fish ponds on his property.
JOGO	Sauri A	Male	68	He is also the chair of the community agriculture committee. Also actively involved in agriculture cooperative activities.
MOKU	Yala	Female	56	She grows corn on her property.

				Grateful for the training that enabled them to eradicate notorious weeds from their farms.
MAGIN	Kosoro	Female	61	Very interested in dairy and poultry projects. Participated in the establishment of the cereal bank project.
MORIW	Luero	Female	67	She is a retired elementary school teacher and committed to her local church. Also involved with MVP educational activities.
MOKE	Sauri B	Female	74	Has been working with various NGO in the area for a long time. Despite her limited education, she was the elected the inaugural chair of the MVP executive committee.
SOTO	Luero	Male	67	A retired chair of the agriculture committee in the committee. Very active on the farm
SOUG	Kosoro	Male	86	A very active farmer who is also a retired civil servant. Very knowledgeable on the farm but is not involved in MVP leadership.
WOGU	Madiri	Female	52	An active farmer who grows corn, beans, and bananas. Also the chair of Water and Sanitation committee. Her family donated the property for the construction of Sauri Health Clinic. Appreciates the trainings by the MVP which enabled her to become a leader of a development committee.

APPENDIX D: HEALTH PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Pseudonym	Village	Gender	Age	Profile
<i>CEOTI</i>	Sauri	Female	32	Community Health Worker Helps in mobilizing other community health workers at the health center.
<i>DASIB</i>	Sauri A	Male	69	A member of the Village Health committee Uses his spiritual convictions to approach issues in the community.
<i>FAGIN</i>	Kosoro	Female	50	A Community Health Worker who serves two communities.
<i>IRONYA</i>	Nyamninia B	Female	39	Community Health Worker and a mother of five. Very active in the community health programs.
<i>IGWAR</i>	Yala B	Male	48	Village Health committee. Also serves a community health worker especially in targeting males.
<i>JOLUO</i>	Anyiko	Male	34	Community Health Worker. Has worked with several NGOs in the region and seems very knowledgeable with the MVP health programs.
<i>JAMOL</i>	Sauri A	Female	51	Community Health Worker. Has limited education but appreciates the MVP trainings in health.
<i>JOTWE</i>	Luero	Female	62	Community Health Worker. Very knowledgeable in community health issues having worked with several NGOs including CDC.
<i>JAKIN</i>	Kosoro Yala Town	Female	53	Community Health Worker
<i>JATIE</i>	Anyiko	Female	33	Community Health Worker
<i>LISHI</i>	Sauri B	Female	52	Community Health Worker
<i>RAMBA</i>	Luero	Female	55	Head, health sector
<i>RONGE</i>	Kosoro	Female	27	Village Health committee
<i>SOGUT</i>	Madiri	Male	66	Community Health Worker
<i>SOKUM</i>	Kosoro	Male	32	Retired CHW

APPENDIX E: QUANTITATIVE SURVEY PARTICIPANT PROFILES

Participant Pseudonym	Village	Gender	Age	Profile
AOME	Kosoro	Female	82	Herbalist/TBA
GOYOM	Sauri	Male	45	Spiritual Leader
GOGIN	Kosoro	Male	41	Village Elder
HOMOL	Nyamninia A	Male		Retired Chief Community Development Committee Member
INYAG	Sauri A	Male	55	Village Elder
IKIPYE	Yala	Male	38	District Officer
JOGON	Sauri B	Male	63	Agriculture Sector Leader
MONAND	Luero	Male	53	Village Elder Cooperative Member
MWASON	Nyamninia B	Female	44	Women Leader Executive Committee Chair
NOMOND	Yala A	Male		Youth Leader
PAMUSU	Luero	Male	34	Opinion Leader Community Health worker
RAMBA	Luero	Female	55	Health Sector Leader Community Health worker
WOLUO	Yala	Female	40	Community Health Worker

VITA

Billystrom A. Jivetti was born in Mahanga Village, near Kaimosi, a town founded by Friends Quaker Missionaries. He attended Friends Primary School Kaimosi and Musingu High School in western Kenya.

In 1996, he joined Kenyatta University in Nairobi and graduated in 1999 with a degree in biology focusing in animal ecology.

In 2002, he joined Miami University in Ohio and graduated in 2005 with a Master of Environmental Science. It was while on a research assignment in a Kwale, one of Kenya's poor districts near the coastal of Mombasa in 2004 that Jivetti became interested in the human dimensions of development.

In 2006, he enrolled in the School of International Studies at Oklahoma State University and graduated in 2007 with a Master of Science in international trade and development.

With the desire to work with communities, Jivetti enrolled in doctoral studies in Rural Sociology in January 2008 at the University of Missouri-Columbia, Missouri, USA and completed his PhD degree in 2012 in the focus area of Community Studies.