ISSN 2349-7831

International Journal of Recent Research in Social Sciences and Humanities (IJRRSSH)
Vol. 5, Issue 2, pp: (112-120), Month: April - June 2018, Available at: www.paperpublications.org

ASSESSMENT OF FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PERFORMANCE OF CONSTITUENCY DEVELOPMENT FUNDED PROJECTS: A SURVEY OF VIHIGA COUNTY

[1]KAMAU EDWARD MWANGI, [*2]ELIZABETH NAMBUSWA MAKOKHA

[*]*Corresponding Author Name: ELIZABETH NAMBUSWA MAKOKHA*

Abstract: **The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors influencing the performance of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects in Vihiga County. The study evaluated the effect of the budget on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County; the study was supported by the Theory of change whose layout analysis of outcomes of a project deliverables resembles the logical framework model. Descriptive survey design was used. The survey was conducted in Vihiga County, constituencies namely: Emuhaya, Luanda, Hamisi, Sabatia and Vihiga. A complete survey involving all 80 committee members from all the CDF projects was done. Data was collected using predesigned questionnaires. The study received responses from 80 respondents forming a response rate of 100%. Data obtained was cleaned, coded and analyzed using *spss* 21software. Multiple regressions model/analysis was used to determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variable. The results were presented using inferential statistics such as the Pierson correlation coefficients, comparative tables and percentages. Findings emanating from this study will be of great importance to all the direct and indirect stakeholders who play key roles in ensuring the ultimate accomplishment of the devolved fund-CDF and further realization of the Kenya Vision 2030 development blue print. The regression model showed that budget (P = 0.045) had a significant influence on the level of project completion. From the findings it can be concluded that budgetary parameters influence the performance of Constituency development funded projects in Vihiga County.**

1. INTRODUCTION

Projects as defined by the PMI are temporary undertakings with a defined start and end timeline. It is also unique with a set of operations that are not routine but with specific set of operations that are designed to accomplish certain goals. The struggle to identify the critical project success factors is an ongoing topic, approached by many researchers especially due to the pressure of implementing successful projects in a dynamic global market and ever changing business world (Beleiu *et al*., 2015), where continuous innovation is a must in order to achieve competitive advantage (Salanta & Popa, 2015). A project is considered as successful if it meets certain performance measures such as timely performance, within budget as well as satisfying stakeholder's needs in the project. Project management is a requirement in any organization since the discipline aims at ensuring effective and efficient utilization of resources for adequate and quality delivery of the project objectives within the set time and cost limits. The key purpose of project management is to therefore achieve successful project performance with the resources available (Kerzner, 2013). According to Leach (2014), every project must pass through the following five phases of the project cycle: Conception Phase, Definition Phase, Planning and- organizing Phase, Performance Phase and Project handover Phase which is also the termination phase. Worldwide, projects have experienced numerous barriers in their performance. As a solution, project monitoring and evaluation are key elements in

improving project performance. A research by Serrador & Turner (2015) showed that together, failed and poorly managed projects in the United States cost companies and government agencies approximated 145 billion dollars a year.

Several research studies have been conducted with the aim of determining the various factors that influence project performance in developing countries. Despite more than a quarter of a century of intensive experience with projects investment, international funding institutions and ministries of less developed countries still report serious problems in project execution. Many are due directly to ineffective planning and management. It has been found out that most developing nations simply do not have adequate institutional capacity or trained personnel to plan and implement projects effectively. In one developing country after another, it has been discovered that a major limitation in implementing projects and programs, and in operating them upon performance, is not financial resources, but administrative capacity. In Nigeria for instance, a study by Agundu **(**2010**)** showed that projects performance experiences frequent incidences of wastage and pilfering of resources accounting for about 2.5percent to15percent of the total budget thus leading to abandoned projects.

Similarly, a study on the causes of Ghana government projects failure was done to determine the most influential (important) factors from contractors, project management practitioners and general public. In view of the effort to ensure that projects succeed, factors such as limited resources and budgetary allocations for monitoring & evaluation, weak linkage between planning, budgeting and monitoring & evaluation, weak demand for and utilization of monitoring and evaluation results and poor data quality, data gaps and inconsistencies presented a challenge to project performance in Ghana (Ahadzie, 2007). Furthermore, as noted by GNDPC (2010), limited resources in terms of budgetary allocations for project performance, monitoring and evaluation posed a barrier to projects performance.

In another study to identify challenges facing projects performance at local government level in South Africa, Lawal & Onohaebi (2010) argued that for any project in the local government to be considered successful, criteria such as time, efficiency, effectiveness and quality delivery should be satisfied. This was essential and beneficial for the relevant bodies to monitor projects, because doing so improves insight concerning project performance status. They noted that The Mfolozi municipality had far mostly focused on developing community halls, small playgrounds. As a result, other kinds of social facilities and basic needs had been excluded from plans, for example, clinics, ICT centers, the provision of clean water, and roads indicating poor project selection criteria which is a key parameter to ensuring beneficiaries benefit from the community projects.

