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INFLUENCING FACTORS AND SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN GROUPS INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS IN RUMBEK, SOUTH SUDAN

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DECLARATION

This research proposal is my original work. It has not been presented in any other University or institution of higher learning for any academic credit. All work sourced from other scholars and sources have been duly cited and acknowledged in this document.

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Signed ……

DEDICATION

This research thesis is dedicated to the Bishop Mazzolari Foundation in Italy who support my study from bachelor's degree up to this level. Without their financial support, I would have not made it to this level. I am forever grateful this Organization for empowering me and many other south Sudanese girls.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **i**

TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **v**

LIST OF FIGURES ..... **ix**

LIST OF TABLES ..... **x**

LIST OF ACRONYM/ ABBREVIATIONS ..... **xi**

ABSTRACT ..... **xii**

CHAPTER ONE **1**

INTRODUCTION **1**

1.0 Introduction 1

1.1 Background to the Study 1

1.2. Statement of the Problem 3

1.3. Research Objectives 4

1.4. Research Questions 4

1.5. Justification of the Study 4

1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study 5

1.8 Limitations 6

1.9 Conceptual Framework 7

1.9 Organization of the Study 8

CHAPTER TWO **9**

LITERATURE REVIEW **9**

2.0 Introduction 9

2.1 Literature Review 9

2.1.1 Current Trends on Women Activities 9

2.2 Theoretical Framework 10

2.1.1 Empowerment Theory 10
2.1.2 Theory of Change 12
2.3 Empirical Evidence 14
2.3.1 Socio-cultural Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 14
2.3.2 Economic Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 18
2.3.3 Political Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 22
2.3.4 Geo-Environmental Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 27
2.4 Research Gap 32
CHAPTER THREE 33
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 33
3.0 Introduction 33
3.1 Research Design 33
3.2 Target Population 33
3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques 33
3.4 Data Collection Tools 35
3.4.1 Questionnaires for Representatives of IGPs 35
3.4.2 Interview Schedule for Key Informants 36
3.5 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments 36
3.5.1 Validity 36
3.5.2 Reliability 36
3.6 Data Analysis Procedures 37
3.7 Ethical Consideration 37
CHAPTER FOUR 39
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS 39
4.0 Introduction 39

4.1 Data Presentation 39
Response rate 39
4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents 40
4.2 Data analysis and interpretation 42
4.2.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 42
4.2.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 45
4.2.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 48
4.2.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 51
4.2.5 Sustainability of women income generating Projects 54
Rate the development of your income generating projects between the years 2016 and 2020? 54
4.3 Discussion of findings 56
4.3.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 56
4.3.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 56
4.3.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 57
4.3.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 58
CHAPTER FIVE 59
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 59
5.0 Introduction 59
5.1 Summary of Findings 59
5.1.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 59
5.1.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 59
5.1.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 59
5.1.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 60
5.2 Conclusion 60
5.2.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 60

5.2.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 60
5.2.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 61
5.2.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 61
5.3 Recommendations 61
5.3.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 61
5.3.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 61
5.3.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 62
5.3.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects 62
5.4 Areas for Further Research 62
REFERENCES 64
APPENDICES 70
Appendix A: Letter of Introduction (CUEA) 70
Appendix B: Authorization letter from MCRD 71
Appendix C: Questionnaire for Representatives of Women IGPs 72
Appendix D: Interview Guide for Key Informants 77
Appendix E: Research Work plan 80
Appendix F: Budget 81

LIST OF FIGURES

Table 9: Rate the development of your income generating Projects between the years 2016 and 2020 54

Table 10: Did your business make profit between the years 2016 and 2020? 54

Table 11: How many employees does your income generating project have? 55

Table 12: How would you rate the sustainably of your income generating activity? 55

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Women Group Income Generating Projects 34

Table 3.2: Key Informants 35

Table 3.3: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Model Results Table 37

Table 4: Response rate 37

Table 5: Socio-cultural factors 42

Table 6: Economic factors 46

Table 7: Political factors 49

Table 8: Geo-environmental factors 52

Table 9: Rate the development of your income generating Projects between the years 2016 and 2020 54

Table 10: Did your business make profit between the years 2016 and 2020? 54

Table 11: How many employees does your income generating project have? 55

Table 12: How would you rate the sustainably of your income generating activity? 55

LIST OF ACRONYM/ ABBREVIATIONS

NGO : Non-Governmental Organizations

CBOs : Community-Based Organizations

SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences

NBG : Northern Bhar el Ghazal

CSA : Climate Smart Agricultura

IGA : Income Generating Activities

IGP : Income Generating Projects

SME : Small and Medium Enterprises

UN : United Nations

ABSTRACT

This study analysed the sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. The objectives that guided the study were to: determine the socio-cultural factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects; establish the economic factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects; analyse the political factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects; and examine the geo-environmental factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. The study is anchored on two theories namely the Empowerment Theory and Theory of Change. The study adopted a descriptive research design, which involved the collection of data from women groups in Rumbek, South Sudan, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study targeted a 150-women group income generating projects and 36 key informants (MFIs, NGOs representatives and the local government officials). From this, a total of 108 respondents from women group income generating groups was used as sample. However, only 84 returned the questionnaire while 28 key informants participated in interviews. Data were collected using questionnaires and an interview guide. Results revealed that majority of the participants mentioned that there are cultural norms and expectations; that women prioritize domestic and care-giving responsibilities over paid work; and they face challenges such as limited access to education, training, and credit. Economic factors showed that majority of respondents mentioned that microfinance institutions provide small loans and other financial services to individuals who lack access to traditional banking services. Political factors revealed that since 2017, the political situation in Rumbek has been unstable hence majority of respondents mentioned that recurrent political instability scares women from engaging in income generating projects. On the geo-environmental factors such as extreme weather conditions and limited access to transportation and communication infrastructure have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. The study concluded that there are significant challenges faced by women in Rumbek; and the crucial role that education and training can play in empowering women to break the cycle of poverty and become financially independent. On the first objective, the study recommends that the government and NGOs should promote women education and training that specifically focus on financial management, marketing and entrepreneurship. On the second objective, the study recommends that microfinance institutions and banks should increase access to affordable financing options for women entrepreneurs through microfinance institutions. On the third objective, the study recommends that regulators should encourage the government to review and adjust laws and regulations that pose challenges for women involved in income-generating projects. Finally, on the forth objective, the study suggested that government and stakeholders should encourage the use of technologies and innovations that can help women entrepreneurs adapt to extreme weather conditions such as floods and droughts.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions as well as justification, significance, scope, limitation and delimitation, organization of the study and conceptual framework.

1.1 Background to the Study

Over the past few years, income generation projects have gained prominence since it has been realized that if projects don't focus on economic empowerment of beneficiaries, then interventions would not have a long-term impact on beneficiaries. However, success of income generating projects is not guaranteed since some may succeed while others do not.

Globally, there are numerous studies focusing on factors affecting women income generating projects. In India, a study by Raghuvanshi, Agrawal and Ghosh (2017) found that women activities failed because of lack of adequate education and training, lack of family support, inadequate business management skills and lack of organizational support as well as lack of access to financial resources. A similar study in India by Roy, Tripathy and Tripathy (2017) established that income generating activities were affected by personal attributes of women, lack of own property, lack of business finance access, stiff competition, low training, use of inappropriate technology and lack of raw materials. In Bangladesh, Islam, *et al.,* (2020) found that women income generating activities was encumbered with poor family relationship and poor recording keeping.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, Income Generating Projects (IGP) has been used previously in promoting economic wellbeing of various groups. A study by Panda (2018) revealed that the major barriers affecting women IGP emanated from gender bias and discrimination, poor infrastructure, unstable economy, unstable political environment and lack of training, start-up capital, work-life balance and personal attributes of entrepreneurs. In Morocco, a study by Montanari and Bergh (2019) showed that women participation in IGA was affected by literacy and lack of free labour. In Nigeria, a study by Yusuf, *et al.* (2014) established that women IGA was hampered by age, level of education, household size, access to startup capital and membership association. Similarly,

in South Africa, Chinomona and Maziriri (2015) found in their study that women IGA was faced with barriers such as inadequate training and education, lack of access to credit services, gender inequality, poor attitude and insufficient resources thereby affecting performance of IGA.

The empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality have gained increasing recognition as crucial factors for sustainable development worldwide (UNDP, 2020). In the context of South Sudan, a country marred by long-standing conflict and economic challenges, women's income-generating projects have emerged as a means to enhance women's economic autonomy, contribute to poverty reduction, and foster community development (World Bank, 2019). These projects encompass a diverse range of activities, from agricultural ventures to handicrafts and small businesses, and have been championed as potential catalysts for positive change in a society where gender disparities persist (FAO, 2018).

However, the sustainability of these women's income-generating projects remains a pressing concern. Despite the initial enthusiasm and promise, many projects encounter hurdles that hinder their long-term viability. The factors contributing to the challenges of sustainability in such projects are complex and multifaceted, stemming from a combination of economic, social, and institutional dynamics (Chowdhury, 2017). Insufficient access to resources, limited technical skills, inadequate market linkages, and a lack of supportive policies are among the factors that can impede the projects' progress (UN Women, 2021).

As South Sudan endeavors to rebuild its social fabric and economy, it is imperative to address the sustainability of women's income-generating projects as a pivotal component of broader development efforts. Said and Enslin (2020) found that women income projects faced the challenge of accessing credit services as well as experienced fear, frustration, stress, and anger while operating IGA. In 2017, the transitional constitution of South Sudan stated that the government should promote women's participation in executive and legislative bodies by at least 25%. This is an affirmative action that the government can take to address the various imbalances that have been created by history, traditions, and customs (Nyathon,2015). Another study by Ndungu (2017) established that income generating activities projects in South Sudan were not technically appropriate to be sustainable. It is against this background that this study examines the predictors of sustainable women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

This study sought to delve into the intricate web of challenges and opportunities surrounding these projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Women income generating projects fail and are not able to sustain themselves after withdrawal of support from humanitarian assistance. Women are poor and dependent on aid despite the existence of income generating opportunities in the area. Oxfam (2016) argues that women income generating projects in South Sudan fail or are not sustainable. Further, opportunities for productive income-generating activities among women had been significantly reduced. This makes women who account for 60% of the South Sudan population to continue to languish in poverty despite efforts put by NGOs to improve their livelihoods. Consequently, women become dependent on their husbands or donations from government and NGO's and in the event of withdrawal of support, women and children bears the greatest brunt (Oxfam, 2016)

Women income generating projects fail to achieve financial sustainability due to several factors. Wandera and Sang (2017) revealed that economic factors such as budget control, financial reporting, income source diversification and donor fund managements were key factors affecting financial sustainability of projects in South Sudan. A study by Bior (2019) revealed that socio-cultural factors such as early marriage, low education and gender roles prevented women from achieving their potential and hence affected their economic suitability. Political unrest has also been a major challenge affecting sustainability of women income projects in South Sudan. Nyanga, et al. (2019) found a link between political unrest and slow economic growth in South Sudan. He argued that armed conflict was a major antecedent that affected people's livelihood and destroyed the economy. It affected women businesses and economic infrastructure of the country. Sustainability of women income projects is also hindered by geo-environmental factors. Alex (2018) found that climate change such as declining precipitation and rising temperatures made farming increasingly more difficult in South Sudan and unreliable rainfall and recurring droughts and flash floods affected crop production, roads and health.

In Rumbek, South Sudan, women are facing challenges in meeting necessities. This has forced an avalanche of organizations such as UN, World Vision and Oxfam to rush in providing relief services such food, water, housing, education and other social services (Oxfam, 2016). However, some of these interventions are short lived because the affected women keep falling

back to the same problem again and again. It is against this backdrop that this study sought to analyse sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

1.3. Research Objectives

The general objective of this study was to analyse the influencing factors on sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. The specific objectives are:

1) To determine the socio-cultural factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.
2) To establish the economic factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.
3) To analyse the political factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.
4) To examine the geo-environmental factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

1.4. Research Questions

1) What are the socio-cultural factors on affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan?
2) What are the economic factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan?
3) What are the political factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan?
4) What are the geo-environmental factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan?

1.5. Justification of the Study

Firstly, women's income generating projects have been recognized globally as catalysts for economic empowerment and poverty alleviation (Duflo, 2012). In a region like Rumbek with limited economic opportunities, these projects offer a way for women to contribute to their households' income and enhance their agency. By investigating the sustainability factors, the study provides insights that can enhance project effectiveness and long-term impact. Exploring the sustainability of women's income generating projects in Rumbek holds significant implications for

gender equality, poverty reduction, and community development. Given Rumbek's history of instability, understanding how political factors impact women's income generating projects is pivotal. This study's findings can inform advocacy efforts for stable governance and regulatory reforms that create an environment conducive to entrepreneurial endeavors

1.6 Significance of the Study

Equally, the study findings may help in formulation of policies that may help NGOs, government and other stakeholders in championing sustainability as a method of empowering individuals, families, groups or communities to be resilient and self-sustainable thereby reducing dependency. Similarly, the study may help practitioners in the field of social and economic development to develop a thorough understanding on the role played by NGO's in promoting economic sustainability of women beneficiaries. At the same time, due to sparse studies on the subject in South Sudan, the study may add to the growth of knowledge on the effectiveness of NGO's in promoting economic empowerment of vulnerable groups in South Sudan. Furthermore, the findings from this study may be a useful tool to the government of South Sudan particularly the Ministry of Gender and Social Welfare in policy development and setting laws which may promote economic sustainability of women.

1.7 Scope and Delimitation of the Study

This study focused on sustainability of women groups' income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. The study targeted women beneficiaries of IGA programs, NGO representatives, government representatives and financial institutions. This study comes at a time when many countries including South Sudan are faced with challenges of donor uncertainty resulting from budget cuts. This means that in the event of donor withdrawal or budget cut, many households which are dependent on NGOs for basic support are likely to be affected thereby increasing their vulnerability. Thus, the study may help NGOs and women IGP beneficiaries to develop measures which promote sustainability of women IGPs.

