Effect of Project Selection Criteria on Performance of National Government Constituency Development Fund Funded Projects: Case of Kiambu County, Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The Constituency Development Fund was established in Kenya in 2003 with a view to addressing regional imbalances and empowering communities to prioritise and manage development projects at the grass root. This has made significant contribution in bringing essential services to the grass root. Many complaints have however been lodged by constituents with regard to performance of projects as a result of poor choice of projects, poorly constructed projects, stalled projects and projects that are completed but not in use. In the years 2013/2014 to 2015/2016, the National Government allocated a total of Kes 86.8 Billion to all the constituencies with Ruiru constituency being allocated Kes 279 million to finance different projects in line with CDF Act. Different researchers have investigated various factors that affect the performance of NG-CDF funded project. The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of project selection criteria on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru Constituency, Kiambu County, Kenya. Project cost, time to completion and quality of the outcome have been noted to be the most visible and significant indicators of project performance due to the objectivity that characterizes their measurement and their direct economic implications if they are exceeded. The specific objectives were to investigate the effect of alignment with strategy, community participation, capacity to implement projects and feasibility of the project on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru constituency in Kiambu County. The study was anchored on the theory of constraints, strategic alignment theory and theory of rational choice. The study employed a quantitative design using descriptive and inferential statistics to collect and analyze data and make inferences on the effect of selection criteria on performance of projects. The study’s units of analysis were 91 CDF projects, in Ruiru constituency in education, water, health, transport, environment and social services sectors that were approved between 2013/2014 to 2015/2016 financial years. The units of observation were 131 representatives comprising of a member of the executive of constituency committee and project management committee, an ordinary member of each of these committees, officers in charge of ministries of education, water, health, transport, environment and social services at sub county level. Data was collected using a questionnaire and an observations checklist. The relationship between the variables was determined through descriptive statistics, regression and correlation analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21. The researcher used test retest test reliability of the questionnaire. The research established that, the independent variables alignment with strategy (X₁), feasibility of project (X₂), capacity to implement projects (X₃) and community participation (X₄) affected performance of projects with aggregate mean scores of 3.46, 3.42, 3.31 and 3.31 and Pearson correlation values of r= 0.515, r=0.736, r=0.765 and r=0.679 respectively. The regression model had an R Square value of 0.661 inferring that they explained 66.1% of project performance. However, it was established that the constituency did not have a strategic plan making coordination of development efforts
disjointed. There were instances of projects that could not be identified on the ground, Poor documentation of project approvals and dissemination of information to stakeholders making it difficult to track projects absence of schedules and budgets hence no benchmark for measuring progress of cost and timelines. Many of the people charged with managing the projects lacked qualifications making it difficult to make appropriate judgments and there were many instances where communities were not involved in project management processes. Researcher recommends that there should be deliberate effort to align project objectives with organisation strategy, CDF funded projects must be evaluated to establish their feasibility, Constituency must build capacity to implement projects and community should be sufficiently involved in project identification and prioritisation. The CDF Act should be improved to ensure a more rigorous process of project identification, selection, evaluation and approval with minimum thresholds to be met before a project is accepted for funding. Further research should be undertaken on how to link project management with organisation strategy with particular reference to CDF funded projects.

Key Words: Project Management, Project Selection Criteria, National Government Constituency Development Fund Funded Projects, Kiambu County

DOI: 10.7176/ijcab.v3iIV.49, URN: nbn:de:0000ijcab.v3iIV.492

Cite this Article:

1. INTRODUCTION

Project management methodology is increasingly being applied in public sector in upgrading management capabilities to enable efficient delivery of projects and attainment of development objectives (Arnaboldi, Azzone & Savoldelli, 2004). The projects and programs that are selected to be undertaken should be the ones that are capable of efficiently delivering the strategic objectives of the organisation; in line with its capacity and capability to produce outputs that are willingly accepted by end users and customers (Wheeler 2013). Usually, organisations are constrained by resources which makes selection of projects and programs a key function of both public and private sector organisations (Wheeler 2013). This makes it imperative for organisations to have objective project selection criteria, which take into consideration the needs of stakeholders and available resources. To successfully discriminate undesirable projects, there must be criteria able to incorporate organizational culture, selection process, knowledge of the business, knowledge of the work, level of education, experience, governance, risk awareness, preconceptions and urgency (wheeler 2013). According to the Project Management Institute, PMI (2013), some of criteria used to select and evaluate projects are alignment with organizational strategy, organizational goals and objectives, expected benefits, market share, market growth, project cost, dependencies, risks, legal and regulatory compliance, human resources capabilities and capacities, technology capabilities and capacities and urgency. According the Asian Development Bank, ADB (2007), active and dedicated participation of the key stakeholders in the design and implementation of projects, especially those at the grass-roots level, contribute significantly to the sustainability of developmental activities, through increased ownership and more effective use of grass roots level inputs. The European Union Cooperation
Program has a two stage project selection process with the first stage based on administrative compliance and eligibility criteria and stage two based on relevance of a project, sustainability, innovation and implementation related criteria.

According to Kenya’s CDF Act 2015, NG-CDF funded should as a minimum be, community based works and services for projects aligned with functions of the national government. In addition, it has eligibility and compliance criteria which include application timelines, prescribed application and submission formats and project selection process. According to clause 16 (f) of the CDF Act 2015, the National Government Constituencies Development Fund Board should encourage best practices in the implementation of projects including institutionalization of project management best practices in the management of the CDF projects. According to Puthamont & Charoenngam (2006), the most difficult stage in strategy management is in its implementation. Organisations, whether public or private that use projects to achieve their objectives must strive to select, prioritise and implement projects in adherence to project management methodology. Success of the projects will greatly depend on how well they are prepared right from their selection and prioritization. The researcher intends to investigate whether the CDF projects in Ruiru constituency are aligned with strategic plan, whether they are technically and economically feasible, whether the constituency has capacity to implement projects and whether the community is involved in identification, prioritization and implementation of CDF projects and whether these factors affect performance of projects in Ruiru constituency Kiambu county, Kenya.

Project performance is ability of a project to be completed within its budget and due date, within the intended design to the satisfaction of the stakeholders. It is influenced by factors which relate to methods of generating, obtaining and disseminating expertise on off-site production projects (Pendlebury, Gibb, & Pasquire, 2005). Project performance is tied to project success and project objectives (Chan & Chan, 2004); Sadeh, Dvir, & Shenhar, (2000) and it is measured on the ability to meet design goals, projects benefit to end users and benefit to the developing organization. Chan & Chan, (2004) developed a consolidated framework for measuring project success which included cost, time, environmental performance, quality and client satisfaction. According to Loader, (2002), success of a project is influenced by the nature and source of funds and payments scheduling engaged by a given organization. Bryde, (2003), noted that the experience of the client in project management processes influences decisions taken during the lifetime of the project. Some decisions like design changes irrespective of the stage of a project have significant influence on success of a project. A lack of adequate experience on the part of the client and project designers are likely to lead to decisions with significant cost implications that may lead to cost and time overruns (Naoum, 1994). The effectiveness of client’s representative and construction management team, and the scope of works usually affect construction time performance (Walker, 1995). Cost performance may also be affected by variations and modifications during the construction period (Chan & Chan, 2004). The overall project performance is determined from performance of basic project objectives of time, cost and quality based on guidelines advocated by Collin, (2002). These three basic objectives of time, cost and quality are adopted as dimensions for measurement of project performance in this study.

