

## **Project Implementation and Performance of Health Sector Based Non-Governmental Organizations' Projects in Nairobi County, Kenya**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The general objective of the study was to find out the effects of implementation by Health sector based NGO projects on project performance. The study employed a descriptive study design. A census of 87 Health based NGOs with operations in Nairobi County were drawn and data was collected from them with a response rate of 69%, considered adequate to draw inferences. The participants were sampled using HENNET register. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire. Findings were presented in tables and analyzed by use of descriptive and inferential statistics. The study findings shows that the variables project planning, knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation and financing in that order are important in project management cycle. Respondents further identified other factors that were not covered in this study as important including staff capacity, organizational policies, mentorship and stakeholder relation. The variables studied were statistically significant to the independent variable.*

**Keywords:** *Project Implementation, Project Performance, Project Planning, Project Financing Knowledge Management, Monitoring and Evaluation*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Project implementation is a phase towards a logical conclusion, when visions and plans drawn in the Work Breakdown Structure are made a fact. The simple requirement for beginning the implementation process is to have the work plan geared up and understood by way of all of the actors involved (NETSSAF, 2008). Project implementation involves mission control; where at its maximum best, control is set to get things done (Barnes, 2012). As a result, powerful teamwork is primary to a success of tasks. Project control specializes in controlling the advent of the desired alternate. Every mission creates a unique product, carrier, or end result. Although repetitive factors may be found in a few project deliverables, this repetition does not alternate the essential specialty of the project work. For instance, workplace buildings are built with the identical or comparable materials or with the aid of the equal team, but each region is particular with a distinct design, distinctive circumstances, specific contractors, and so on.

Project management is performed through the best utility and integration of logically grouped assignment control processes comprising the 5 Process Groups. These 5 Process Groups are: Initiating, Planning, Executing & Controlling, Monitoring and Closing (PMBOK, 2008). The

planning approaches increase the project management plan and the assignment documents to be able to be used to perform the project. As more mission records or traits are amassed and understood, additional plans can be required. Significant adjustments going on in the course of the project cycle could be revisited for one or greater of the planning processes and, probable, a number of the starting up strategies. This progressive detailing of the assignment control plan is frequently referred to as rolling wave planning, indicating that making plans and documentation are interactive and ongoing strategies (PMBOK, 2008). One of the elements that have an effect on the implementation of projects is financing. Adequate financing hastens the rate at which implementation is completed. It ensures that the project execution team and the control office are well-resourced to carry out work. Lack of funds certainly grinds to a halt the implementation. Information may be explored one at a time or portion of statistics or the information control scheme thought. The factual idea is studied via Seufert, Back and von Krogh (2003) that by no means-finishing drift within which facts is categorized into logical methods like localizing and taking pictures; sharing and moving; making and applying. They plan to make a case for statistics control as a way of coping with records to allow “introduction of completely new understanding, moreover catalyzing the novelty” Arguments indicate that data control additionally subsidizes productiveness in a cost-reducing setting (Thompson, 2003).

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

One of the critical issues regarding the NGO projects in Kenya is the common and lengthy delays that occur during implementation; (Thairu, 2014) which eventually results in low/poor performance. Project performance is measured by various indicators set at the initial stages that may have been done by various stakeholders. The Kenya government is introducing a controversial Public Benefit Organization Act, 2013 which further in some of its Articles, questions the impact brought about by existing projects and gives limiting factors for nongovernmental organization registration in the country. Recently, the government blacklisted over 500 non-governmental organizations from their routine operations; for suspicion of financing the militia group Al-Shabaab; Felix (2014) further notes that though they are still under investigations, this has brought about a negative impact in running projects of these organizations, which eventually will affect the organizations growth and development and the donor perspective, and in the long run, donor withdrawal.

Several studies have already been done around projects success and failure in organizations. For instance; Gichoya (2005) looked at the —Factors Affecting the Successful Implementation of ICT Projects in Government; Karuti and Winnie (2001) studied the —The non-profit sector in Kenya - what we know and what we don't know; Adel (2009) looked into the —Causes of delays in public sector construction projects in developing countries; Thairu (2014) analyzed the implementation of Non-Governmental Organizations projects in Nairobi. However, this study based on the literature of earlier studies on the project's success, failures and effective performance, the researcher sought to understand the effects of implementation to project performance by health based NGOs in Nairobi County and draw recommendations for the health non-governmental actors to improve on performance in the sector.