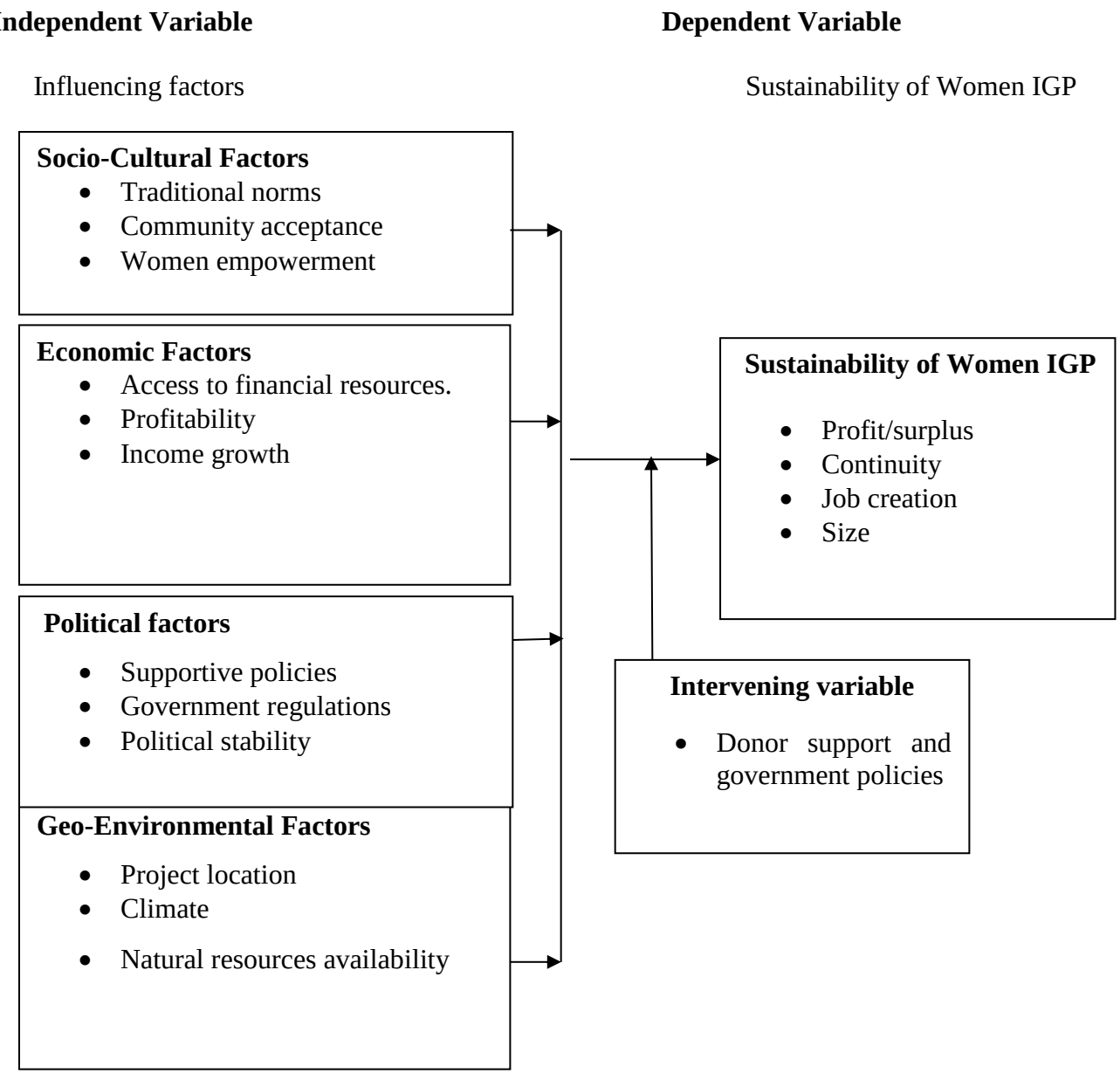
This study was carried out in Rumbek Center and Rumbek East Counties of Lakes State, South Sudan. The study targeted women groups' income generating projects which have been in operation for more than six months while women income generating projects which have been in operation for less than six months was excluded from the study.

1.8 Limitations

The researcher experienced challenges such as cost of transport to distributions and collection of questionaries' from 12 payams of Rumbek Centre and Rumbek East Counties. The researcher spent more time to complete data collection. The number of key informants who participated in the interview at first were 4 from 36 targeted. This was giving below average percentage allowed to conduct data analysis. The researcher, therefore, identified purposively 24 more key informants to be interviewed to meet the allowable response rate.

1.9 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework



The presentation in figure 1 shows the interrelationship between the independent and dependent variable. The independent variable is factors affecting women IGP and is measured in terms of socio-cultural, economic, and geopolitical factors while dependent variable which is sustainability of women IGP which is determined by continuity, profit and job created. Sociocultural factors include measures such as traditional norms, community acceptance and women empowerment, economic factors include access to financial resources, profitability and

income growth. Political unrest may disrupt operations of IGP hence affecting their sustainability while geo-environment factors such as location, climate and natural resources availability may affect the operational costs of IGP and smooth running of the enterprises respectfully. However, the relationship between predictors and sustainability of IGP may be mediated by donor policies such as household economic strengthening interventions, theory of change etc. or government policies on trade, climate change, taxation.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This thesis was organized into five chapters: The first chapter, which introduced the study, discusses the background of the study, statement of problem, study objectives, justification and significance of the study as well as scope and delimitations and conceptual framework. The second chapter provided a theoretical and empirical review of the study issue of sustainability of women income generating activities. The research methodology was covered in chapter three, while research findings and interpretation were presented in chapter four, and the study's conclusions and policy implications were presented in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with theoretical framework and empirical literature review in relation to growth and sustainability of income generating initiatives.

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Current Trends on Women Activities

A Gender Assessment Report carried out by World Vision South Sudan (2015) found out that women typically perform productive activities, such as brewing local alcohol, selling vegetables on a small scale, making and selling of crafts and baking bread. In two locations, Northern Bhar el Ghazal (NBG) and Warrap, women were found actively engaged in tea business. Since most women are restricted by their husbands from engaging in businesses that take them far away from their households, most of these economic activities do not require women to move far from their households. They are also closely aligned with women's reproductive roles of feeding and caring for the entire family. The same report revealed that most women and girls perform the role of raising small animals and poultry at home. It was clear however, that men have ownership and control.

An evaluation report by Pretari and Anguko (2019) examined livelihood project implemented by Oxfam points out that women were able to produce groundnuts, sorghum, cucumbers, kudru or okra in large quantities and the project emphasised on value-addition by crop processing and were likely to sell some of their produce. Livelihood components of this project was implemented in order to build peace, through enhancing participation of women and youth in community groups and reducing the gap between community institutions and farmers. It is worth underlining that participation of women is low in farmers' groups (29 percent among women respondents in the intervention group), and that this was not affected by the project.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

This section reviews theories related to women income generating activities. The main theories discussed are: Empowerment Theory and Theory of Change.

2.1.1 Empowerment Theory

This study based on Empowerment Theory of Zimmerman (1995). Zimmerman states that empowerment is the process of enabling people gain strength, confidence and vision to work for positive changes in their lives individually and collectively with others. People become empowered by their own efforts not by what others do for them. The process seeks to redistribute power in favour of the poor and the disadvantaged in the community. It is enabling the poor and the powerless to take more control over their lives and secure a better livelihood with ownership and control of productive assets (Zimmerman, 1995).

Naila Kabeer's perspective emphasizes the importance of agency and access to resources for women's empowerment (Kabeer, 2021). In the context of the influencing factors on the sustainability of women's income generating projects, Kabeer's ideas highlight the significance of providing women with the agency to make decisions about their projects. This connects to the influencing factor of "Training and Capacity Building" (IF1), where effective training equips women with the skills and knowledge necessary to take control of their projects' management and decision-making processes. Empowerment, as Kabeer suggests, hinges on women having the agency to exercise control over their resources and projects.

Kabeer's emphasis on access to resources also plays a pivotal role. This notion resonates with the influencing factors of "Access to Resources" (IF3) and "Market Access" (IF4). Access to financial resources, tools, and markets is vital for women to not only initiate their projects but also to navigate challenges and uncertainties along the way. Having the agency to access and manage resources effectively empowers women to overcome barriers that might otherwise hinder project sustainability.

Empowerment, as per Kabeer's viewpoint, centers on providing women with agency, which translates into their ability to make decisions and exercise control. In the context of your study, this aligns closely with the influencing factor of "Training and Capacity Building" (IF1). Effective training equips women with the necessary skills, knowledge, and confidence to actively engage in managing their income generating projects. This empowerment through training enables women

to take charge of critical decision-making processes related to their projects' operations, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustained success.

Amartya Sen's capability approach emphasizes individuals' ability to lead lives they value through enhanced capabilities (Sen, 1999). Relating this to the influencing factors, the factor of "Access to Resources" (IF3) becomes crucial. Access to resources enables women to develop their capabilities and effectively engage in income generating projects. Sen's approach underlines the importance of enabling women's choices and freedoms in pursuing sustainable projects. For instance, access to financial resources and tools can enhance women's capabilities to initiate, manage, and sustain their projects.

Jo Rowlands' concept of transformative empowerment emphasizes societal transformation to address gender inequalities (Rowlands, 1997). This aligns with the influencing factors under "Socio-Cultural Factors" (IF1) and "Political Factors" (IF5). Rowlands' perspective suggests that to ensure the sustainability of women's income generating projects, it's necessary to transform existing norms and structures. This could involve challenging traditional gender roles and fostering an environment where women's participation and decision-making in economic activities are encouraged and supported.

Alsop and Bertelsen's framework highlights access, agency, and achievements as empowerment pathways (Alsop & Bertelsen, 2019). This connects directly to various influencing factors. For instance, "Market Access" (IF4) involves providing women with access to markets, which aligns with the access pathway. The "Government Policies and Regulations" (IF6) factor influences agency by either enabling or hindering women's decision-making capabilities. Lastly, the "Training and Capacity Building" (IF1) factor contributes to the achievement pathway by enhancing women's skills, thus empowering them to achieve sustainable income generating projects.

Strengths of Empowerment Theory

The above theory has several proven strengths that make it triumph in the explanation of many phenomena. These strengths include the following:

The theory advocates teamwork and working together of various stakeholders. This gives the theory some advantage of sharing ideas and examining decisions carefully before implementing them hence minimizing the chances of making misinformed decisions.

The theory also emphasizes on the means and not just the product. It stresses that an institution or program must give priority to the process followed in developing the resource in order to obtain the product. This carefully assessed process leads to a quality finished goods. This is applied by various organizations implementing economic strengthening activities by support the woman and journeying with her to a state of self-reliance. The theory is much interested in the quality of the community life which ensures that the program at hand looks at the development projects.

Weaknesses of Empowerment Theory

The weakness of the theory is that it takes so much time to follow the due process in order to come up with the intended effect on the community. However, it is practically possible to account for the human investment of time in any organization and so it does not hold and will not in way significantly affect the findings of this study. To address these weaknesses, the researcher applies the Theory of Change.

2.1.2 Theory of Change

The Theory of Change was developed by Weber in 1920. According to it, a program or initiative should have a long-term goal in mind in order to achieve lasting changes. It should also have procedures in place to implement the goals and develop interventions that will help achieve them. Finally, it should create indicators to measure the success of the program. According to Weber (1920), certain social structures can lead to changes in the society. The theory of change is applicable to this study as all the initiatives that are led by various stakeholders and NGOs have a common objective. Several preconditions are also set to ensure that the change is achieved.

The Theory of Change involves creating a logic model that maps out how inputs lead to activities, which lead to outputs, outcomes, and eventually impact (Anderson, 2021). In the context of women's income generating projects, the influencing factors (inputs) are elements like training, access to resources, community support, and government policies. The activities involve implementing these factors effectively, which leads to outputs like improved skills, increased income, and stronger networks. These outputs, in turn, contribute to outcomes such as empowered women, poverty reduction, and community development. Ultimately, these outcomes collectively drive the impact of sustainable women's income generating projects.

A central aspect of the Theory of Change is identifying assumptions and intermediary changes that must occur for the desired impact (Mayne & Johnson, 2015). Applying this to the study, the influencing factors are integral to these intermediary changes. For instance, if the assumption is that empowered women can lead to poverty reduction, the influencing factors directly contribute to this assumption. Empowerment achieved through training (an influencing factor) can lead to women's increased income (intermediary change), which aligns with the desired impact of poverty reduction.

The Theory of Change encourages recognizing feedback loops and adapting strategies accordingly (Anderson, 2021). In this study, this would mean understanding how the influencing factors interact and how adjustments in one area can affect others. For example, if training is identified as a key factor for sustainability, feedback from women participants might prompt adaptations in training methodologies to better meet their needs, resulting in improved project sustainability.

The Theory of Change emphasizes tailoring interventions to specific contexts (Mayne & Johnson, 2015). Applying this to the study, understanding the socio-cultural, economic, political, and geo-environmental context is crucial for effective implementation of influencing factors. Contextualization ensures that the factors are attuned to the needs and challenges of the local environment, enhancing the potential for sustainable project outcomes.

The five-stage change model by Theory of change explains how to implement lasting changes in a community initiative. It involves identifying a goal, developing immediate outcomes, establishing an association between the outcomes and the interventions, and putting measures in place to promote the goals. The activities that enable the attainment of results are referred to as initiatives. In charitable organizations and other similar businesses, a clear understanding of the goals and procedures for carrying out daily activities is crucial. Theory of Change can help organizations and charitable entities align their resources and activities to realize long-term results (Weber, 1920).

The theory of change, as described by Weber, helps organizations establish goals, team building, and collaborate to plan an initiative. It can also assist in raising funds, developing an evaluation and action plan, and disseminating the results. These activities, as well as other key activities such as influencing policy makings, happen within an agency. According to the theory

of change, activities should result in positive outcomes and should also yield impactful results. This means that all development projects must ensure that they carry out activities that are designed to foster social transformation. Theory of Change is applicable to this study because various government, private, and non-profit initiatives are aimed at changing the world.

The weaknesses of empowerment theory and theory of change will be overcome by testing the theory against empirical data collected from women engaged in income generating activities in Juba, South Sudan. The researcher will ensure that the data collected is genuine and will institute effective measures to determine validity and reliability

2.3 Empirical Evidence

2.3.1 Socio-cultural Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Women's income generating projects have gained significant attention as potent mechanisms for fostering economic empowerment and social development in various contexts worldwide. These projects hold the potential to alleviate poverty, enhance women's agency, and contribute to community growth. The sustainability of these projects is deeply intertwined with socio-cultural factors that shape women's roles, access to resources, and participation in economic activities.