According to Baskin (2010), “a Constituency Development Fund is a policy tool that dedicates public Money to benefit specific political subdivisions through allocations and/or spending decisions influenced by their representatives in the national parliament” (P.2). According to State University on New York Centre for International Development, SUNY/CID (2010), the increase
in the use of CDF’s as a resource allocation mechanism has also increased the potential for their abuse creating a need for norms, rules and procedures for the effective operation to institutionalise accountability and transparency, efficiency and equity in CDF schemes. According to National Government Constituency Development Fund website, a cumulative Kes 220 billion had been allocated to constituencies throughout the country to finance development projects from 2003 to 2017 with Kes 86.8 billion spent between 2015 and 2016. Various studies have been undertaken on the performance of CDF projects in Kenya over the years and highlighted problems related to the performance of projects funded by the scheme. According to Institute for economic analysis IEA (2006) evaluation of performance of CDF projects in twenty-two constituencies, there was a high level of dissatisfaction with CDF projects with up to 25.6% of the beneficiaries were dissatisfied with planning and selection of projects, 46.5% were dissatisfied with implementation and management of projects and 16.9% were dissatisfied with quality of work done on CDF projects. According to the National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Committee, NACCSC (2008), there were weaknesses in CDF funds allocation, project identification, distribution, management, community participation in project design, prioritization, and monitoring and evaluation. The study established that 36.7% of respondents were dissatisfied with location of projects, 59.8% with cost of projects, 50.7% with community participation in decision making, 35.9% with relevance of projects, 52.9% with time taken to implement projects, 43.9% with targeting of beneficiaries, 45.9% with project reach and 40.3% with overall project impact.

According to Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and analysis, KIPPRA (2011), the quality of work done on CDF projects in Nairobi and Nakuru counties was low, there were projects that could not be identified on the ground, unaccounted for funds and irregular payments, low completion rates, duplication of projects, projects located on private land and discrepancy between official data, progress on physical site and evidence of project committees as detailed in individual projects. Studies by Wambugu (2010), Ndeto (2011), Muchiri (2014) on success of CDF projects in constituencies in Nyeri County and Masinga and Mbooni constituencies corroborate the above findings. Ruiru constituency was established in 2012 and was carved out of former Juja Constituency. It is one of the twelve constituencies in Kiambu County. It has a population of 201,986 and covers 179.9 square kilometers. In the years 2013/2014 to 2015/2016, the constituency was allocated a total of Kes 279 million in CDF funds which was used to finance 91 projects in different sectors in the constituency (Ruiru NG-CDF). There was a research gap in that no study had so far been undertaken to establish the performance of CDF funded projects in Ruiru constituency.

2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Project management methodology is increasingly being applied in managing public sector activities. For it to be effective, an organisation must carefully select the projects it will undertake therefore making project selection a critical activity for the success of the organisation. According to Eilertsen (2004) “project selection aligns project initiatives with business and strategic goals and guides allocation of capital and human resources for highest business result impact” (p.2). The Kenya Government in its endeavour to spur development at the grassroots throughout the country has devolved 2.5% of its annual budget to the constituencies through the CDF Act of (2003 & 2015) to fund projects at the constituency level. Between 2013/14 and 2015/16 financial years, a total of Kes 86.8 billion was disbursed to the constituencies with Ruiru constituency receiving Kes 279 million (Ruiru NG-CDF) of the CDF funds to finance different
projects in accordance with the CDF Act. For the government and constituency’s development objectives to be achieved, the projects that are funded must be those that will meet the objectives of the constituency by making the biggest contribution in addressing the prioritised development needs. Projects however do fail and ample evidence exists throughout the world Le & Nguyen (2007). Hastie & Wojewoda (2015), in the chaos report demonstrated that out of 50,000 IT projects surveyed throughout the world, only 29% were successful, 52% were challenged while 19% failed. Reviews on performance of CDF funded projects in many parts of the country by various scholars and stakeholders like (IEA, 2006), (NACCSC, 2008) and (OSIEA, 2011), have highlighted many cases of public dissatisfaction with the work done, cases of duplication and wastage of resources and stalled projects. Kibui, et.al. (2015), reported that billions of shillings of tax money were expended on “useless” CDF funded projects in various constituencies in Kenya. Studies in project management have focused on factors influencing the success of projects, project selection process and criteria used in selecting private sector projects. De Wit (1988), focused on measurement of project success and Wheeler (2013), researched on factors contributing to optimal project selection in Australia. Many scholars have researched on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Kenya. Wambugu (2010), Ndeto (2011), Wamugu & Ogollah (2017) focused on factors influencing performance of NG-CDF projects in different counties, Mathenge (2013), investigated challenges facing project implementation in public sector organisations. There is however a research gap in the study on criteria used to select NG-CDF funded projects. In addition, no study has been undertaken on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru constituency. This study therefore sought to investigate the effect of project selection criteria on the performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru constituency in Kiambu County.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of project selection criteria on the performance of CDF funded projects in Ruiru, Kiambu County, Kenya.