In Kenya projects performance and their ultimate performance are a key factor to the country's achievement of its key pillars of the Sustainable Development Goals. The Constituency Development Fund (CDF) was created in 2003 under the CDF Act of 2003 which was then reviewed as CDF Act of 2013. Its establishment aimed at providing funds to constituencies in order to address regional disparities and thus stimulate balanced economic development in all the constituencies. The CDF program comprises of an annual budgetary allocation equivalent to 2.5percent of the total national revenue. The allocations to the constituencies are clearly spelled out in the CDF Act, where 75percent of the fund is allocated equally among all the constituencies in order to undertake or implement projects at the grassroots levels. The definitions of these projects vary in definition and concepts by different scholars. In a recent report by National Tax Payers Association (NTPA, 2010), the public (stakeholders/beneficiaries) have recurrently demanded for high-quality project leadership and governance, proper monitoring and evaluation of public projects (and therefore funds) and also totality in compliance to the laws and regulations by project managers and those responsible for management of public funds.

Some of the challenges faced in the performance of CDF projects include procurement process. This have been a key thorn to all stakeholders with a lot of dented operations experienced in the processes of tender or quotation announcement, opening, evaluation as well as awarding. As revealed by the International Governance Institute (IGI Kenya, 2010) professionals have also gone an extra mile in blaming the Small micro enterprises (SMEs) who bid for supply of materials, goods and services. Similarly, governance of the initiated projects and their Monitoring and Evaluation techniques have been of concern as reported through NIMES (2009/2010) report which clearly showed how difficult it is to successfully establish whether the monitoring and evaluation frameworks of CDF projects is done to the expected standards. It thus becomes vital to realize and ascertain that CDF will remain unproductive, embezzled, underperforming if the relevant project management tools and techniques will not be effectively and efficiently utilized, if proper strategic

planning is not done and if the project budget is not adhered to. As researched by Barasa (2014), this brings scholars to conclude that various CDF projects, nearly 60 percent, remain behind schedule or abandoned.

A report published by the World Bank (2000) showed that the CDF can be laterally defined as a vehicle used for monetary transfers and misappropriation, since the system of performance at constituency levels allows the local people such as members of parliament to decide on their project spending. This may only reflect their tastes, preferences and choices to gain political mileages and boost their economic statuses. This study was a replica to that conducted by Bagaka (2008), which revealed that the performance of cdf showed a disparity between the local nature of capital expenditure decisions and financing for the operations and maintenance of such projects with local benefits which further reduces the quality of projects sustainability.

2. THE PROJECT BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE OF A PROJECT

Budgeting has been the cornerstone of the management control process in nearly all organizations for decades. Despite its widespread application in project management, it is far from perfect. Practitioners express concerns about using budgets for planning and performance evaluation. The practitioners argue that budgets impede the allocation of organizational resources to their best uses and encourage myopic decision making and other dysfunctional budget games. They attribute these problems, in part, to traditional budgeting's financial, top-down, command and control orientation as embedded in annual budget planning and performance evaluation processes (Hope & Fraser 2003).

The financing of a project involves the arrangement of adequate funds to pay for the development and operation of a clearly defined project. The transparency and accountability of spending CDF funds was enhanced through the new constituency approach specifically the CDF Act of 2013 which advocates for public involvement on the CDF committee. This must take into account the geographical diversity within the constituency, communal, religious, social and cultural interests in the constituency and the requirement of gender youth and persons with disabilities. This links resolutely with a research by Wabwire (2010) which recommend promotion of overall government transparency and accountability in CDF budgets and expenditure programs through disclosure to the public. In addition to ensuring citizens are able to understand how the allocated funds are spent, it also ensures that minimal if any embezzlement of the funds occur. Nonetheless, the government should enforce economical periodic audits to increase accountability of the fund.

The budget is a very important tool in project planning and performance. It is usually developed after a thorough analysis of the log frame has been conducted. There are two types of budget control. Merchant's study (as cited in Conboy, 2008) refers to tight budget control as low tolerance for interim budget deviations, detailed line-item follow-ups, intense discussions of budgeting results, emphasis on meeting short-run budget targets, and level of tolerance for budget revisions during the year. The main area of focus and major interest lies on meeting the budget, increased operational level management and higher precision in accounting. Similarly, Periasamy (2010) defines the fixed budget as the budget designed to remain unchanged irrespective of the level of activity actually attained. Van der Stede's study (as cited in Conboy, 2008) defines loose budgetary control as a budget where management does not routinely inspect deviations at all, or do so only if there is something clearly amiss. This recapulate the analysis given by Periasamy (2010) who defines a flexible budget as one designed to change in accordance with the various level of activity actually attained.

