

# **IMPACT OF VILLAGE SAVINGS AND LOANS SCHEMES ON WELL BEING OF ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN IN KISUMU WEST DISTRICT, KENYA.**

**Degree Programme:** [MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT](#) [1]

**Student Names:** STEPHEN OKELLO OGUWA A

**Student Registration Number:** L50/62303/2011

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Savings-led and community managed approaches have been seen as effective ways of extending financial services to the low income households and in some situations acting as substitute for the more ambitious Microfinance institutions. One such approach is the Village Savings and Loans Schemes, an approach developed by CARE in Niger which builds on a Rotational Savings and Credit Accumulation model commonly used by women in many rural communities. This study sought to explore the impact of Village Savings and Loans Schemes on the wellbeing of Orphans and Vulnerable children in Kisumu West District of Kisumu County - Kenya. The study looked at the various components of Village Savings and Loans Schemes and how these affect the wellbeing of Orphans and Vulnerable Children. The study assumed that improved status of an Orphans and Vulnerable Children depends on economic and socio political empowerment resulting from access to both financial and non financial services provided by Village Savings and Loans schemes. The study adopted a descriptive survey design with quantitative and qualitative approaches to data collection. Using probability and non-probability sampling techniques, a sample of 322 respondents was drawn from women Village Savings and Loans Schemes participants and at least one child under their care, aged 10-18 year. On the qualitative aspect, the study employed in-depth interviews to obtain information to help understand respondent's views and experiences. Data analysis entailed the use of Statistical Package of Social Sciences to run frequency distribution. Findings from both qualitative and quantitative data collection were fed into each other and were later triangulated with the findings from review of documentation on wellbeing of Orphans and Vulnerable Children. Study findings were presented in tables. The study found that the financial services had positive effects on orphans and vulnerable children. 98.4% of the participants indicated that they accessed savings and credit while 76% indicated that they accessed insurance and all these went into supporting the needs of children under their care. from their schemes 76%. 98.4% of the participants also indicated that the non financial services such as trainings, mentorship and goods which they received from their schemes supported them to effectively provide for the children. The study also established that although there was some slight engagement of orphans and vulnerable children and their caregivers in economic activities, this did not significantly compromise on the wellbeing of the children. Only Less than 15% of the children had left school so that they could contribute to family income. Participation of the caregivers in savings and loaning activities was also found to contribute to physical, mental, spiritual and social growth and development of children under their care which in turn prepared the children for better lives in the future. 92% of the children indicated that their caregivers responded to their physical, mental as well as spiritual needs effectively and this prepared them to live a better independent life in the future. The study concluded by making recommendations that Village Savings and Loans model should be promoted as a way of extending financial services to the poor, especially in rural setting where penetration of formal financial sector is still low. Participation in VSL schemes in this study has made significant contribution to improving access to saving and loan services and initiation and growth of income generating activities for the women which in turns promotes the well being of children under their care. This should therefore be promoted by the government and other development agencies as a way of alleviating poverty and promoting well being of OVC in rural settings. The study proposes that further research be carried out to determine potential for linkages of these savings and loans schemes to the formal financial sector.

**Academic Year:** 2011/2012

**Project Year:** 2012

**Project Status:** completed

**Project Supervisor:** Dr. Charles M. Rambo

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