Specific objectives were:

(i) To investigate the effect of alignment of projects with strategy on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru, Kiambu County, Kenya.

(ii) To investigate the effect of feasibility of projects on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru, Kiambu County, Kenya.

(iii) To investigate the effect of community participation in project management on performance of CDF funded projects in Ruiru, Kiambu County, Kenya.

(iv) To the effect of capacity to implement the project on performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru, Kiambu County, Kenya.

4. THEORETICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

This sections reviewed theories developed on project management with reference to criteria used to select and prioritise projects, alignment with strategy, feasibility of projects, organisational capacity and community participation and performance of projects.

4.1 Theory of Constraints

Dr. Eliyahu Goldratt in 1984 developed a holistic theory for improving organizational performance. The theory says that majority of poor performances are caused by very few
underlying causes. According to the theory, a constraint is resolved through a five-step logical thinking which combines cause-effect, experience and intuition to understand and resolve a constraint. The process which involves identification of the constraint, exploitation of the constraint, subordination and synchronization of the constraint, elevation of the performance of the constraint and repeat of the process. According to Goldratt (1984), systems’ performance improvement results from improvements of only those parts that are not performing optimally or the constraints in the system. These constraints can be internal like processes, skills, information, technology, or even policies, or external like supplies, competition etc. Goldratt (1984), argues that any system, no matter how well it performs, has at least one constraint that limits its performance which can be improved by removing the constraint. The theory provides a reliable mechanism to differentiate many parts of a system that can be improved from the few that must be improved in order to improve the performance. The theory however works effectively to address the current time frame for a business and therefore limits itself to short-term effects. Performance of projects is achieved through interaction of many factors and it is important to establish which of these factors are acting as constraints and how such constraints can be resolved to improve performance. The researcher used this theory evaluate how the constraints of the alignment with strategy, project feasibility, community participation and organizational capacity affected performance of CDF projects in Ruiru Constituency in Kiambu County, Kenya.

4.2 Strategic Alignment Theory

Strategic alignment model explains the link between an organisation’s overall goals and the goals of each unit that contribute to the success of those overall goals (Andolsen, 2007). The model was first developed by Henderson and Venkatraman in 1990 to explain organisational transformation through information technology. The theory deals with alignment of strategic choice with business strategy, information technology strategy, organisation infrastructure and processes and information technology infrastructure and processes. According to Henderson and Venkatraman (1990), strategic alignment is achieved when there is simultaneous attention to all four domains. According to Henderson and Venkatraman (1990), business Strategy explains the set of goals, means, and underlying assumptions pertaining positioning of an organisation in the product-market arena. The Organizational Infrastructure and Processes are the internal arrangements that support the organization’s business strategy. Henderson and Venkatraman (1990) further argue that the Information Technology Strategy relate to the set of goals, means and underlying assumptions that position the organisation in the information technology' marketplace. The Information Technology Infrastructure and Processes are the internal arrangements and processes that support IT strategy and affect types of IT products and services delivered to the organization. Alignment with strategy is achieved when the goals of the various domains are aligned with the overall goals of the organization. The researcher used this theory to investigate whether alignment of project objectives with the constituency plan affected performance of the projects and therefore contribute to constituency goals.