Socio-cultural factors encompass a broad spectrum of norms, values, traditions, and gender roles prevailing within a given community (Duflo, 2018). These factors wield considerable influence over women's opportunities and constraints within income generating projects. Particularly in societies characterized by patriarchal norms, deeply rooted gender expectations can limit women's mobility, authority, and ability to access resources essential for project success (Duflo, 2018). Such constraints, in turn, can impede women's active participation and control over income-generating activities, consequently affecting the sustainability of these endeavors.

Empirical research underscores the necessity of addressing and reshaping prevailing socio-cultural norms to bolster project sustainability. Initiatives that aim to increase women's engagement in income-generating endeavors frequently incorporate efforts to challenge and transform gender stereotypes (Acharya et al., 2019). By actively addressing these underlying socio-cultural barriers, interventions aspire to create an environment conducive to sustained women's participation and commitment to income generating projects.

Furthermore, the role of social networks and community support proves instrumental in this context. The presence or absence of strong social ties and support networks can either facilitate or impede the sustainability of income generating projects. Robust community connections can grant women access to valuable information, resources, and opportunities, potentially enhancing their resilience in the face of challenges and promoting project longevity (Mayoux, 2020).

Education and awareness campaigns also emerge as essential agents of change within socio-cultural dynamics. Education equips women with knowledge and skills that enable them to challenge traditional gender roles and engage more effectively in economic activities (Wegner & Harman, 2016). Through education, women often become empowered to question and alter community perceptions about their roles, thus cultivating an environment more conducive to sustainable women's income generating projects.

Socio-cultural factors encompass a broad spectrum of norms, values, traditions, and gender roles prevailing within a community. These factors play a pivotal role in determining the opportunities and constraints that women face in income generating projects. In patriarchal societies, deeply ingrained gender norms might restrict women's mobility, decision-making power, and access to resources (Duflo, 2018). These norms can translate into challenges for women's participation in and control over income generating activities, thereby influencing project sustainability.

In patriarchal societies, deeply ingrained gender norms often establish distinct roles and expectations for women and men. These norms can lead to a range of challenges for women's participation in income generating projects. For instance, prevailing gender norms might restrict women's mobility, limiting their ability to engage in economic activities beyond their immediate surroundings (Duflo, 2018). Such limitations directly affect women's access to markets and opportunities, potentially hindering the growth and sustainability of their projects.

Moreover, these gender norms can exert control over women's decision-making power. In many cases, women's agency and authority over economic activities are curtailed by traditional norms, which tend to prioritize male voices in decision-making processes (Acharya et al., 2019). This diminished decision-making power can lead to challenges in managing and scaling income generating projects effectively, impacting their long-term sustainability.

Access to resources is also heavily influenced by socio-cultural factors. In communities where gender norms assign women domestic roles, women might face difficulties accessing financial resources or owning property independently (Mayoux, 2020). These resource constraints can hinder women's ability to invest in their projects, purchase necessary materials, or expand their businesses, thereby affecting the overall sustainability of their income generating activities.

To address these challenges, interventions often focus on challenging and transforming these socio-cultural norms. Strategies include community sensitization, awareness campaigns, and educational initiatives aimed at shifting gender perceptions and fostering an environment that supports women's economic participation (Wegner & Harman, 2016). By altering these norms, women's income generating projects can thrive with enhanced participation, improved decision-making, and better access to resources, ultimately contributing to project sustainability.

Empirical studies have highlighted the importance of challenging and reshaping such socio-cultural norms to enhance project sustainability. Initiatives that promote women's participation in income generating activities often go hand-in-hand with efforts to challenge gender stereotypes and provide platforms for women's voices to be heard (Acharya et al., 2019). By addressing underlying socio-cultural barriers, these interventions aim to create an enabling environment where women can actively engage in and sustain income generating projects.

By addressing the foundational socio-cultural barriers, these interventions endeavour to create an environment that not only allows but actively encourages sustained women's engagement in income generating projects. Through the questioning of traditional gender norms that confine women to domestic roles, initiatives can gradually dismantle these restrictions and create pathways for women's economic participation (Duflo, 2018). Providing platforms for women's voices to be heard not only influences decision-making processes but also serves to reshape prevailing socio-cultural norms that have long constrained women's agency and participation (Acharya et al., 2019).

This transformative process, where socio-cultural norms are challenged and redefined, empowers women to transcend traditional limitations and assume more active roles in income generating activities (Mayoux, 2020). By encouraging women to engage in traditionally male-dominated economic activities, interventions promote gender equality and increase the likelihood of sustained project engagement and success (Kabeer, 2021).

Furthermore, these initiatives tend to create an inclusive and participatory environment that yields multiple benefits. By involving women in project-related decisions and giving them a platform to voice their perspectives, these interventions enhance the relevance and effectiveness of income generating projects (Duflo, 2018). This approach not only empowers individual women but also promotes a sense of ownership and collaboration within the community, contributing to broader social development (Mayoux, 2020).

Social networks and community support also emerge as vital socio-cultural factors. These networks can either enable or hinder project sustainability. Strong community ties and support networks can provide women with access to information, resources, and opportunities (Mayoux, 2020). Women who are embedded within supportive social structures might find it easier to overcome challenges and adapt to changing circumstances, leading to improved project sustainability.

Within the intricate fabric of socio-cultural factors, the role of social networks and community support surfaces as a vital determinant of the sustainability of women's income generating projects. These networks, shaped by local norms and interactions, possess the potential to significantly influence the trajectory of these initiatives. Whether they enable or hinder project sustainability depends on the nature of community ties and the extent of support provided (Mayoux, 2020).

Strong community ties and robust support networks have the capacity to furnish women with a plethora of advantages crucial for project success. Access to pertinent information, resources, and opportunities is often facilitated through these networks (Wegner & Harman, 2016). Women who are embedded within such supportive social structures are better positioned to navigate challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and adapt to the fluidity of changing circumstances (Mayoux, 2020). This adaptability not only improves women's resilience but also enhances the overall sustainability of their income generating projects.

Conversely, inadequate or lacking community support networks can impede project sustainability. Isolation from crucial information, resources, and opportunities could leave women ill-equipped to overcome obstacles or capitalize on market trends (Wegner & Harman, 2016). This emphasizes the intricate role of social networks in influencing women's empowerment and the long-term viability of their income generating activities.

Interventions seeking to enhance the sustainability of women's income generating projects often recognize the importance of cultivating supportive social networks. By facilitating interactions among women engaged in similar endeavors, interventions foster an environment of shared experiences, knowledge exchange, and mutual assistance (Acharya et al., 2019). Such facilitated networking not only strengthens women's individual capacities but also cultivates a community of practice that collectively bolsters the sustainability of income generating projects (Wegner & Harman, 2016).

The role of education and awareness campaigns in altering socio-cultural dynamics cannot be underestimated. Education empowers women with knowledge and skills, enabling them to challenge traditional gender roles and engage more effectively in economic activities (Wegner & Harman, 2016). Such educational interventions often lead to a transformation in gender perceptions within the community, fostering an environment that is more conducive to women's economic participation.

2.3.2 Economic Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The relationship between economic factors and the sustainability of women's income generating projects is a critical area of study that underscores the multifaceted nature of project success. Economic factors encompass a range of elements, including access to financial resources, market dynamics, cost-effectiveness, and the overall economic environment. The interplay between these factors significantly shapes the viability and continuity of women's income generating endeavors.

The sustainability of women's income generating projects hinges significantly on the intricate interplay of economic factors, which encompass diverse dimensions such as financial resources, market dynamics, cost-effectiveness, and the broader economic landscape. Adequate access to financial resources is a fundamental determinant of project sustainability (Brush & Hisrich, 2022). Insufficient capital can hinder project initiation and growth, limiting women's ability to invest, expand, or adapt to changing circumstances. Empowering women with access to microfinance services has emerged as a powerful strategy to bridge this gap and enhance the sustainability of their income generating activities (Mayoux, 2020).

Market dynamics exert a profound influence on project viability. Projects that align with consumer demand and evolving market trends are more likely to endure (Gupta, 2018). Therefore,

understanding local market preferences and being responsive to shifts in consumer behavior are vital for sustained success. Moreover, cost-effectiveness becomes critical in resource-constrained environments (Gupta, 2018). Efficient utilization of resources, prudent financial management, and optimizing operational costs are pivotal for maintaining profitability and long-term project viability.

Market dynamics exert a profound influence on the viability of women's income generating projects. The alignment of projects with consumer demand and the ability to adapt to evolving market trends significantly contribute to their longevity (Alam & Sultana, 2016). Understanding and catering to local market preferences, as well as remaining responsive to shifts in consumer behavior, emerge as indispensable strategies for achieving sustained success (Wong & Aspinwall, 2021).

Cost-effectiveness takes on heightened importance, particularly in resource-constrained environments. Operating within limited resource contexts necessitates prudent financial management and efficient resource utilization (Simanis & Hart, 2019). Maintaining profitability and long-term viability demands a careful balance between minimizing operational costs and maximizing revenue streams. In this regard, adopting innovative and cost-efficient production methods becomes instrumental (Wong & Aspinwall, 2021).

The interplay between market dynamics and cost-effectiveness is critical for project sustainability. When projects align with market needs and preferences, they are more likely to generate consistent revenue streams (Simanis & Hart, 2019). Concurrently, when operational costs are managed efficiently, profit margins can be maintained even in competitive market environments. This symbiotic relationship between market alignment and cost-efficiency forms the bedrock of project viability.

Moreover, the adaptability of women's income generating projects to changing market conditions is vital. Entrepreneurial ventures that remain agile and capable of embracing emerging trends are better positioned to endure in dynamic market landscapes (Alam & Sultana, 2016). This adaptability calls for continuous monitoring of market shifts, proactive response strategies, and flexibility in product offerings or business models.

The broader economic environment significantly impacts project sustainability. Economic stability, inflation rates, and overall economic growth influence consumer purchasing power and demand for products and services generated by women's projects (Mayoux, 2020). Economic fluctuations can affect consumer preferences and disrupt supply chains, directly influencing the feasibility of these endeavors.

In times of economic stability, individuals generally have higher purchasing power, which can translate into increased demand for goods produced by women's initiatives. Conversely, during economic downturns, consumers might tighten their belts, impacting the demand for non-essential goods and services (Anderson & Jack, 2022). Inflation rates, which reflect the general rise in prices over time, can also affect project sustainability. High inflation rates erode consumers' purchasing power, potentially leading to decreased demand for goods and services offered by women's projects (Hossain & Islam, 2017). This can pose challenges for maintaining revenue streams and profitability, especially if operational costs rise faster than the prices of products or services.

Furthermore, the overall economic growth of a region can influence the feasibility of women's income generating projects (Hossain & Islam, 2017). In rapidly growing economies, rising incomes and expanding consumer markets can create favorable conditions for project success. Conversely, in stagnant or contracting economies, women's initiatives might face reduced consumer demand and increased competition, impacting their ability to sustain operations and growth (Bennett, 2019).

Economic fluctuations, including recessions or economic booms, can have direct implications for project sustainability. Rapid changes in consumer preferences, reduced disposable income, or supply chain disruptions during economic downturns can strain the viability of women's projects (Bennett, 2019). On the other hand, economic upturns can present opportunities for growth and expansion, provided women's initiatives can respond effectively to the increased demand.

Furthermore, linkage with formal financial institutions can enhance project sustainability. Establishing connections with banks, credit unions, or microfinance institutions can provide women access to financial services, facilitate savings, and support project scaling (Sureshchandar et al., 2022). Integrating women's income generating projects into the formal financial system can enhance their credibility and visibility, enabling sustained growth and impact.

Microfinance institutions, in particular, have gained prominence for their role in empowering women and catalyzing project sustainability (Alam & Sultana, 2016). Access to microloans enables women to invest in their projects, purchase necessary resources, and respond to market demands (Wong & Aspinwall, 2021). The availability of credit can reduce women's financial constraints, providing them with the means to scale up and expand their ventures.

Integrating women's income generating projects into the formal financial system not only offers access to capital but also enhances their credibility and visibility within the broader economic landscape (Simanis & Hart, 2019). Women gain the opportunity to establish a financial track record and engage with financial institutions on equal footing. This enhances the reputation of women-led projects, making them more attractive to potential investors, partners, and customers.

Moreover, financial institutions often provide training and capacity-building programs aimed at enhancing financial literacy and entrepreneurship skills (Alam & Sultana, 2016). These programs empower women with the knowledge and tools needed to effectively manage their projects' financial aspects, thereby enhancing their long-term sustainability. As women acquire financial acumen, they become better equipped to navigate economic challenges, make informed decisions, and seize growth opportunities (Sureshchandar et al., 2022).

Economic empowerment interventions often encompass financial literacy and entrepreneurship training (Duflo, 2018). Equipping women with financial management skills and business acumen is pivotal for navigating economic challenges and capitalizing on opportunities. Such interventions empower women to make informed decisions, effectively manage resources, and strategically position their projects within the economic landscape.

Such interventions have been proven to play a transformative role in enhancing women's agency and confidence in economic endeavors (Acharya et al., 2019). With a solid grasp of financial concepts, women can develop strategies for mitigating potential risks and responding proactively to market fluctuations (Wegner & Harman, 2016). This ability to foresee challenges and capitalize on favorable conditions can significantly contribute to the sustainability of their income generating projects.

Moreover, financial literacy and entrepreneurship training provide women with the tools needed to strategically position their projects within the broader economic landscape (Wong & Aspinwall, 2021). Through understanding market dynamics, consumer preferences, and financial trends, women are better equipped to tailor their offerings and adapt to changing circumstances. This strategic alignment enhances their competitive advantage and increases the likelihood of project viability and long-term success (Alam & Sultana, 2016).

Empowering women with financial management skills also fosters a sense of ownership and control over their projects (Simanis & Hart, 2019). As women develop the ability to independently manage finances, make informed decisions, and assess profitability, they are less reliant on external actors for decision-making. This increased agency is pivotal for project sustainability, as women can effectively respond to challenges, capitalize on opportunities, and drive the growth of their initiatives.

2.3.3 Political Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Various political factors can affect a business's operations. These include the level of corruption, the bureaucracy, and the freedom of the press. According to Cepel et al (2019), state regulation and support from the business community can significantly influence a company's decision to establish operations. In addition, legislative environments are also influential on entrepreneurship. According to Muhlbacher et al., (2017), the political environment can affect a company's operations. This is because the judiciary and legislature executive can have a significant influence on the development and direction of the business. On the other, Robert (2016) noted that the political environment is a complex relationship that involves power, control, and influence. This concept pertains to the government's actions, which can affect a company's or business' daily operations.