## **3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The general objective of the study was to investigate project implementation and performance of health sector based NGOS projects in Nairobi County, Kenya

The researcher was guided by the following specific objectives;

- i) To determine how planning influences project performance in health sector based NGOs in Nairobi County.
- ii) To establish the role of financing on effective project performance within health sector based NGOs in Nairobi County
- iii) To determine how knowledge management impacts on future project performance by health sector based NGOs in Nairobi County.
- iv) To assess how monitoring and evaluation affects project performance of health sector based NGOs in Nairobi County

## **4. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **4.1 Project Life Cycle theory**

Projects range in length and complexity. Not how big or small, easy or complicated, all projects can be mapped to the following life cycle shape: Initiating, Planning, Executing, Monitoring and Control and Closing. This widely-spread life cycle shape is frequently referred to whilst speaking with higher control or different entities less acquainted with the information of the project. This excessive-degree view can offer a not- unusual body of reference for comparing projects; despite the fact that they're numerous in nature. The customary life cycle shape generally shows the following characteristics: Cost and staffing ranges are low on the start, peak because the work is completed, and drop swiftly because the project approaches a close. The cost of adjustments and correcting mistakes commonly will increase substantially because the project procedures are of entirety. Within the context of the established life cycle shape, a venture supervisor may also decide the need for extra powerful manipulate over certain deliverables. Large and complicated tasks specifically may also require this extra level of control. In such instances, the work executed to finish the task's objective can also gain from being officially divided into stages. Project levels are divisions inside a task in which extra manage is required to correctly manage the final touch of a main deliverable. Project levels are typically finished sequentially, but can overlap in a few challenging situations. This study, the variables studied are informed by the project cycle to inform its effect on the independent variable.

### **4.2 Underlying Theory**

The present underlying theory according to PMBOK by PMI and applied (2002b); is pointed out as the foundation of project management. This foundation can be divided into

#### **4.2.1 Theory of project**

This theory provides for the transformation view on operations. In this view, a project is postulated as a revolution of contributions to results. There are a number of principles, by means of which a project is managed; for instance, disintegrating the alteration hierarchically into slighter tasks and minimizing the cost of each commission autonomously.

#### **4.2.2 Theory of management**

Management is cast on three theories; management as planning, the dispatching model and thermostat model. In the management as planning is observed to consist of the creation, revision and implementation of strategies. This methodology to management indicates a strong

fundamental amid activities in administration and effects of the company. The dispatch model, adopts that organized actions can be implemented once a notification to start the task is issued. Thermostat model consists of a regular functioning; performance is calculated at the yield; the potential difference amid the standard and the deliberate value; for remedying the course so that the standard can be attained.

#### **4.3 Empirical Literature Review**

The foundation of a task achievement is laid at some point of the opportunity evaluation and initiation phase of the project control existence cycle. During which the technical description is evolved, outlining the opportunity, task objective, scope and deliverables; in addition to excessive risk evaluation is carried out. A project performance is a measure based on set targets, which might be measured primarily based on preliminary recognized signs. The signs frequently display how activities are progressing in achieving purposes and consequences, allow the identification of problems at an early age and permit for corrective measures (Finch, 2012).

The initiation phase is critical to the achievement of the task as it establishes its middle foundations. Effective execution takes into consideration all planning, stakeholder engagement, beneficiary mapping, threat evaluation, in addition to the actual plan. The three most mentioned factors for task failure are: stakeholder disengagement, incoherent conversation, and unclear responsibilities and roles. These factors consequently, need to be considered very early during the introduction and making plans of any project. The singular unifying feature new and complicated projects possesses is the incapability for all stakeholders to be on the equal page so as to envision the same final results. Good project managers consequently, could have diagnosed all of the stakeholders and made certain, through exact communicate, that stakeholders have clarity of the task's targets and outputs.

The capabilities of finance have to be treated according to the goal of enterprise. In profit making agency, the purpose must be extension of the prosperity of the stakeholders. The achievement of tasks is mediated by means of the efficiency to acquire the goals and performance is analyzed via computing in opposition to two restraints; cost and period. In analyzing the restraints, the period of specific tasks and useful supply utilization had been augmented and additional discount of project period ought to boom the direct price of the task due to time beyond regulation and inefficient custom of the factory life and systems. Project administrators ought to apprehend time, fee and aid approximations ought to be precise if planning, preparation, and regulatory are to be operative. At the initial degree, the person familiar with the project need to make approximates. The regulators accountable to ensure activities are accomplished and who are skilled and acquainted with the arts need to be asked to broaden the valuations at this point. The benefit is that supervisors may be answerable to make certain activities as anticipated with the aid of them would be possible (West, 2008).

