

ABSTRACT

Community gardens have helped to fight poverty in Zimbabwe's vulnerable rural communities in the face of climate change. However, these gardens normally collapse soon after the donor leaves raising questions about borrowed climate change initiatives and their capacity for sustainability and resilience among communities. The study assessed the performance of Caritas initiated and sponsored community gardens in Chaka ward, Chirumanzu District, during and after the sponsors' regime. Data was collected using questionnaires, interviews, and direct observations. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics and content analysis. Results show that the gardens flourished during Caritas reign but quickly shrank and even folded after the NGO's departure. The research recommends that project initiators should stay a while longer than they are currently doing. Rural District Councils should create a community projects department to take over assistance to community projects after the sponsor has left. A nominal fee should also be paid by beneficiaries while the project is running under the initial sponsor and even after. This will enable continuity and enhance sustainability even after the project decommissioning stage.