Tabassam, et al., (2016) found that political instability in Pakistan coupled with political unrest, terrorism, election, regime change and strikes hinder business growth and development. Joshi, et al., (2017) noted that the policies and regulations that support tourism are more responsive to the needs of the industry than those that are focused on safety, infrastructure, and price competitiveness. Besides these, other factors such as health and hygiene are also taken into account when it comes to assessing the tourism industry's success.

Ibeto (2017) noted that market competition could be decreased or increased by regulatory changes. Moreover, social risks tend to have political bases, and mismanagement can result in natural or man-made disasters. The political environment can have a significant effect on a business' operations. According to Walter (2014), the risk that a company faces is calculated as a measure of the possible difficulties that it will encounter in its pursuit of earnings. These include direct and indirect impacts, such as taxes and fees.

The market's favorable environment can be affected by political factors, as governments have significant control over companies. Companies are often powerless to address such external environmental elements, which can result in significant losses (Ahsan, 2018).

Vilika and Zvirbule (2018) noted that changes in administration policies can have political repercussions that can significantly affect a company's operations. These can range from social, to legal, and economic. One example of a political factor is the increasing or decreasing tax rate. Due to certain government regulations, the tax rate may go up for some companies and drop for others. This can have a significant impact on a company's operations, and it is important that the company has a strategy that can handle these situations.

Hamiza et al. (2020) notes that unstable political environments can have an adverse effect on business activities. This applies to companies operating globally. For instance, an unstable government can be caused by hostile takeovers. Such incidents can lead to riots and looting. Unstable political environments can negatively affect a company's activities and bottom line. Hamiza et al. (2020) noted that certain regulations and tax policies put in place by the government can help certain companies expand their operations in certain regions. On the other hand, other policies can hinder a company's efforts to expand. When it comes to maintaining a competitive advantage in a foreign region, government initiatives that seek to assist local firms may prove detrimental to multinational companies.

The concept of employment laws aims to protect the rights of employees and ensure that their relationship with their employers is protected. Unfortunately, this area of law can be very complex and can lead to costly mistakes. Businesses can benefit from staying up-to-date with the latest legislation, but they should be careful not to get it wrong (Hamiza et al., 2020).

In 2018, a study was conducted in Sudan to investigate the investment opportunities in agriculture for the country's economic transformation and food security. The findings showed that

households tend to sell their produce to earn money, which suggests that market incentives could be used to encourage the production of surpluses, which could boost food availability. This requires enhanced market infrastructure and road networks, as well as improved agricultural inputs with support from institutional arrangements, such as extension services and legal and policy research. Livelihood and income diversification can help increase household resilience.

Political factors can have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women entrepreneurs may face numerous political challenges that hinder their ability to start or sustain their businesses. Women's political participation is an essential factor affecting the sustainability of their income-generating projects. Research has shown that women's political participation can lead to increased economic opportunities for women (Blau et al., 2020). When women are represented in decision-making processes, policies that support women's economic empowerment are more likely to be implemented.

Gender-based violence is another political factor that can impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who experience gender-based violence may struggle to focus on their businesses or may be forced to abandon their businesses altogether (Werner, 2020). Governments need to address gender-based violence through legislation, policies, and programs to ensure that women can operate their businesses safely. Government policies and regulations can also have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Some governments may impose regulations that disproportionately affect women entrepreneurs, making it harder for them to start or sustain their businesses. Regulations that limit women's access to credit or make it difficult for women to register their businesses can significantly hinder their sustainability (Abdullah et al., 2020).

Supportive policies and regulations can enhance the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. For instance, governments can create programs that provide women entrepreneurs with access to capital, training, and other resources needed to start and sustain their businesses (Garcia & Fonseca, 2021). Governments can also work to reduce gender-based barriers to entrepreneurship, such as discriminatory laws and regulations, by implementing gender-responsive policies and programs. Political instability can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. In conflict-affected countries, women entrepreneurs may face significant challenges in accessing markets, capital, and resources, which can make it harder for them to sustain their businesses (Barrett et al., 2020). In addition, political instability can create

an environment of insecurity and uncertainty, making it harder for women entrepreneurs to make long-term investments in their businesses. Furthermore, corruption and weak governance can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Corruption can make it harder for women entrepreneurs to access services and resources, such as business licenses and permits, and can also create an uneven playing field for women entrepreneurs (Kedir & Zewdie, 2019). Weak governance can also result in inadequate infrastructure and services, such as electricity and transportation, which can hinder the growth and sustainability of women's income-generating projects.

Access to government programs and services is another political factor affecting the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women entrepreneurs may struggle to access government programs and services due to barriers such as language, distance, and cultural norms (Orozco et al., 2019). Governments need to ensure that their programs and services are accessible to all women, regardless of their background or circumstances. Corruption is another political factor that can hinder the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Corruption can lead to unfair practices and create an uneven playing field for businesses, which can negatively impact women entrepreneurs (Murray & Ramdhani, 2020). Governments need to tackle corruption to create a fair and equitable environment for businesses.

The presence of conflict and instability can also have a negative impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Conflict can destroy infrastructure and limit access to resources, making it harder for women to start or sustain their businesses (Sachs et al., 2021). Governments need to address conflict and instability to create a conducive environment for women entrepreneurs. Government support for women's entrepreneurship can enhance the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Governments can provide funding, training, and other resources to support women entrepreneurs and help them grow their businesses (Kornhauser, 2020). Government support can also help raise awareness of the challenges faced by women entrepreneurs and promote gender equality in the business environment.

International policies and agreements can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Trade agreements and investment policies can create opportunities for women entrepreneurs to access new markets and investment opportunities (Lama & Kharel, 2020). Governments need to ensure that international policies and agreements support women's economic empowerment. The role of women's organizations and civil society in promoting women's

entrepreneurship is another political factor affecting the sustainability of women income generating projects. Women's organizations can provide training, mentorship, and other resources to support women entrepreneurs (Wang et al., 2020). Civil society can also play a crucial role in advocating for policies and programs that support women's economic empowerment.

Political instability and conflict can have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. In conflict-affected regions, women may face significant challenges accessing markets, inputs, and finance, limiting their ability to sustain their businesses (UN Women, 2021). Government policies and programs aimed at promoting peace and security can help create a stable environment for women entrepreneurs to thrive. Furthermore, corruption can also negatively affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women may face challenges in accessing public resources and services due to corrupt practices, limiting their ability to grow their businesses (Minten & Barrett, 2019). Anti-corruption policies and initiatives can help address these challenges and create a more conducive environment for women entrepreneurs.

Moreover, trade policies and agreements can have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. International trade policies and agreements can create new market opportunities for women entrepreneurs but can also create new challenges, such as increased competition and limited access to finance and technology (Abdullah et al., 2020). Governments can implement policies and programs to support women entrepreneurs in adapting to these changes and taking advantage of new opportunities. Women's political representation can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women's representation in political institutions can help ensure that policies and programs are designed to address the needs and challenges of women entrepreneurs (UN Women, 2015). Women's participation in decision-making processes can also help create a more gender-inclusive business environment, where women have equal access to resources, services, and opportunities.

Women's political representation remains low in many countries, and this can hinder the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women's voices and perspectives may not be adequately represented in decision-making processes, and policies and programs may not adequately address the specific needs of women entrepreneurs (UN Women, 2015). Another political factor affecting the sustainability of women's income-generating projects is corruption. Corruption can undermine the effectiveness of government policies and programs designed to

support women entrepreneurs. It can also make it more difficult for women to access the resources and services they need to sustain their businesses (Akhtar et al., 2021). trade policies and agreements can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Trade liberalization can create opportunities for women entrepreneurs by opening up new markets and increasing demand for their products and services. However, it can also create challenges, such as increased competition from foreign firms, which may hinder the sustainability of some women's businesses (Abdullah et al., 2020).

2.3.4 Geo-Environmental Factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Geo-environmental factors are physical conditions in the environment such as climate change, natural disasters, energy and pollution levels which has an impact on business operations and growth. The study conducted by Akinbami et al., (2019) analyzed the previous and current practices related to climate change adaptation in two rural areas in Oyo State. They introduced the concept of climate entrepreneurship and assessed its effectiveness. The research utilized a descriptive research approach to examine the interventions that were carried out in the last few years. The study revealed that climate change affected entrepreneurship through changing soil fertility, caused less predictable, and prolonged the dry season. The paper concludes that the goal of implementing adaptation strategies is to effectively manage the climate risks that will occur in the coming decades. This can help inform the decisions of farmers, as well as other stakeholders such as policy makers and development partners. Some climate changes are natural hence human will have less control about them while others are as a result of human activities. The study conducted by Gani & Sharma (2009) revealed that there is a negative correlation between the level of greenhouse gas emissions and the start of a business. This suggests that in developing countries, the regulations are more stringent when it comes to establishing a business.

Aryal, et al (2020) analyzed the factors that influence the decision-making of farmers in Bangladesh when it comes to adapting to climate risks. They identified six measures that farm households can use to mitigate these risks. These include changing their farming practices, using past savings, reducing consumption, looking for alternative employment options, and getting help from the government or non-governmental organizations. The study revealed that households that adopted new farming techniques were less likely to seek other adaptation strategies. It had assumed that climate risks only affected farmers, and it did not take into account other socio-cultural factors like household chores and inadequate education.

The sustainability of women's income-generating projects can also be affected by geo-environmental factors such as climate change, natural disasters, and environmental degradation. Climate change can lead to extreme weather events such as floods, droughts, and hurricanes, which can damage infrastructure, destroy crops, and disrupt supply chains, affecting the sustainability of women's businesses (UN Women, 2015). Environmental degradation, such as deforestation and soil erosion, can also have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who rely on natural resources for their livelihoods, such as small-scale farmers, fishers, and forest dwellers, are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of environmental degradation (United Nations, 2020).

Environmental degradation can impact women's income-generating projects, as it can damage ecosystems and natural resources that women rely on for their businesses. For example, deforestation can affect women who rely on forest products for their livelihoods, while soil erosion can impact women farmers (Bhattacharyya et al., 2019). Women may also face additional challenges in adapting to the impacts of climate change, such as limited access to information, resources, and technology (UN Women, 2015). Natural disasters such as earthquakes, hurricanes, and tsunamis can also have devastating impacts on women's income-generating projects, as they can damage or destroy infrastructure, equipment, and supplies, leading to business closures and loss of income (Kaur & Kaur, 2020). In addition, women may face unique challenges in responding to and recovering from natural disasters, such as limited access to emergency services and financial resources, as well as increased risk of gender-based violence and exploitation (UN Women, 2015).

The sustainability of women's income-generating projects can also be impacted by access to natural resources such as land and water. Women may face barriers to accessing and controlling these resources, as cultural norms and laws may prioritize men's ownership and control over them (FAO, 2018). Limited access to these resources can constrain women's ability to engage in income-generating activities, particularly in agriculture and natural resource management. Furthermore, women's income-generating projects can be affected by the availability and quality of infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and telecommunications. Poor infrastructure can increase the cost of production, limit access to markets, and impede communication, all of which can negatively impact the sustainability of women's businesses (Kabeer, 2017).

Additionally, conflict and political instability can have significant impacts on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women may be particularly vulnerable to

the effects of conflict, such as displacement, loss of assets, and disruption of supply chains, which can make it difficult to sustain their businesses (Abu-Saad & Riger, 2018). Access to education and training is another important factor that affects the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women with low levels of education may face limited opportunities for entrepreneurship, as they may lack the necessary skills and knowledge to start or grow their businesses (Aslam & D'Cruz, 2019).

Access to clean water and sanitation is critical to the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who lack access to these basic services may spend a significant amount of time collecting water or caring for sick family members, reducing their ability to invest time and resources in their businesses (UN Women, 2015). Moreover, pollution and other environmental hazards can also negatively impact women's businesses, particularly those in the informal sector. For example, women who work in small-scale manufacturing industries, such as textiles or leather goods, may be exposed to hazardous chemicals and poor working conditions, which can affect their health and ability to work (Kumar & Sangwan, 2019).

Natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods, and landslides can also have a devastating impact on women's income-generating projects. Women who live in disaster-prone areas may lose their homes, crops, and businesses, and may be forced to migrate to find new sources of income (UN Women, 2015). In addition, conflicts and displacement can also affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who are displaced or living in conflict-affected areas may face limited access to markets, resources, and services, making it difficult for them to sustain their businesses (United Nations, 2020).

The availability of infrastructure and transportation can also affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who live in remote areas may face limited access to markets, financial institutions, and other resources, making it harder for them to start or sustain their businesses (Akhtar et al., 2021). Furthermore, access to energy is also critical to the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Lack of access to basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, and water can also limit women's ability to engage in income-generating activities, particularly in the agriculture sector, where irrigation and other infrastructure are crucial for productivity and income generation (FAO, 2018). Inadequate transportation infrastructure can also limit women's ability to transport goods and access markets.

Environmental degradation and natural resource depletion can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who rely on natural resources such as forests, fisheries, and water sources for their businesses may be adversely affected by environmental degradation (Akhtar et al., 2021). Unsustainable resource use practices, such as overfishing, deforestation, and land degradation, can lead to reduced productivity and income generation for women entrepreneurs. In conclusion, the sustainability of women's income-generating projects is affected by a wide range of geo-environmental factors. These include climate change, natural disasters, environmental degradation, access to natural resources, and infrastructure and transportation. These factors can limit women's ability to start and sustain their businesses, resulting in lower incomes and reduced economic empowerment. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes policy interventions to address structural inequalities, building capacity for women entrepreneurs, and improving access to basic infrastructure and services.

Women who lack access to reliable and affordable energy may struggle to operate their businesses, particularly those that require electricity, such as small-scale food processing or textile production (United Nations, 2020). Geopolitical factors, such as border closures and trade restrictions, can also have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who rely on exports for their businesses may be affected by changes in trade policies, while those who rely on imports may face challenges in accessing raw materials or other inputs (Abdullah et al., 2020). Conflicts and political instability can also have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. In conflict-affected areas, women may face increased risks to their safety and limited access to markets, financial institutions, and other resources (World Bank, 2018). The displacement and dislocation caused by conflict can also disrupt supply chains and markets, affecting the sustainability of women's businesses.