4.3 Theory of Rational Choice

The rational choice theory models how social and economic behavior and determinants of individual choices. It assumes that an individual has preferences among the choice alternatives that allow them to state which option they prefer in order to maximise utility. According to Hansson (1994), the theory of rational choice deals with how a rational decision maker should act in the face of uncertainty and incomplete information. According to Scott (2000), the theory assumes that all action is fundamentally rational and that people are able to determine the costs and benefits of any action. Scott
(2000), and that individuals are motivated by the wants that express their preference within constraints of available information. “The theory further holds that individuals must anticipate the outcomes of alternative courses of action and calculate which will be best for them” (p.3). “Rational choice theory also recognizes collective action such as by organizations and consider such decisions as rational choice” (P.7). Decisions at conceptual stage of a project are made collectively often with incomplete information and high degree of uncertainty. The objective of project selection is to identify projects that will have the highest chances of being successfully implemented and with maximum contribution to organisational goals and objectives. These result from goal oriented, reflective and consistent decisions as postulated in rational choice theory. The researcher used this theory to investigate whether use of rational criteria to select and prioritize NG-CDF projects affected their performance.

4.4 Stakeholder Theory

According to stakeholder theory, the primary objective of a business is to maximize stakeholder value and executives must keep the interests of stakeholders aligned and going in the same direction (Freeman 1984). According to Freeman (1984), managers are answerable to both shareholders, groups and individuals who can affect or are affected by the achievement of the firm's objectives. The stakeholder also addresses morals and values in managing an organization and it identifies and models the stakeholders of a project and describes and recommends methods by which management can give due regard to the interests of those groups. The theory is relevant to management of the NG-CDF projects, as it integrates resource and market based views and defines the specific stakeholders of a NG-CDF projects and how their interactions with the projects affected their performance.

5. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptual framework provides a relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. The framework is used in research to outline possible courses of action or preferred approach to the research subject (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The independent variables are the factors influencing project performance. The framework therefore shows the relationship between the dependent and the independent variables. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework.
6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The researcher undertook a survey on NG-CDF funded projects approved between 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 in Ruiru constituency. The objective of the study was to investigate the effect of project selection criteria on performance of NG-CDF projects. The researcher used descriptive statistics to gather, summarize, present, interpret data that was collected. Regression analysis was used to explore relationship between alignment of project objectives with strategy, feasibility of projects, capacity to implement projects and community participation and performance of NG-CDF funded projects in Ruiru constituency in Kiambu County. The study took a census of all the 91 NG-CDF projects, in education, water, health, transport, environment and social service sectors that were approved between 2013-2014 and 2015-2016 financial years. The unit of observation was members of constituency development committee and project implementation committees and officers at the sub-county responsible for the ministries of education, water, health, transport, environment and social services. The target population was 131 comprising of...
an executive and ordinary members of constituency development committee and project implementation committee and officers in charge of ministries of education, water, health, transport, environment and social services at sub county level who helped in the investigation of the impact of criteria used to select NG-CDF projects in Ruiru Constituency on performance of the public funded projects.

The researcher used a questionnaire with structured and non-structured questions to collect data from the respondents. The researcher used three enumerators who distributed the questionnaires and also assisted the respondents in completing the questionnaires. They also completed the observations checklist on the processes of selection and prioritization, approval, planning implementation and status of projects on the ground. The questionnaires and the letter of introduction were hand delivered to the respondents and the completed questionnaires were collected after a week or on the appointed time. Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 21 (SPSS) was be used to analyze the data. The data was manipulated in various ways to generate tables to categorise and summarizing responses show relationships between the variables and investigate whether the independent variables of alignment with strategic plan, feasibility of the project, capacity to implement projects and community participation in project management process are interrelated and whether they influence performance of projects. This was done by calculating the frequencies, mean, standard deviations, correlation coefficients. The researcher also analysed demographics of the respondents, including gender, age, education, professional qualifications, experience in project management and committees in which the respondents belonged. Analysis on sectoral preferences of the respondent to show which sectors would have received what proportion of funds with a view to comparing how the funds were actually allocated. Opinions were also sought on who actually identified and recommended CDF projects for funding and whether the constituency had a strategic plan. The Researcher made observations on project identification and selection, approval, and implementation with a view to corroborate the views and opinions of the respondents. Finally, a multiple regression was used to investigate effects of selection criteria (independent variables) and performance of selected National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) funded projects Y (dependent variable).