Knowledge has been touted as the sole asset that may provide organizations a competitive advantage as there's a robust linkage between core competency and information. Information may be explored separately or as a part of information management or the information management system conception. The conception of information is explored as never-ending flow within which information is categorized into logical processes like localizing and capturing; sharing and transferring; making and applying. They plan to make a case for information management as a method of managing information to enable "creation of entirely new

knowledge, whereas additionally accelerating the innovation”. Others have argued that information management also contributes to productivity in a cost-cutting setting. According to the PMBOK, the rise in project management indicates that the appliance of acceptable data, process, skills, tools, and techniques has impact on project success (PMI 2008). The objective of project management is to ensure a project is be completed at the desired scope outlined by the stakeholders inside project budget, on time and delivers a top quality product or service as the consequence. M&E is an embedded concept and constitutive a part of each project or programme design. M&E isn't always an imposed manipulate device by the donor or an optional accent of any challenge or programme. M&E is ideally understood as a dialogue on development and its progress among all stakeholders. The evaluation is an analysis or interpretation of the gathered records which delves deeper into the relationships between the effects of the project, the consequences produced by means of the assignment/programme and the overall impact of the mission/programme.

## 5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive survey design intended to perform an analysis on project implementation and performance of health sector based NGOs projects in Nairobi County. The researcher targeted the health sector based NGOs operational in Nairobi County. The registered NGOs under HENNET were 87. HENNET has a list of 87 registered NGOs based in Nairobi County. The researcher conducted a census of the health based NGOs that constituted the sample size. The research targeted program managers or the operational coordinators, who were sampled for this study. The primary data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire. It was emailed to all the nominated respondents who responded and sent back. The questionnaires targeted program managers or the operational coordinators within the target organizations. The questionnaires comprised of two parts. Part A captured the general particulars of the respondent organizations while Part B focused on the analysis of effective implementation of NGO projects (independent variables). This part gave each respondent an opportunity to detail how they perceived the factors outlined , influence effective implementation of projects; by responding to certain propositions on a Likert scale from 5 (Great Extent) to 1 (No Extent). The respondents also had an opportunity to outline other factors outside the researcher’s scope that affects the effective implementation of NGO projects. To ensure that the questionnaire is suitable, the researcher conducted a pre-test with NGOs that did not form part of the study sample, and restructured the questions to ensure they answered the objectives of the research.

Prior to data analysis, the questionnaires were checked for completeness; entries were checked for consistency and coding was done. The data both qualitative and quantitative; and the researcher did everything possible to ensure that it was objective, systematic and free from any selective perceptions that could dilute its reliability and validity. Qualitative data was analyzed through the content analysis, while the quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive analysis. The regression model was used to show the relationship between variables and how they relate to address the research questions.  $Y = a + b_1.X_1 + b_2.X_2 + b_3.X_3 + b_4.X_4 \dots$  Where  $X_n$  (1,2,3,4) is the predictor variable;  $Y$  is a constant ( $a$ ) and a slope ( $b$ ) multiplied by the  $X$  variable. Project performance ( $Y$ ) against the predictor variables ( $X_n$ ) project planning, financing, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation. The researcher, during the period of study observed the highest standards of research ethics and good academic behavior to ensure that the study is credible. More specifically the following were the ethical pillars supporting the

study; honesty and integrity, peer-review process contributing to the quality control and an essential step to ascertain the standing and originality of the research.

## 6. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study focused on project implementation and performance of health sector based NGOS projects in Nairobi County, Kenya. There was a 69% response rate.

### 6.1 Project Financing and Project Performance

Project financing is a key component to ensure projects run smoothly within stipulated timelines. According to (PMBOK, 2008), the key components of financing include cost control, resource planning, cost estimating and cost budgeting. The study in this regard sought to find out how projects are influenced by some of these factors in project financing.