Women's economic empowerment is essential for achieving gender equality and sustainable development. Income-generating projects are a key way for women to generate income and contribute to their families and communities. However, these projects face a range of challenges that impact their sustainability. One critical set of challenges is related to geo-environmental factors, such as climate change, natural disasters, and resource depletion. This literature review examines the research on these factors and their impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Climate change has significant implications for women's

income-generating projects. Research shows that women are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change due to their roles in agriculture and other sectors that are dependent on natural resources. Climate change can impact the availability of water, land, and other resources that are critical for women's income-generating activities.

One study by Safa and Hossain (2018) examined the impact of climate change on women's agricultural livelihoods in Bangladesh. The study found that women faced a range of challenges related to climate change, including increased flooding and drought, which impacted their ability to grow crops and generate income. Additionally, women faced gender-specific challenges such as limited access to credit and other resources that could help them adapt to climate change. Another study by Adger et al. (2014) examined the impacts of climate change on small-scale fisheries in coastal communities in Indonesia. The study found that women were disproportionately impacted by climate change due to their reliance on fisheries for income and food security. Climate change impacts such as sea level rise and ocean acidification threatened the sustainability of small-scale fisheries, which in turn impacted the livelihoods of women and their families.

Moreover, cultural beliefs and practices can also affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects in rural areas. For example, in some communities, women are responsible for collecting firewood and water, which can take up a significant amount of their time and limit their ability to engage in income-generating activities (Kabeer, 2017). In addition, land tenure issues can also impact the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women who lack secure land tenure may be unable to invest in their businesses or may face challenges in accessing credit or other resources (Abu-Saad & Riger, 2018).

Natural disasters also have significant implications for the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women are often at increased risk during disasters due to their roles in caregiving and household management. Disasters can also impact the infrastructure and resources that are critical for women's income-generating activities. One study by ADB (2015) examined the impact of Typhoon Haiyan on women's livelihoods in the Philippines. The study found that women faced a range of challenges related to the disaster, including loss of income and assets, increased care responsibilities, and limited access to financial and other resources. The study also highlighted the importance of gender-sensitive disaster response and recovery efforts to support women's livelihoods and economic empowerment.

Another study by UN Women (2018) examined the impact of the 2015 earthquakes in Nepal on women's livelihoods. The study found that women faced significant challenges related to loss of income and assets, as well as increased care responsibilities and safety risks. The study highlighted the importance of gender-sensitive disaster response and recovery efforts to support women's economic empowerment and ensure their participation in rebuilding efforts. Resource depletion is another critical factor that impacts the sustainability of women's income-generating projects. Women often rely on natural resources such as water, land, and forests for their livelihoods, but these resources are increasingly under threat due to overuse and unsustainable practices. One study by UNDP (2015) examined the impact of forest depletion on women's livelihoods in Uganda. The study found that women faced significant challenges related to the loss of forest resources, which impacted their ability to generate income and support their families. The study highlighted the importance of sustainable forest management practices that take into account the needs and perspectives of women.

2.4 Research Gap

While African Continental Free Trade Area (2018) underpins trade and business as the foundation to build economic resilience of Africa, there is no study which has specifically analysed the sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. Majority of the available studies' findings in developed countries may not be applied in in the context of South Sudan where women groups income generating projects are new idea. The few studies done in South Sudan are focusing on women groups supported by the humanitarian assistance, leaving behind the women groups or individual who might struggling on their own.

This study may significantly contribute new knowledge on how sociocultural factors, economic factors, political factors and geo-environmental factors contribute to sustainability of women income generating projects in South Sudan.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter covers the research design, study population & target population, sample and sampling techniques, tools of data collection, data analysis procedures and ethical considerations during data collection.

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted descriptive design. Gay (1992) defines descriptive design as "the systematic description of an event, phenomenon, or fact concerning a specific area or population." Descriptive studies require gathering information about a certain subject to provide answers to specific inquiries, like what, where, when, or how the research problem arises. The adoption of this design is justified according to the notion that it offers helpful answers to certain questions. In addition, the subjects being observed using descriptive design are completely natural and in unchanged natural environment.

3.2 Target Population

The target population is a group of objects or individuals that a sample is taken from for measurement (Kombo & Tromp, 2017). This study targeted women group income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. Specifically, the study targeted all representatives of 150 women group income generating projects and 36 key informants (MFIs, NGOs representatives and the local government officials) in Rumbek, South Sudan.

3.3 Sample and Sampling Techniques

The study adopted the Krejcie & Morgan (1970) formula to calculate the sample size from a population of 150 representatives of women IGP in Rumbek, South Sudan as follows:

$$S = \frac{X^2 N P(1-P).}{e^2(N-1) + x^2 P (1-P)}$$

Where; X^2 = chi-square table value,

e = margin error,

P = population proportion

N = population size,

At 95% confidence level with degree of freedom 1 the chi-square value is (X^2) =3.841

At 95% confidence level the margin of error(e) is 0.05

Population proportion (P) is 0.5

Population size (N) of 150;

$$S = \frac{3.841*150*0.5(1-0.5).}{0.005^2(150-1) + 3.841*0.5(1-0.5)}$$

$$S = \frac{144.375.}{1.33275}$$

S = 108 women group income generating projects

Table 3.1: Women Group Income Generating Projects

	Name of Payam	Number of women Groups	Proportion (%)	Absolute/actual numbers (%of 108)
1	Amongpiny	15	10	11
2	Jiir	20	13	14
3	Malek	8	5	5
4	Matangai	25	17	18
5	Mayom	6	4	4
6	Akot	7	5	5
7	Atiabia	10	7	8
8	Cuiecok	9	6	6
9	Maleng Agok	4	3	3
10	Pacong	18	12	13
11	Paloch	11	7	8
12	Aduel	17	11	12
	Total	**150**	**100**	**108**

Source: Primary data, 2023

Table 3.2: Key Informants

Key Informants	Absolute/ actual numbers
Representative of Financial Institutions	
Kenya Commercial Banks	4
Ivory Bank	4
Nile Commercial Bank	2
Eden Bank	2
Representatives of Non-Governmental Organizations	
Plan International	2
Oxfam GB	2
Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO)	2
Norwegian People AID(NPA)	2
ACROSS	2
DRDA	2
Representatives of Local government units (Payams)	12
TOTAL	**36**

Source: Primary data, 2023

The study adopted stratified and purposive sampling techniques. This is because representatives of women IGP were selected from various types of IGP projects in Rumbek South Sudan. The stratum was formed from the 12 Payams then proportionate simple random sampling was used to select 108 representatives of IGP. The key informants were identified based on the knowledge they have about IGPs.

3.4 Data Collection Tools

3.4.1 Questionnaires for Representatives of IGPs

The questionnaire for representatives of IGP was developed in line with research objectives. The questionnaire comprised of five sections. Section one focused on demographic characteristics of respondents, section two assessed the impact of socio-cultural factors on sustainability of women IGPs, second three assessed the effects economic factors on sustainability

of women IGPs and section four covered the effects of political factors on sustainability of women IGPs while section five examined the effects of geo-environmental factors on sustainability of women IGPs. The items in the questionnaire were measured using a five-point Likert's Scale where 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Uncertain, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree.

3.4.2 Interview Schedule for Key Informants

The interview guide was made to collect qualitative data, and it covered the literature and study objectives. It also asked the respondents about their demographic information, as well as how sociocultural factors influences sustainability of women IGPs, the impact of economic factors on sustainability of women IGPs, and the role of political factors on sustainability of women IGPs as well as influence of geo-environmental factors on sustainability of women IGPs. The questions were asked orally, and the responses were captured in verbatim or excerpts.

3.5 Validity and Reliability of Research Instruments

3.5.1 Validity

To confirm the content and face validity, the instruments was reviewed by supervisors and experts in the field. The instruments were also administered to a small sample with similar characteristics with the actual sample during piloting. This helped identify ambiguous items and adjust the instrument accordingly.

This was done through expert judgment of the two research supervisors where each of them gave the research instruments to rate out items that are valid. After, Content Validity Index (CVI) for every instrument was determined by summing up the number of statements considered as valid by each expert judge of partitioned by the total number items in the instrument.

3.5.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to how well a research approach provides consistent and reliable outcomes (Mohammed et al, 2015). The internal consistency of the questionnaires was determined using the "Cronbach Alpha" technique. This technique was preferred because it is consistent with the usage of surveys with a range of possible replies for each item. The Cronbach Alpha coefficient was set at 0.70. After, content validity was used on the basis of the extent to which questions signify the issue they are supposed to measure (Kumar, 2014).

Table 3.3: Cronbach Alpha Coefficient Model Results Table

Variable	Anchor	Cronbach Alpha Coefficient	No of Items
Socio-cultural factors	5-point	.837	6
Economic factors	5-point	.818	5
Political factors	5-point	.779	5
Geo-environmental factors	5-point	.802	5

Source: Primary data, (2022)

According to the results of the study, all the constructs achieved a Cronbach Alpha score of over 0.7. This means that they are good candidates for use in the main research. In a study conducted by Daud et al (2018), the researchers noted that the values between 0.6 and 0.8 are generally considered moderate.

3.6 Data Analysis Procedures

The collected data was checked for missing information and internal consistency. After the queries were coded and entered into a statistical package, descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data. They were used to describe the variables' basic features. Inferential statistics were then used to examine the link between the variables.

The qualitative data was sorted by looking for notable patterns, organizing the data into themes, inferring meaning from the data, and finally putting together a logical chain of evidence. The use of theme analysis was ideal because it is a more efficient and expedient procedure.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Researcher obtained an introduction letter from the Catholic University of Eastern Africa before proceeding for data collection. During data collection, the researcher sought and obtained informed consent before administering the research instruments. Besides, the researcher observed the principal fairness by selecting respondents from the targeted population within Rumbek, South Sudan. Prior to undertaking field study, the researcher liaised with community projects' implementing Staff, Microfinance Institutions, Community leaders and Businesswomen to inform them of the study, its goals, and the desire to conduct the study in their various institutions. The researcher endeavoured to protect the respondents from harms either psychological or physical injury. The researcher did not disclose the respondents' names and responses. The researcher assured the respondents of confidentiality of identity, information and records as well as explain

to them the benefits and risks of participating in the study. In addition, the researcher upheld the principle of respect of persons by treating respondents with dignity and respecting their views as unique and autonomous individuals who deserve respect.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, which were gathered through a variety of sources, including a survey, literature review, and interviews. The results of the study are presented in terms of their supporting research questions and study objectives. The quantitative information collected during the study was analysed using the Likert's scale of 1-to-5.

4.1 Data Presentation

Response rate

Out of a total of 144 respondents, only 112 respondents participated in this study; therefore, the response rate for the current study based on the questionnaires and interviews was 77.8% which is applicable and fit to analyse and interpret data because its score is above 70% as recommended by Darren (2022).

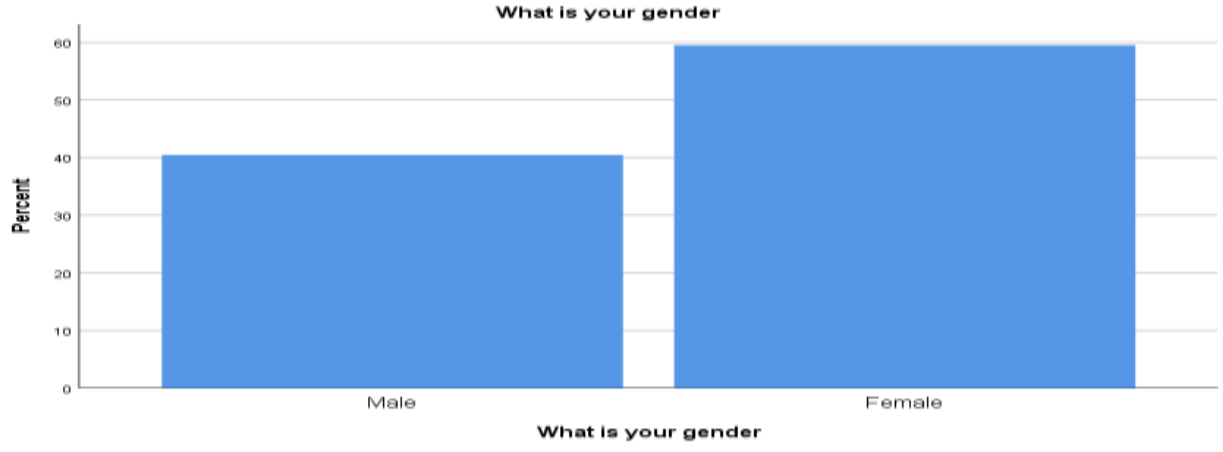
Table 4: Response Rate

	Targeted Number	Valid Instruments	Percentage
Questionnaires	108	84	77.8
Interviews guides	36	28	77.8
Total	**144**	**112**	

Source of data: Primary data, (2022)

4.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

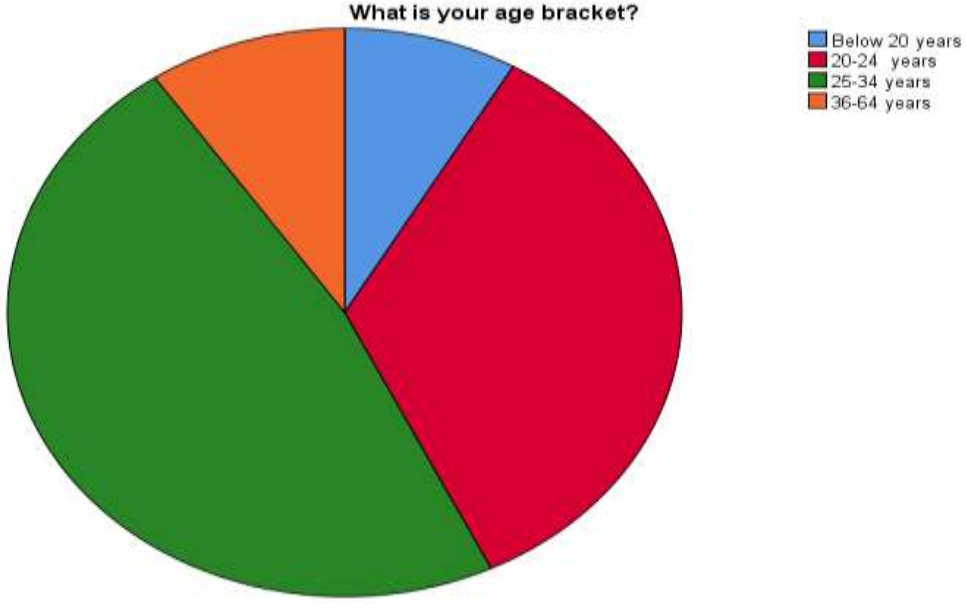
Figure 2: Gender of respondents



Source: Primary data, 2022

As seen in Figure 2, results revealed that 43 (38.3%) of the respondents were males while 69(61.7%) of the respondents were females. This means that more data was collected from the females than the male gender; however, the results also show that there was no gender bias since the study is about women groups.