7. STUDY FINDINGS

The research investigated the relationship between the variables and results are shown in Table 1. All the variables had positive relationships at 95% confidence level. Capacity to implement projects had the most significant influence with performance while alignment with strategy had the least significant influence. Feasibility of projects and capacity to implement projects had the most significant relationship with correlation coefficients of .736 and .765 respectively.

Table 1: Correlations Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Project performance</th>
<th>Alignment with strategy</th>
<th>Effect of feasibility on project performance</th>
<th>Effect of capacity to implement projects on project performance</th>
<th>Effect of community participation on project performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project performance</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alignment with strategy</td>
<td>0.515</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The findings of this research were that alignment with strategy had the least influence on performance of projects with r = 0.515, p=0.000. It was however established that the constituency did not have a strategic plan and project selection and prioritisation did not reflect the preferences of the beneficiaries. This would be in line with the findings of Meredith (2006) and Muhammad (2015) that extent of consistency of project objectives with the goals of the organisation influenced success of projects. Further, the research corroborated the study by Murothi (2017) that feasibility had significant influence on project performance. Effect of feasibility of projects had a correlation of r=0.736, p=0.000. This indicates moderate correlation between effect of feasibility of projects and performance of projects. Capacity to implement projects had a correlation of r = 0.765, p = 0.000, if all other variables are held constant, a unit increase in capacity to implement projects would lead to a 0.765 increase in performance of projects. The research established that the various dimensions of capacity, including human resource, financial, information technology, knowledge and collaborative capacities were evident but weak. These findings were in line with those by Bryan (2011) that organisation capacity influence project performance. Community participation had r = 3.31 and p= 0.905 indicating divergence of opinions with regard to various aspects of community participation in project management. The research established that community was not sufficiently involved in various aspects of project management. Community participation particularly at the early stages of the project cycle was found to be important in aligning the project objectives with strategy of the organisation (Kolltveit and Gronhaug, 2004).

To investigate the effect of alignment with strategy, community participation, capacity to implement projects and feasibility of the project on performance of NG-CDF funded projects, the researcher developed a regressions model $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$ Where; Y is the dependent variable (performance of NG-CDF funded projects), $X_1$ is Alignment with strategy, $X_2$ is Community Participation, $X_3$ is Capacity to implement the project, $X_4$ is Feasibility of the project, $\epsilon$ - Error term (residual term that includes the net effect of other factors not included in the model and measurement errors in the dependent and independent variables).

Table 2 show the model summary generated from the results of the research:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
<th>Change Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>R Square Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.813a</td>
<td>.661</td>
<td>.641</td>
<td>.38765</td>
<td>.661</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
a. Predictors: (Constant), Effect of community participation on project performance, Effect of Alignment with strategy on project performance, Effect of capacity to implement projects on project performance, Effect of feasibility on project performance.

The regression equation therefore becomes: \( Y = 0.529 - 0.08X_1 + 0.312X_2 + 0.456X_3 + 0.204X_4 \).

The coefficient of determination \( R^2 \) of 0.661 indicates that the independent variables statistically explain 66.1% of variation in performance of projects. The model is therefore useful in explaining performance of projects. The result of the regression analysis coefficients is shown in Table 3:

### Table 3: Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alignment with strategy</td>
<td>-.080</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect of feasibility on project performance</td>
<td>.312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect of capacity to implement projects on project performance</td>
<td>.456</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Effect of community participation on project performance</td>
<td>.204</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The beta coefficients of the independent variables are not equal to zero implying that they explain performance of selected CDF projects. Alignment with strategy had a negative beta coefficient of -0.08 inferring that, a unit increase in alignment with strategy, with all other variables held constant would lead to a 0.08 decrease in performance of projects. This indicates a misalignment between project and constituency objectives. A unit increase in feasibility of the project while all other variables are held constant would lead to a 0.312 increase on project performance, while a unit increase in capacity to implement projects and community participation would lead to 0.456 and 0.204 increase in project performance respectively. Capacity to implement projects with a beta coefficient of 0.456 therefore had the largest influence on performance of projects.