**Table 1: Project financing and project performance**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
weight given to activities	48	4.92	.279
weight given to direct costs on activities	52	4.69	.466
weight given to staff cost	52	4.46	.503
weight given to overhead costs	52	3.85	.777
Valid N (listwise)	48		

On weight given to activities, the study identified that activities are heavily considered in project financing. The respondents' findings indicated a mean of 4.92 showing great to very great extent. This shows that projects must give consideration to activities when allocating finances to a project. This is a clear indicator that resource planning for activities is a big factor in influencing project success. On the weight given to direct costs on activities, the study findings indicate a mean of 4.69. The direct costs is a key component of every project and must be put to consideration for a project to successfully operationalize. Such costs may include equipments, raw materials, labor and related costs. These costs must be well planned for ahead of time and adequately budgeted for as they influence project performance. The weight given to staff costs, the study findings indicate a mean of 4.46 indicating the cost for staff a reasonable cause for adequate allocation. This is true according to (Thairu, 2014) as they both consider project teams as a big player in any project success; and has impact across each step of project cycle.

### 6.2 Knowledge Management and Project Performance

The conception of information according to (Seufert, Back & von Krogh, 2003) as never-ending drift within information branded into rational processes like confining and seizing; allocation and shifting; making and pertaining. Plans to make a case for information administration as a method of managing information to permit "formation of wholly new information, whereas quickening the invention" (Seufert et al. 2003: 106). The study sought to understand how knowledge management as a key factor for sustainability and transitions during project exits, can inform better preparedness in project success. The findings shown below are the components that participants were asked with regard to project influence.

**Table 2: Knowledge Management and Project Performance**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Utilization of existing intellectual resource	52	4.85	.364
Best practices and change management	52	4.54	.641

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organizational manuals	52	4.15	.668
Utilization of existing networks	52	4.23	.703
Valid N (listwise)	52		

On utilization of existing intellectual resource, the study findings shows at a mean of 4.85 consider it firmly as a key component. According to PMBOK (2008), any project success is attributed to key aspects of planning, which includes data resource a component of knowledge management. On organizational manuals, the study findings indicate that all participants who responded are in agreement at a mean of 4.15. On best practices and change management, findings indicate a mean of 4.54 showing that best practices in an organization are able transitions to enhance better performance in oncoming projects and for change management for new staff. On utilization of existing networks, the study findings indicate a mean of 4.23. This is an indication that networking is a big factor in ensuring knowledge is shared and managed within a network.

### 6.3 Monitoring and Evaluation and Project Performance Influence

As an accountability system, the project must invest heavily in monitoring and evaluation. It is ideally understood as a dialogue on development and its progress between all stakeholders according to (Jaap et al, 2007). In the event of an evaluation, data from previous monitoring is adapted to understand how the program established and inspired modification. The project thereof, sought to understand how project are influenced by monitoring and evaluation.

**Table 3: Monitoring and evaluation**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
monitoring of activities	52	4.69	.466
assessment of outcomes	52	4.92	.269
review of activities and outcomes	52	4.85	.364
baseline evaluation	52	4.85	.364
Mid-term evaluation	52	4.46	.753
end term evaluation	52	4.62	.745
Valid N (listwise)	52		

On monitoring of activities, the study findings indicate a mean of 4.69 showing great to very great extent. Monitoring of activities is a key component in project management as it is a measure of project progress. On assessment of outcomes, the study findings indicated at a mean of 4.92; showing great to very great extent, this implies that continuous outcome assessment is an imperative to ensure project performance. The end term evaluation findings indicated a mean of 4.62; strongly indicating that end term evaluation is a very key component to assess project performance, outcome change and impact on the stakeholders. The review of outcomes findings indicated a mean of 4.85 showing great to very great extent, as an influential aspect in improving project performance.

### 6.4 Factors most influential to project performance

The project intended also to find out among the project influencers, financing, monitoring and evaluation, planning and knowledge management; which one has the greatest influence. The respondents indicated to a great extent, project planning at 46.7% is a key influence; followed by 26.7% for monitoring and evaluation, and 10% for knowledge management. Financing had

16.7% which shows that most projects do not prioritize financing; contrary to the emphasis made by project management book of knowledge (PMBOK, 2008) that shows costing of a project carries that largest factor in success of projects.

### 6.5 Other factors influencing project performance

The study also identified other factors that were not directly addressed in the study, the study findings shows that human resource in terms of staff capacity to deliver, was highly influential; as well as organization policies and coordination at 33.3%, also highly regarded. Mentorship and stakeholder engagement were also considered at 11.1% each. They also has a role to play in project performance and success of projects.