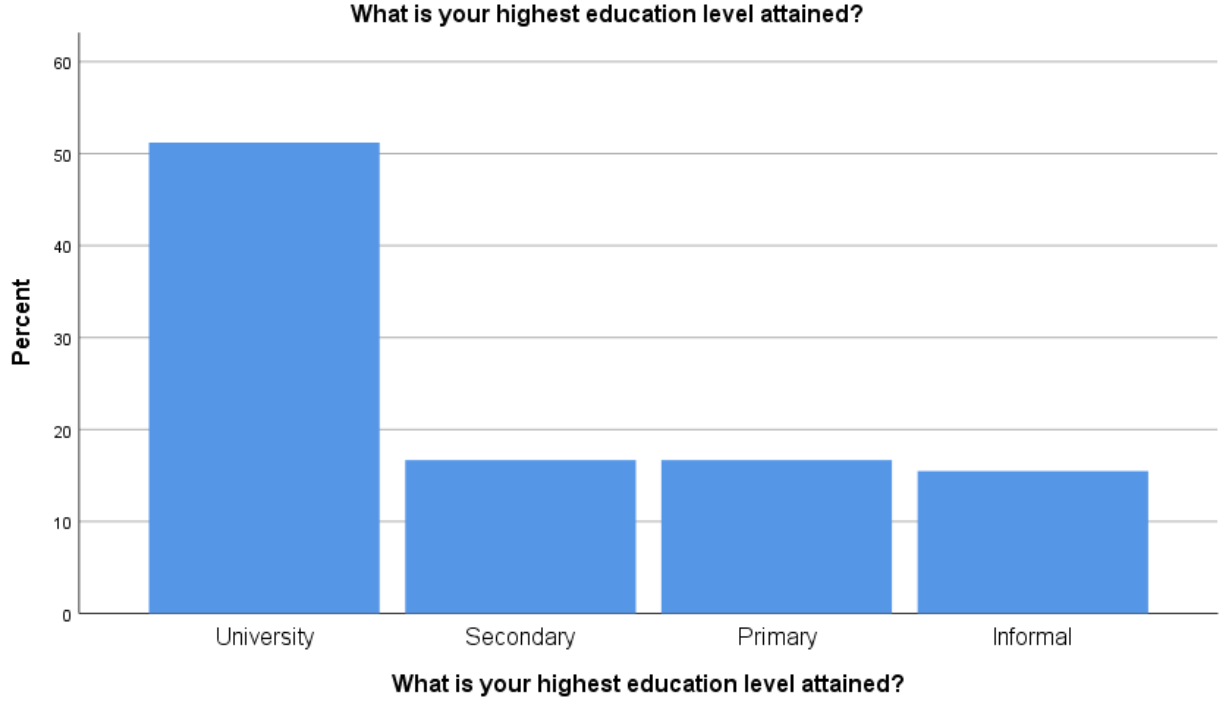
Figure 3: Age bracket of respondents



Source: Primary data, 2022

As seen in Figure 3, results indicate that 53 (47.3%) belonged to the age bracket of 25-34 years, this was the majority age bracket. 39 (34.8%) were aged between 20-24 years and 11 (9.8%) were aged 36-64 years and above while 9 (8.3%) were aged below 20 years. This means that all respondents are mature and assumed to have a good understanding on sustainability of women groups income generating projects hence provided reliable and relevant information.

Figure 4: Highest level of education



Source: Primary data, 2022

As seen in Figure 4, results revealed that majority of the respondents summarised by 58 (51.7%) who had university level of education while 18 (16.1%) had both secondary and primary level of education while 18 (16.1%) had informal education. The results also reveal that all respondents had a relevant level of education and as such expected to have knowledge about the study variables.

4.2 Data analysis and interpretation

4.2.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The first objective of the study was to determine the socio-cultural factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Table 5: Socio-cultural factors

	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.
There are taboos such as early marriage which affect women from engaging in income generating activities	35 (41.7%)	22 (26.2%)	11 (13.1%)	11 (13.1%)	5 (6.0%)	2.1548	1.26581
Women often receive education and trainings on income generating activities	19 (22.6%)	48 (57.1%)	9 (10.7%)	5 (6.0%)	3 (3.6%)	2.1071	.94446
There are no skills development programs for women from succeeding in income generating projects	37 (44.0%)	32 (38.1%)	4 (4.8%)	7 (8.3%)	4 (4.8%)	1.9167	1.12162
Lack of family support prevent women from participating in income generating activities	42 (50.0%)	28 (33.3%)	4 (4.8%)	5 (6.0%)	5 (6.0%)	1.8452	1.14591
Community has negative attitudes towards women income generating activities	46 (54.8%)	28 (33.3%)	3 (3.6%)	6 (7.1%)	1 (1.2%)	1.6667	.93568
Lack of institutional support from government, civil society, NGOs and private sectors is the greatest barrier to women income generating activities	42 (50.0%)	34 (40.5%)	3 (3.6%)	3 (3.6%)	2 (2.4%)	1.6786	.89390

Source: Primary data, 2022

Respondents were asked to identify the main types of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan. In interview sessions, respondents mentioned that.

> *"Salon hairdressing is a popular business for women in Rumbek. With the demand for hairstyling services growing, many women have started their own hairdressing salons. These salons offer a range of services including haircuts, hair styling, and hair coloring. Also, agriculture is the backbone of the economy in Rumbek, and many women have formed farming groups to cultivate crops such as maize, sorghum, and vegetables. These groups help women to pool resources and knowledge, and to access training and support from government agencies and NGOs. In addition to farming groups, women's vegetable groups are also common in Rumbek. These groups enable women to produce and sell vegetables such as tomatoes, local vegetable known as Kudhura, okra, Sukuma wiki onions, and peppers. They also help to increase food security and promote healthy eating habits in the community. Also, there are Village Savings and Loan Association that that provide a safe and convenient way for women to save money and access credit. In Rumbek, many women have formed VSLAs to finance their businesses and improve their livelihoods (Key respondent, A)".*

On the question of whether there are taboos such as early marriage which affect women from engaging in income generating activities; the results show a combined percentage of 57 (67.9%) generally agreed to the statement; this can be implied to mean that various taboos limit women's opportunities for education, career development, and financial independence, all of which are crucial for their ability to engage in income-generating activities. Respondents revealed that in various regions of Rumbek, early marriage is viewed as a norm and is reinforced by cultural and religious beliefs. This has resulted in women being married off at a young age and being denied the chance to develop their skills and knowledge, leading to limited earning potential and increased dependency on their husbands. This means that there is need to change attitudes and beliefs, and empowering women through education and access to resources that allow them to make informed choices and lead independent lives.

Respondents were also asked whether women often receive education and trainings on income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 67(79.7%). The results can be interpreted to mean that providing women with education and training in income-generating projects is a crucial step in empowering them to become financially independent and break the

cycle of poverty. Respondents revealed that the type of education and training includes skills development in areas such as entrepreneurship, agriculture, and technology, as well as financial literacy and management. By equipping women with these skills, they can start and grow their own businesses, create jobs, and increase their earning potential. This means that education and training help women to overcome barriers such as discrimination and limited access to credit and markets, allowing them to fully participate in the economy and achieve financial stability.

On the question of whether there are no skills development programs for women from succeeding in income generating projects; the results showed that a combined percentage of 69(82.1%) generally agreed to the statement which means that it is more difficult for women to succeed in income-generating projects. According to key respondent A;

> *"Without access to education and training, women lack the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to start and run a successful business. This has been a major limitation to their ability to generate income, achieve financial stability, and escape poverty. To address this, governments, non-government organizations, and private sector companies can partner to develop and implement skills development programs specifically for women" (Key respondent A).*

This means that skills development programs can provide women with the support and resources they need to overcome the challenges they face and succeed in income-generating projects.

The respondents were further asked whether the lack of family support prevent women from participating in income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 70(83.3%) who generally agreed to the statement. This can be concluded to mean that lack of family support is a significant barrier for women who wish to participate in income-generating projects. Respondents revealed that in Rumbek, there are cultural norms and expectations that women prioritize domestic and care-giving responsibilities over paid work. This situation has led to resistance from family members, who do not support a woman's decision to engage in income-generating projects. This means that women face resistance from their partners, who view their involvement in paid work as a threat to their own status and control within the household.

The respondents were also asked whether community has negative attitudes towards women income generating activities; the results show that a combined percentage of 74(88.1%) generally agreed to the statement. This means that the attitude of community in Rumbek is a significant barrier for women who wish to participate in income-generating projects. According to key respondent B;

> *"When women are viewed as less capable or less worthy than men, they face discrimination and stigma, making it more difficult for them to access resources, markets, and credit. In addition, negative attitudes also discourage women from pursuing income-generating activities, as they may feel that their efforts will not be valued or supported by their communities, and this is very common around here" (Key respondent B).*

This means that communities in Rumbek are not so supportive of women's participation in the workforce and do not necessarily recognise their contributions.

On the question of whether there is lack of institutional support from government, civil society, NGOs and private sectors is the greatest barrier to women income generating activities; the results showed a combined percentage of 76(90.5%) generally agreed to the statement; this implies that women face challenges such as limited access to education, training, and credit. Respondents revealed that women in Rumbek encounter systemic barriers such as discrimination and unequal treatment within the legal and regulatory systems, making it more difficult for them to start and grow their businesses. This means that in Rumbek various sectors do not work together in providing women with the support and resources they need to succeed in their income-generating projects.

4.2.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The second objective of the study was to establish the economic factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Table 6: Economic factors

	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.
Women have access to microfinance services to start or boost income generating activities	24 (28.6%)	35 (41.7%)	5 (6.0%)	16 (19.0%)	4 (4.8%)	2.2976	1.21020
Lack of enough skilled personnel affect women income generating activities	44 (52.4%)	30 (35.7%)	3 (3.6%)	4 (4.8%)	3 (3.6%)	1.7143	1.00086
High interest rate on loans prevents women from borrowing to start/boost income generating activities	29 (34.5%)	33 (39.3%)	11 (13.1%)	8 (9.5%)	3 (3.6%)	2.0833	1.08892
Many women lack start-up capital to start income generating activities	29 (34.5%)	42 (50.0%)	5 (6.0%)	5 (6.0%)	3 (3.6%)	1.9405	.98606
Stiff competition among women with income generating activities prevent growth and sustainability	20 (23.8%)	35 (41.7%)	10 (11.9%)	11 (13.1%)	8 (9.5%)	2.4286	1.25425

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents were asked whether women have access to microfinance services to start or boost income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 59(70.3%) who generally agreed; this implies that microfinance institutions provide small loans and other financial services to individuals who lack access to traditional banking services. It was also revealed that microfinance services in Rumbek often target women and other marginalized groups who have difficulty obtaining financing through traditional means. This means that these services can help women start or boost income-generating projects, such as starting a small business, buying inventory, or investing in agricultural production. This means microfinance services play a significant role in promoting economic empowerment for women and supporting their financial independence.

On the question of whether lack of enough skilled personnel affect women income generating activities; the results showed a combined percentage of 74(88.1%) who generally

agreed to the statement. This implies that lack of skilled personnel can affect women's income-generating activities. According to key respondent A;

> *"In Rumbek, a number of women face challenges in obtaining the necessary training and education to acquire the skills needed to succeed in their chosen business or trade. This has greatly limited their ability to grow their businesses, increase their productivity, and generate higher incomes. In addition, a lack of access to professional networks and mentorship opportunities also limits the ability of women to develop the skills they need to succeed in their businesses" (Key respondent C).*

This means that there is need to address such barriers through targeted skills training and education programs, as well as initiatives to promote gender equality in the workplace.

The respondents were also asked whether high interest rate on loans prevents women from borrowing to start/boost income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 62(73.8%). The results can be concluded to mean that women face difficulty in accessing the funds they need to start or grow businesses due to high interest rates. It was revealed that the high interest rates have limited women's ability to generate income as a result perpetuating poverty and income inequality. It was also revealed that the government has not done enough to address this issue by maybe offering low-interest loan programs specifically targeted towards women entrepreneurs, or by implementing policies that encourage banks to offer more favorable loan terms to female borrowers. This means that women do not have adequate financial education and resources which could help them make informed decisions.

On the question of whether many women lack start-up capital to start income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 71(84.5%) generally agreed to the statement; this can be implied to mean that the lack of start-up capital is one of the major barriers that women face when trying to start their own businesses. According to key respondent C;

> *"In Rumbek, women lack start-up capital due to a number of factors which include unequal pay, limited access to credit, and a lack of assets to use as collateral for loans. The same group of women lack funding and resources specifically for women entrepreneurs" (Key respondent C).*

This means that parties such as government, financial institutions and community-based organisations do not play a big role in supporting women's entrepreneurship through mentorship, networking opportunities, and skill-building workshops.

On the question of whether stiff competition among women with income generating activities prevent growth and sustainability; the results showed a combined percentage of 55(65.5%) who generally agreed to the statement; this can be interpreted to mean that women entrepreneurs in Rumbek have not yet fully benefited from support networks, such as business associations or mentorship programs, which provide resources and help build connections within the industry. It was also revealed that there are still gaps in improving access to markets and customers who would in turn differentiate themselves and increase on competitiveness. This means that there is still a lot to be done in providing business training, technical assistance, and access to capital to help women entrepreneurs grow and scale their businesses.