8. **CONCLUSIONS**

This section highlights conclusions drawn from the research findings based on the effect of alignment of project objectives with strategy on performance of projects, effect of feasibility of projects on performance of projects, effect of capacity to implement projects on performance of projects and effect of community participation on performance of projects. The first objective was to investigate effects of alignment of project objectives with strategy on performance of projects. The study established that this variable had an aggregate mean score of 3.46. It also had the least influence on performance of projects with Pearson correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.515 \), \( p = 0.000 \). This could be explained by the facts that majority of the projects were identified by the constituency committee while Member of Parliament and the government played a significant role in identifying projects. Overall the community identified 42.5% of the projects. This means
that the projects may not have sufficiently addressed the needs and preferences of the beneficiaries. It was also established that the constituency did not have a strategic plan which means that project objectives could be misaligned with strategy.

The second objective was to investigate the effect of feasibility of projects on their performance. The survey established that feasibility of projects affects their performance with an aggregate mean score of 3.42. The variable had a Pearson correlation of \( r=0.736, p=0.000 \). Only in minority of projects was there proper project evaluation through project parameters of scope, cost and timelines. Prioritisation and ranking criteria were not well known. Only a small proportion of projects had approval reports. The study revealed that the constituency in a majority of projects did not employ objective means of determining feasibility of projects. The third objective was to investigate the effect of capacity to implement projects on performance of projects. The survey established that, capacity to implement projects affected their performance with an aggregate mean score of 3.31 and Pearson correlation of \( r=0.765, p=0.000 \). It is noteworthy that, although project implementation committees were in place, members of those committees did not have professional qualifications or experience required to handle projects. Further, there were no policies and procedures to guide management of project scope, cost and timelines.

The fourth objective was to investigate the effect of community participation in management of project on performance of projects. The survey established that community participation had an aggregate mean score of 3.31 and a Pearson correlation of \( r=0.679, p=0.000 \). The survey established that community was not sufficiently involved in selection and prioritisation of projects as many of the projects were identified by constituency committee, the Member of Parliament and the government. Stakeholders were also not sufficiently involved in nominating members to NG-CDF committees and did not have access to project records. The survey established that performance of projects had an aggregate mean score of 3.47. All projects that were surveyed were eligible for NG-CDF funding and respondents agreed that they were satisfied with quality of work done. Further, majority of respondents indicated that benefits expected from the projects were being realised. In the absence of a strategic plan however, it was not possible to conclude that projects were aligned with strategic plan. In addition, lack of proper project documentation in terms of scope, cost and timelines meant that there was no objective means of establishing that the projects performed in terms of these critical criteria.

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Following the outcome of this study, the researcher recommends that, there should be deliberate effort to align project objectives with organisational strategy through community participation in project selection and prioritisation, planning, implementation and monitoring. The constituency should develop a strategic plan to ensure that its operations are well coordinated for optimal results. The prioritised sectors and activities should be made known to all stakeholders and resources should be directed to those areas. Further it is important to evaluate projects to establish their feasibility in order to enhance their chances of successful implementation. Projects should be well prepared with architectural drawings, bills of quantities and implementation timelines. Cost-benefit analysis should be undertaken to ensure that the stakeholders receive value for money. The constituency should have well-publicized criteria for prioritisation and ranking of projects. This will improve preparation of projects for implementation thus improve their chances of successful performance. The constituency should build various dimensions of capacity including financial, technical managerial and collaborative capacities to implement
projects. The constituency should develop policies and procedures for entrenching project management methodologies and managing collaboration with departments and agencies in areas it does not have or cannot build capacity. The constituency should adhere to the provisions of the CDF Act 2015 and hold meeting to identify and prioritise projects as well as incorporate members of the community in implementation and monitoring of the projects. Community preferences should be reflected in allocation of CDF funds. Project record are public documents and should be available for scrutiny on request and there should be mechanisms of resolving disputes relating to projects. The CDF Act could be improved by requiring a more rigorous project identification, selection, evaluation and approval process with minimum thresholds to be met before a project is accepted for funding. Further research on the influence of project selection criteria should be undertaken in other counties and with regard to other devolved funds.

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Strategy Research: A Critique and Proposal


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