### 6.6 Regression analysis

A regression analysis was conducted to establish the relationship between variables on project performance

**Table 4: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.849 <sup>a</sup>	.721	.699	.54847492

a. Predictors: (Constant), Planning, Financing, Knowledge management, monitoring and evaluation

The four independent variables that were studied, could only address the requirements to completely address the effects of performance of health based sector nongovernmental organizations projects; as indicated on average of 72.1% presented by the R<sup>2</sup>. The adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is lower than the R<sup>2</sup> indicating that the model used is not statistical strong and therefore cannot be used to generalize the findings to all organizations implementing the health projects in Nairobi County. However, there is need to consider more predictor variables and other factors that should be studied to contribute to this or related studies by a difference of 27.9%.

**Table 5: Model Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	-2.920	.701		-4.164	.000
Planning	.637	.132	.444	4.823	.000
Financing	.163	.055	.249	2.955	.005
Knowledge management	.244	.067	.303	3.656	.001
Monitoring and evaluation	.596	.104	.485	5.704	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Project performance

The regression model equation is;  $Y = a + b_1.X_1 + b_2.X_2 + b_3.X_3 + b_4.X_4...$  Where Xn (1, 2, 3, 4) is the predictor variable; Y is a constant (a) and a slope (b) multiplied by the Xvariable. Project performance (Y) against the predictor variables (Xn) project planning, financing, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation.

The equation therefore reads as  $Y = (-2.92) + 0.637X_1 + 0.163X_2 + 0.244X_3 + 0.596X_4$

The researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to determine the relationship between variables. The data analyzed showed that if all other independent variables are at zero, a unit increase in planning will lead to a 0.637 increase in performance; a unit increase in



efficiency will lead to a 0.163 increase in performance, a unit increase in service quality will lead to a 0.244 increase in performance and a unit increase in creativity will lead to a 0.596 increase in performance. This shows that all variables are statistically significant to the performance of health projects in NGOs. However, the most significant factors were planning and monitoring and evaluation, followed by knowledge management and financing.

**Table 6: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	14.009	4	3.502	32.958	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	5.420	51	.106		
	Total	19.429	55			

*a. Dependent Variable: Project performance*

*b. Predictors: (Constant), Planning, Financing, Knowledge management monitoring and evaluation*

The analysis of variance shows that the variables studied; planning, financing, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation are statistically significant,  $F(4, 51; p=0.00)$  which strongly rejects the null hypothesis.

## 7. CONCLUSION


On project planning and project performance, key factors to consider are generation of activities which will address the identified need or problem; this is closely followed by resource allocation which is a facilitator to implementation of these activities; staff recruitment is equally important to have the capacity to conduct the project; the staff and stakeholders will then define a coordination mechanism that shall work for the project. In project financing and project performance, key factors for any implementer to consider include weight given to activities; which should be the major aspect as activities can only be implemented once adequately facilitated. Also, weight given to direct costs, the costs that will result to a production of specific products. The implementer must as well consider costs of staff and indirect costs such as utility and rental if any. These factors ensure a project is implemented fully. On knowledge management and project performance, the study draws that best practices and change is a major component for project transitions or new staff. Utilization of intellectual resource and networks also are integral as they assist one to understand the project direction from the very start up to the point it is; enabling to draw lessons learnt.

On monitoring and evaluation, key components any implementer must understand include the baseline evaluation that gives a direction from a stand point a person can take. Then monitoring of activities that measures output that contributes to outcome; review of outcomes is equally important as it gives the milestones achieved and the gaps to be addressed within the timelines. The study learns that project planning is the key influence among the variables, followed by monitoring and evaluation, knowledge management and finally financing. This is however, contrary to the literature emphasis made by project management book of knowledge (2008), that shows costing of a project carries the largest factor in success of projects. The study also learns that the least influential factors to project performance is knowledge management and financing with regard to respondents. According to the regression analysis for the study, planning, financing, knowledge management and monitoring and evaluation factors cover only up to 72%, therefore there are a number of factors that should be studied further to cover the 28%.

According to respondents, some of these factors include human resource in terms of staff capacity to deliver, organizational policies and coordination, and mentorship and stakeholder engagement. However, this list is not exhaustive and therefore there are other underlying factors not mentioned.

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