4.2.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The third objective of the study was to analyse the political factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Table 7: Political factors

	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.
Recurrent political instability scares women from engaging in income generating activities	50 (59.5%)	26 (31.0%)	3 (3.6%)	3 (3.6%)	2 (2.4%)	1.5833	.90791
Available laws and regulations do not support women income generating activities	27 (32.1%)	20 (23.8%)	13 (15.5%)	15 (17.9%)	9 (10.7%)	2.5119	1.38402
High taxation affects growth of women income generating activities	25 (29.8%)	46 (54.8%)	3 (3.6%)	5 (6.0%)	5 (6.0%)	2.0357	1.05792
Many women lack start-up capital to start income generating activities	29 (34.5%)	42 (50.0%)	4 (4.8%)	5 (6.0%)	4 (4.8%)	1.9643	1.03489
Unequal distribution of government resources prevents growth and sustainability of women income generating activities	35 (41.7%)	34 (40.5%)	9 (10.7%)	3 (3.6%)	3 (3.6%)	1.8690	.99128

Source: Primary data, 2022

The respondents were also asked whether recurrent political instability scares women from engaging in income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 76(90.5%) who generally agreed to the statement; this can be concluded to mean that political instability can disrupt economic activities, leading to uncertainty and decreased confidence in the business environment. It was revealed that the Rumbek has experienced instability since 2017 which

disrupted economic activities and created an uncertain and unstable environment making it difficult for women to plan and invest in their businesses, as they always fear that their investments will not be secure. According to key respondent D;

“Political instability has particularly negatively impacted on women, who have faced increased levels of violence and displacement, as well as limited access to resources and services. The ongoing conflict has also made it more difficult for women to participate in the workforce and to start or grow income-generating activities, as they may face challenges in accessing markets and finance, as well as increased insecurity and violence” (Key respondent D).

This means that political instability has led to violence and displacement has had a direct impact on women's ability to participate in the workforce and access financial services.

On the question of whether available laws and regulations do not support women income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 47(55.9%) who generally agreed to the statement; this can be implied to mean that the laws and regulations in South Sudan can present challenges for women's income-generating projects. Respondents also revealed that in many cases, the legal and regulatory environment in the country is not supportive of women's economic empowerment, and women may face discriminatory laws and practices that limit their access to resources, markets, and finance. Additionally, the weak rule of law and limited enforcement of existing laws and regulations can create a challenging business environment for women entrepreneurs. This means that certain laws and regulations in South Sudan limit women's access to financial services, property ownership, or markets, making it more difficult for them to start or grow their businesses.

The respondents were also asked whether high taxation affects growth of women income generating projects; the results showed that a combined percentage of 71(84.6%) who generally agreed to the statement; this can be concluded to mean that high tax burdens reduce the disposable income that women have to invest in their businesses, making it more difficult for them to grow and expand. It was further revealed that the region has complicated tax systems and lacks accessible tax related information which has also created more difficulty and challenges for women entrepreneurs, who have limited knowledge about tax laws and regulations. This has discouraged investment in the informal sector, where many women's businesses are located. This means that

there are unfair tax policies which are not so transparent and difficult to understand by a significant number of women.

On the question of whether many women lack start-up capital to start income generating projects; the results established a combined percentage of 71(84.5%) who generally agreed to the statement; this can be implied to mean that access to financing is often limited for women due to a variety of factors, including gender-based discrimination, limited credit history and collateral, and a lack of awareness about financial services. According to key respondent B;

“This can make it difficult for women to obtain the financing they need to start or grow their businesses. Microfinance services can play an important role in addressing this challenge by providing women with small loans and other financial services, such as savings accounts and insurance, that can help them access the capital they need to start or grow their businesses” (Key respondent B).

This means that there is a difficult and less enabling environment for women's economic empowerment.

The respondents were further asked whether unequal distribution of government resources prevents growth and sustainability of women income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 69(82.2%) who generally agreed; this can be concluded to mean that government resources and services in Rumbek are not effectively targeted to women, who face additional challenges in accessing these resources due to gender-based discrimination and other barriers. As a result, women have limited access to infrastructure, training, and financial services that are essential for the growth and sustainability of their businesses.

4.2.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The fourth objective of the study was to examine the geo-environmental factors affecting sustainability of women income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan.

Table 8: Geo-environmental factors

	SA	A	NS	D	SD	Mean	Std Dev.
Drastic weather patterns such as flood and drought affect operations of women income generating activities	41 (48.8%)	26 (31.0%)	8 (9.5%)	4 (4.8%)	5 (6.0%)	1.8810	1.14497
High energy costs affect profitability/surplus of women income generating activities	21 (25.0%)	44 (52.4%)	10 (11.9%)	5 (6.0%)	4 (4.8%)	2.1310	1.01530
Poor roads and communication networks prevent sustainability of women income generating activities	50 (59.5%)	22 (26.2%)	4 (4.8%)	3 (3.6%)	5 (6.0%)	1.7024	1.11701
Poor waste disposal and drainage systems affects smooth running of women income generating activities	39 (46.4%)	23 (27.4%)	8 (9.5%)	8 (9.5%)	6 (7.1%)	2.0357	1.26535

Source: Primary data, 2022

On the question of whether drastic weather patterns such as flood and drought affect operations of women income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 67(79.8%) who generally agreed to the statement; this means that extreme weather conditions such as floods and droughts can have a significant impact on women's income-generating projects. The respondents revealed that drastic weather patterns cause loss of crops and livestock, damage to infrastructure, and interrupt supply chains, all of which have negatively affected women's income and their ability to support their families. This means that there is need to consider the role of women in economic development and implement strategies to mitigate the impact of weather-related disasters on their livelihoods.

On the question of whether high energy costs affect profitability/surplus of women income generating activities; the results revealed a combined percentage of 65(77.4%) who generally agreed to the statement. According to key respondent D;

“Energy is a critical input for many businesses and high energy costs can increase operating expenses, decrease margins, and reduce the overall profitability of the enterprise. This is

particularly true for women-owned micro, small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) that often operate on tight budgets and have limited access to capital to invest in energy-efficient technologies" (Key respondent D).

This means that high energy costs also limit the ability of these businesses to expand and create more job opportunities, particularly in rural areas where access to energy is often limited.

The respondents were asked whether poor roads and communication networks prevent sustainability of women income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage of 72(85.7%) generally agreed to the statement, which means that access to transportation and communication infrastructure is crucial for women entrepreneurs to reach markets, suppliers, and customers, and to manage their businesses efficiently. It was also revealed that poor road and communication networks can increase the cost of transportation, reduce access to markets, and limit the ability of women-owned businesses to participate in the wider economy. This makes it more difficult for these businesses to remain competitive and sustainable over time which means that improving access to transportation and communication infrastructure helps to support the growth and sustainability of women's income-generating projects and contribute to economic development in the wider community.

On the question of whether poor waste disposal and drainage systems affects smooth running of women income generating projects; the results showed a combined percentage 62(73.4%) who generally agreed; this means that road and communication networks can have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating activities. Access to transportation and communication infrastructure is crucial for women entrepreneurs to reach markets, suppliers, and customers, and to manage their businesses efficiently. Poor road and communication networks can increase the cost of transportation, reduce access to markets, and limit the ability of women-owned businesses to participate in the wider economy. This has made it more difficult for these businesses to remain competitive and sustainable over time.

4.2.5 Sustainability of women income generating Projects

Rate the development of your income generating projects between the years 2016 and 2020?

Table 9: Rate the development of your income generating Projects between the years 2016 and 2020

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	High	32	38.1	38.1	38.1
	Moderate	37	44.0	44.0	82.1
	Low	15	17.9	17.9	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2022

The results in table 9 shows the development of income generating projects between 2016 and 2020, based on the survey conducted in 2022. Out of 84 respondents, 38.1% rated their development as high, 44.0% rated it as moderate, and 17.9% rated it as low. This means that a significant number of women groups are performing considerably well despite the challenges they face in the business environment.

Table 10: Did your business make profit between the years 2016 and 2020?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	37	44.0	44.0	44.0
	No	47	56.0	56.0	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2022

The table 10 shows the results of a survey about the profit made by a business between the years 2016 and 2020. The survey was conducted using primary data in 2022. The results show that 44% of the businesses surveyed made a profit during that time period, while 56% did not make a profit. The results of this survey imply that a significant portion of the businesses surveyed did not make a profit between the years 2016 and 2020. This could indicate a challenging business environment during that time period, with many businesses struggling to stay afloat. The results also suggest that there may have been factors that impacted the profitability of these businesses, such as economic downturns, conflicts and political instability increased competition, or changes in consumer behaviour.

Table 11: How many employees does your income generating project have?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1-5 employees	40	47.6	47.6	47.6
	6-10 employees	21	25.0	25.0	72.6
	11-14 employees	9	10.7	10.7	83.3
	15-19 employees	5	6.0	6.0	89.3
	20 and above	9	10.7	10.7	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2022

The table 11 shows that 47.6% of the businesses surveyed have between 1 and 5 employees, which makes up the largest group. 25% of the businesses have between 6 and 10 employees, and another 10.7% have between 11 and 14 employees. 6% of the businesses have between 15 and 19 employees, while 10.7% have 20 or more employees. These results suggest that a significant portion of the businesses surveyed are small or micro-enterprises, which typically have fewer employees.

Table 12: How would you rate the sustainably of your income generating activity?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Sustainable	47	55.9	55.9	55.9
	Not sure	14	16.6	16.6	72.5
	Unsustainable	23	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	84	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary data, 2022

The results in table 12 show that of the 84 respondents, 47 (55.9%) rated their income-generating activities as sustainable, while 23 (27.5%) rated their activities as unsustainable. 14 (16.6%) respondents were not sure about the sustainability of their activities. The results suggest that a significant proportion of the respondents believe that their income-generating activities are sustainable, which is a positive sign. However, the fact that nearly 30% of respondents rated their activities as unsustainable suggests that there are still significant challenges to be addressed in promoting sustainable income-generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan. The high percentage of respondents who were not sure about the sustainability of their activities also indicates a lack

of awareness or understanding about the factors that contribute to sustainable income-generating activities.

4.3 Discussion of findings

4.3.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The findings of this study suggest that there are various socio-cultural factors that affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. The results show that taboos such as early marriage limit women's opportunities for education, career development, and financial independence, leading to increased dependency on their husbands. Lack of education and training also limit women's skills, knowledge, and resources necessary for successful businesses. Additionally, negative attitudes from the community and lack of family support discourage women from pursuing income-generating activities.

These findings are consistent with other studies that have found cultural and societal barriers to women's economic empowerment. For example, a study by Kabeer (1999) in Bangladesh found that women's participation in income-generating activities was limited by cultural and social norms that dictated their roles as wives and mothers. Similarly, a study by Hossain (2018) in Nepal found that gender inequality and traditional gender roles limited women's participation in income-generating activities.

However, it is important to acknowledge that there are studies that present contrasting evidence to some of our findings. For instance, a study conducted in Bangladesh by Cheroue (2018), which found that high-interest rates on loans did not significantly affect women's access to credit, as women were able to negotiate favorable loan terms with lenders. Furthermore, another study in Pakistan by Abbas (2019) suggested that while access to finance was a challenge for women entrepreneurs, the lack of business skills and education posed a greater barrier to their success.

4.3.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The findings of the study indicate that there are several economic factors that affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. These factors include limited access to microfinance services, lack of skilled personnel, high-interest rates on loans, lack of start-up capital, and stiff competition among women entrepreneurs.

Studies conducted in other regions and countries have also identified similar economic factors that affect women's entrepreneurship and the sustainability of their income-generating projects. For example, a study conducted in Nigeria found that lack of access to finance and credit, limited business skills, and poor infrastructure were major barriers to women's entrepreneurship and their ability to sustain their businesses. Another study in India found that women entrepreneurs faced challenges in accessing credit and finance, lack of networks and mentorship opportunities, and a hostile business environment that limited their growth and profitability.

However, there are also studies that have found evidence against some of the findings of this study. For example, a study conducted in Bangladesh found that high-interest rates on loans did not significantly affect women's access to credit, as women were able to negotiate favorable loan terms with lenders. Another study in Pakistan found that while access to finance was a challenge for women entrepreneurs, the lack of business skills and education was a greater barrier to their success.

4.3.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The findings of the research suggest that political instability, unfavorable laws and regulations, high taxation, and lack of start-up capital are significant factors affecting the sustainability of women's income generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. These results are in support of previous studies that have highlighted the challenges facing women entrepreneurs in the country. For instance, a study by the World Bank (2016) found that women in South Sudan face significant gender-based discrimination in accessing finance, training, and markets. Similarly, another study by UN Women (2017) highlighted the need for supportive policies and programs to promote women's economic empowerment in the country.

The research findings also highlight the need for interventions to address the identified challenges facing women entrepreneurs in Rumbek, South Sudan. For example, policies and programs that support women's access to finance, training, and markets, as well as efforts to strengthen the rule of law and reduce corruption, could help to create a more favorable business environment for women entrepreneurs. Additionally, efforts to increase public awareness about the challenges facing women entrepreneurs in the country and to promote gender equality in all aspects of society could also be effective in addressing the root causes of these challenges.

4.3.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Based on the results provided, it is evident that there are several geo-environmental factors that affect the sustainability of women's income-generating projects in Rumbek, South Sudan. These include drastic weather patterns such as floods and droughts, high energy costs, poor road and communication networks, and poor waste disposal and drainage systems. These findings are supported by previous studies that have highlighted the challenges facing women entrepreneurs in developing countries.

For instance, a study by Njogu et al. (2019) found that climate change and extreme weather events have a significant impact on the livelihoods of women in rural Kenya. The study revealed that women who engage in small-scale farming and other income-generating activities are particularly vulnerable to climate change-related shocks, which can result in crop failure, livestock loss, and reduced incomes. Similarly, a study by UN Women (2015) found that women-owned businesses in Uganda face significant challenges related to access to energy and transportation infrastructure, which can limit their ability to expand and compete in the wider economy.

To provide a more comprehensive discussion, it is important to reference specific studies that directly examine the geo-environmental factors affecting women's income-generating projects in similar contexts. For example, a study conducted by Njogu et al. (2019) explored the impact of climate change and extreme weather events on the livelihoods of women in rural Kenya. The study revealed that women engaged in small-scale farming and other income-generating activities were particularly vulnerable to climate change-related shocks, resulting in crop failure, livestock loss, and reduced incomes. Similarly, a study conducted by UN Women (2015) shed light on the challenges faced by women-owned businesses in Uganda, specifically related to access to energy and transportation infrastructure, which limited their ability to expand and compete in the wider economy.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of findings, the conclusion and recommendations to the study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The study has showed that various taboos limit women's opportunities for education, career development, and financial independence, all of which are crucial for their ability to engage in income-generating activities; it has also been showed that providing women with education and training in income-generating projects is a crucial step in empowering them to become financially independent and break the cycle of poverty. It is revealed that in Rumbek, there are cultural norms and expectations that women prioritize domestic and care-giving responsibilities over paid work and women face challenges such as limited access to education, training, and credit.

5.1.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The study has revealed that microfinance institutions provide small loans and other financial services to individuals who lack access to traditional banking services; it has also been indicated that women face difficulty in accessing the funds they need to start or grow businesses due to high interest rates. The findings showed that the lack of start-up capital is one of the major barriers that women face when trying to start their own businesses and women entrepreneurs in Rumbek have not yet fully benefited from support networks, such as business associations or mentorship programs, which provide resources and help build connections within the industry.

5.1.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The study has showed that since 2017, the situation in Rumbek has been unstable. This has made it difficult for women to start and run their businesses. The study revealed that the laws and regulations in South Sudan can present challenges for women's income-generating projects. The

study also showed that high tax burdens reduce the disposable income that women have to invest in their businesses, making it more difficult for them to grow and expand and that government resources and services in Rumbek are not effectively targeted to women.

5.1.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The results revealed that extreme weather conditions such as floods and droughts can have a significant impact on women's income-generating projects; it is indicated that access to transportation and communication infrastructure is crucial for women entrepreneurs to reach markets, suppliers, and customers, and to manage their businesses efficiently. The findings indicated that road and communication networks can have a significant impact on the sustainability of women's income-generating projects.

5.2 Conclusion

5.2.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The findings underscore the critical role of socio-cultural factors in shaping the sustainability of women's income generating projects. Cultural norms and taboos limiting women's education, career opportunities, and financial independence are identified as barriers. Education and training emerge as empowering tools, enabling women to break the cycle of poverty by engaging in income-generating activities. The study concludes that addressing cultural expectations, expanding access to education, training, and credit, is pivotal for enhancing the sustainability of women's projects.

5.2.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The research highlights the significance of economic factors in determining the success of women's income generating projects. Access to microfinance institutions is instrumental in providing financial services to women who lack traditional banking access. However, the study uncovers challenges related to high interest rates and limited access to start-up capital. The research concludes that fostering accessible and affordable financial resources, coupled with support networks, is essential to overcoming financial barriers and ensuring the sustainability of women's businesses.

5.2.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Political instability since 2017 emerges as a critical challenge affecting the viability of women's income generating projects. The study identifies regulatory challenges posed by South Sudan's laws and regulations. High tax burdens hinder business growth by limiting disposable income. The research concludes that political stability, regulatory reforms, and targeted government resources are imperative to create an enabling environment that supports women entrepreneurs in sustaining their income generating projects.

5.2.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The research illuminates the substantial impact of geo-environmental factors on the sustainability of women's income generating projects. Extreme weather conditions, such as floods and droughts, are identified as threats. Access to transportation and communication infrastructure is crucial for efficient business management. The study concludes that investments in resilient infrastructure, disaster preparedness, and improved connectivity are vital for mitigating environmental risks and ensuring the longevity of women's projects.

5.3 Recommendations

5.3.1 Socio-cultural factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The NGOs, should implement programs that promote women's education and training in areas such as financial management, marketing, and entrepreneurship.

The administration of women income-generating projects should conduct community sensitization campaigns to raise awareness about the importance of gender equality and the valuable role women play in income-generating projects.

The government of Lakes State and stakeholders should develop targeted programs and initiatives that provide access to funding and resources for women's groups involved in income-generating activities.

5.3.2 Economic factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

Microfinance institutions and banks should expand their efforts to provide affordable financing options tailored to the needs of women entrepreneurs.

The government of Lakes State should prioritize providing training and support programs on financial management and planning specifically designed for women entrepreneurs.

Successful women entrepreneurs should actively advocate for the development of support networks, such as business associations or mentorship programs, to provide resources and facilitate connections within the industry.

5.3.3 Political factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The government of Lakes State, including local and national authorities, should prioritize efforts to ensure stability and peace in Rumbek and other regions.

Regulators and policymakers should conduct a thorough review of existing laws and regulations that pose challenges to women's income-generating projects.

The government of Lakes State should allocate resources and services specifically targeted towards women entrepreneurs, including access to training, business development support, and financial resources.

5.3.4 Geo-environmental factors and sustainability of women income generating projects

The government of Lakes State especially the Ministry of Infrastructures should invest in the development of transportation and communication infrastructure, including roads, bridges, and reliable internet connectivity.

The government of Lakes State and stakeholders should actively promote the use of technologies and innovations that can help women entrepreneurs adapt to extreme weather conditions such as floods and droughts.

The government Lakes Sate and stakeholders should collaborate to develop comprehensive disaster management plans and mitigation strategies that specifically address the impact of extreme weather events on women's income-generating projects.

5.4 Areas for Further Research

The impact of conflict on women income-generating projects: Since South Sudan has experienced significant conflict in recent years, it would be interesting to investigate the impact of conflict on women income-generating projects. This research can help identify the challenges

faced by women in conflict-affected areas and provide recommendations on how to address these challenges.

The role of education in women income-generating projects: Investigate the impact of education on the success of women income-generating projects. This research can help identify the types of education and training that are most effective in supporting women's economic empowerment in Rumbek, South Sudan.

The sustainability of women-led cooperatives: Investigate the sustainability of women-led cooperatives in Rumbek, South Sudan. This research can provide insights into the benefits and challenges of women-led cooperatives and provide recommendations on how to support the sustainability of these cooperatives.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Letter of Introduction (CUEA)

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA
Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Department of Social Sciences and Development Studies

5th December 2022

The Director
National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation
Box 30623 - 00100
NAIROBI - KENYA

RE: MARY NYANAJIEK MAYANG **REG. NO. 1024865**

I am writing to introduce to you **Mary Nyanajiek Mayang** who is a finalist student pursuing Masters of Arts in Project Planning and Management Degree at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya, and to request you to assist her to accomplish her academic research requirements.

Mary has completed all course work requirements for this programme. However, every student in the programme is required to conduct research and write a report/thesis submitted during the final years of studies.

Accordingly, **Mary's** research topic has been approved. She will conduct research on the following topic:

"An Analysis on Sustainability of Women Groups Income Generating Projects in Rumbek, South Sudan"

Thanking you in advance for any assistance given to Mary

Sincerely yours,

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA HEAD OF SOCIAL SCIENCES DEPARTMENT 05 DEC 2022 P.O. Box 62157 - 00200, NAIROBI

Dr. Njeri S. Ngacha, PhD, OFS
Head, Department of Social Sciences and Development Studies

THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA (CUEA) P.O. BOX 62157 00200 Nairobi – KENYA
Tel: 020-2525811-5, 8890023-4, Fax: 8891084, Website: www.cuea.edu
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Appendix B: Authorization letter from MCRD

Republic of South Sudan

Ministry of Cooperative & Rural Development

Lakes State-Rumbek

Minister's Office

20th February 2023

To Whom It May Concern

Ref: PERMISSION FOR MARY NYANAJIEK MAYANG

I am writing this letter to introduce to you **Mary Nyanajiek Mayang Majoc** who is conducting an academic research for the fulfillment of her studies in Rumbek Center and Rumbek East Counties. Mary is a finalist student pursuing Maters of Arts in Project Planning and Management at The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Nairobi – Kenya.

Her research topic **"An analysis on Sustainability of Women Groups Income Generating Projects in Rumbek, South Sudan"**, is related to the state Ministry of Cooperative and Rural Development.

In this regard therefore, I hereby request all the security and authorities concerned to allow and assist her to accomplish her academic research requirements without hindrance.

Thank you in advance for any assistance given to her

Sincerely yours

Hon. Philip Taban Chir
Minister for cooperation & Rural Development
Lakes State-Rumbek

REPUBLIC OF SOUTH SUDAN LAKES STATE-RUMBEK Ministry of Cooperative & Rural Development OFFICE OF THE MINISTER

20/02/2023

Telephone: 0922677444. Email:tabanchir82@gmail.com

Appendix C: Questionnaire for Representatives of Women IGPs

Dear respondent,

My name is Mary Nyanajiek Mayang, a master's student at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa Nairobi, Kenya pursuing Master of Arts in Project Planning and Management. I am conducting a study on "An Analysis on Influencing Factors and Sustainability of Women Groups Income Generating Projects in Rumbek, South Sudan" as part of the course requirements. In this regard, I humbly request you to participate in this study by answering this questionnaire that is pertinent and beneficial to the research's completion. Be assured that any information you share will be kept in strict confidence and used solely for academic purposes. Would you like to participate in this study?

Yes ( ) No ( )

Instructions

Please check the applicable box [] or provide your comment in the space provided.

Section A: Demographic Information of the Respondents

1. What is your age bracket?

Below 20years ( ) 20-24 years ( ) 25- 34 years ( ) 35-64 years ( ) 65 and above years ( )

2. What is your highest education level attained?

University ( ) Tertiary/ Vocational ( ) Secondary ( ) Primary ( ) Informal ( )

3. What is your marital status?

Married ( ) Single ( ) Divorced ( ) Separated ( ) Widowed ( )

4. How long have you been running this income generating projects (business)?

Less than a year ( ) 1-4 years ( ) 5-8 years ( ) 9-12 years ( ) 13-16 years ( ) 17-20 years ( ) above 20 years ( )

5. Indicate the type of your income generating activity (business)

……

Section B: Socio-cultural Factors

6. The following statements are about the impact of socio-cultural factors on women income generating activities. Please rate your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Uncertain (U), 4=Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

No	Statements	Strong Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	There are taboos such as early marriage which affect women from engaging in income generating activities					
2	Women often receive education and trainings on income generating activities					
3	There are no skills development programs for women from succeeding in income generating projects					
4	Lack of family support prevent women from participating in income generating activities					
5	Community has negative attitudes towards women income generating activities					
6	Lack of institutional support from government, civil society, NGOs and private sectors is the greatest barrier to women income generating activities					

Section C: Economic Factors

7. The following statements are about the effect economic factors on women income generating activities. Please rate your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Uncertain (U), 4=Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

No	Statements	Strong Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Women have access to microfinance services to start or boost income generating activities					
2	Lack of enough skilled personnel affect women income generating activities					
3	High interest rate on loans prevents women from borrowing to start/boost income generating activities					
4	Many women lack start-up capital to start income generating activities					
5	Stiff competition among women with income generating activities prevent growth and sustainability					

Section D: Political Factors

8. The following statements are about the effect political factors on women income generating activities. Please rate your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Uncertain (U), 4=Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

No	Statements	Strong Agree	Agree	Uncertain	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Recurrent political instability scares women from engaging in income generating activities					
2	Available laws and regulations do not support women income generating activities					
3	High taxation affects growth of women income generating activities					

4	Many women lack start-up capital to start income generating activities					
5	Unequal distribution of government resources prevents growth and sustainability of women income generating activities					

Section E: Geo-environmental Factors

9. The following statements are about the effect geo-environmental factors on women income generating activities. Please rate your agreement with each item on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1=Strongly Disagree (SA), 2= Disagree (D), 3=Uncertain (U), 4=Agree (A), and 5=Strongly Agree (SA)

No	**Statements**	**Strong Agree**	**Agree**	**Uncertain**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1	**Natural raw materials are available and easily accessible**					
2	Drastic weather patterns such as flood and drought affect operations of women income generating activities					
3	High energy costs affect profitability/surplus of women income generating activities					
4	Poor roads and communication networks prevent sustainability of women income generating activities					
5	Poor waste disposal and drainage systems affects smooth running of women income generating activities					

Section F: Sustainability of Women Income Generating Activities

10. How would you rate the development of your income generating activities between the years 2016 and 2020?

    High ( ) Moderate ( ) Low ( ) None ( )

11. Did your business make profit between the years 2016 and 2020?

    Yes ( ) No ( )

    If yes, specify average profit per year

    …….

12. How many employees does your income generating activity have?

    1-5 employees ( ) 6-10 employees ( ) 11-14 employees ( ) 15-19 ( ) 20 and above ( )

13. How would you rate the sustainably of your income generating activity?

  Sustainable ( ) Not sure ( ) Unsustainable ( )

12. What measures would you propose towards improving women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

Appendix D: Interview Guide for Key Informants

A. Biodata

a) Gender……

b) Age of respondent……

c) Education level……

d) Area of residence……

e) Position in the community/organization…….

f) Date of interview……..

B. Socio-cultural Factors and Sustainability of Women Income Generating Activities

i. What are the main types of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

.....

.....

.....

ii. Please name examples of socio-cultural factors which affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……

iii. How does education and training affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……

iv. What effect does family support have on sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……

v. How do community attitudes affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

…….....

vi. How does institutional support affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

C. Economic Factors and Sustainability of Women Income Generating Activities

a) How does microcredit support affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……....

b) How does availability of human capital affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

c) How does interest rate affect sustainability of women income generate activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

d) How does start-up capital affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

e) How does competition affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

a) In what way does exchange rate affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……
……

D. Political Factors and Sustainability of Women Income Generating Activities

i. What is the effect of political instability on sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

.....
.....

ii. How do laws and regulations affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

.....

iii. What is the effect of taxation on sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

.....

iv. How does government distribution of resources affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

E. Geo-Environmental Factors Political Factors and Sustainability of Women Income Generating Activities

a) How do adverse weather patterns affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……...

b) How do energy costs affect sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

c) What is the effect of waste disposal systems on sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……....

d) What would you suggest is the effective way of enhancing sustainability of women income generating activities in Rumbek, South Sudan?

……

……

THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

Appendix E: Research Work plan

ACTIVITY	Jan 2021	Feb-April 2022	May-June 2022	July-Aug 2022	May 2023	June 2023	July 2023
Concept Paper							
Proposal writing							
Proposal defense							
Data collection & analysis							
Final Thesis Defense							
Thesis submission							

Appendix F: BUDGET

Budget Items	**Number of items**	**Cost per item(ssp)**	**Total Cost (ssp)**
Printing Research Proposal	3	540	1,620
Research Assistants allowance	2	5000	10,000
Travel (Nairobi Juba &Juba Nairobi)	2	30,000	60,000
Printing Questionnaires	250	20	5,000
Printing and binding of final research draft	3	3,000	9,000
Article Publication	1	20,000	20,000
Total			105,620

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I HEREBY CONFIRM THAT **MARY NYANAJIEK MAYANG** REG NO: **1024865**, SUBMITTED A CHECK OF ANTIPLAGIARISM ON CRITICAL EVALUATION OF **INFLUENCING FACTORS ON SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN GROUPS INCOME GENERATING PROJECTS IN RUMBEK, SOUTH SUDAN. A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF ARTS IN PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT (MPM) DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SCIENCES & DEVELOPMENT STUDIES FACULTY OF ARTS & SOCIAL SCIENCES THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN AFRICA.**

Verification by Systems Librarian:

Name: HARUN MWANGI Signature: ..... Date: 21/09/2023



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