Corruption cases have remained to be a key thorn surrounding CDF performance and this has been supported by various research and surveys in some constituencies. For instance, a report by the National Tax Association (NTPA) (2010), from financial year 2003/2004 to 2007/2008, shows that Mwea constituency had received a total of Ksh. 153,940,611 (US$1,999,229). This had been used in improving infrastructure, schools, water, dispensaries and school fees bursaries (TISA, 2010). However, the NTA report found wastage of the CDF funds, whereby, Kshs.5, 950, 000 (US$77,273) had been wasted due to badly implemented projects and Ksh 600,000 (US$7,792) on abandoned projects. As noted by NACCSC (2008) Public surveys have also recorded constituent perceptions of corruption on the part of CDF management. The issue is also acknowledged by the Government of Kenya which identified corruption as one of the key problems to be investigated by the Task Force. Funding of non-priority projects which benefit a particular few, or are 'quick-wins' as opposed to more long-term development projects which are difficult to implement.

According to Gikonyo (2008), the various forms of corruption reported in Kenya include: collusion in the awarding of tenders and committee officials/MPs acting as suppliers, bribery in order to secure contracts, double-funding of projects, starting new projects instead of following through on the performance of existing ones, in order for an MP to tie their

name to particular project and point to their impact, tendering and procurement procedures are unclear and tenders are un -advertised. Single sourcing and irregular expenditure may result, Poor or little contract management, leading to contractors being paid for incomplete work or sub-standard work, favoring of particular geographic areas of MP support in selecting projects. The NACCSC (2008) report gives data on the frequency of different forms of corruption and found that nepotism and sub-standard delivery by contractors were predominant: Nepotism: 64percent, shoddy performance of projects: 60percent, awarding tenders irregularly: 54percent, payment of bribes: 39percent. According to Okungu (2008), a political analyst, 70percent of the constituencies have reported mismanagement, theft, fraud and misappropriation and that CDF issues are of political nature. Ongoya and Lumallas, (2005) were of the view that, CDF has the potential of being used by politicians to build their reputation in their constituencies and mobilize political support. The fund has no specific development agenda; hence, it stands out as a political tool (Gikonyo, 2008).According to the Electoral Commission of Kenya, 60percent of Members of Parliament who had billions of CDF money unspent in the CDF bank accounts, had incomplete projects and poor projects did not retain their seats, which is a kind of a warning to M.Ps to manage the fund well, or face the wrath of the electorate in 2012 (Radoli, 2008). Wamugo (2007) further points out that the success of the fund is pegged on the character and the commitment of the area Member of Parliament to use the fund for general development in his constituency. Thus, MPs' performance can be judged based on their success/failure in administering the fund.

3. METHOD

As noted by Sekran (2016), a research design is an outline for the collection, measurement and data analysis whose mandate is to answer the question under research. The study employed a descriptive survey research design. The target population was 80 constituency development committee members from the five constituencies of vihiga county, Kenya. Total census was done because the study population was quite small (80 respondents) for the collection of data where all the 80 committee members in Vihiga County were interviewed. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the required information from the study population. The questionnaires were semi structured carrying variables of the study and response recorded in Likert scale using a rating of 1 to 5 where 1 is "Strongly Agree", 2 is "Agree", 3 is "Neutral", 4 is "Disagree", and 5 is "Strongly Disagree". Pilot test was done to test the validity and reliability of the research instrument. Multiple regression analysis technique was used to determine the effect of independent variables on the dependent variable.

4. RESULTS

The study was geared towards establishing how the various selected parameters of project budget influenced the performance of Constituency Development Funded projects in Vihiga County**.**

The data obtained revealed that the leading proportions (35 percent) of the projects were scheduled to be completed within 2 years while 30 percent were to be completed within 1 year. In totality, the data shows that approximately 80 percent of the projects were scheduled to be completed within 3 years. On the other hand, only 10 percent of the projects had a performance timeline of either less than one year or four years respectively. None of the identified projects showed a performance timeline exceeding four years.

In totality, out of the 56 percent projects (14 in number) in the final bracket of 75-100 percent performance, fully completed projects accounted for 43 percent (6 projects). This implied that 57 percent of the implemented projects had not been completed by the time of conducting this study. These results were correlated to those of a research by Siringi (2010) who found out that 60 percent of CDF projects stalled, 20 percent were abandoned while only 10 percent of all projects were completed in the 2008/2009 and 2009/2010 financial years.

From the data analyzed on how selected budgetary parameters influence project performance, it was noted that most of the respondents (43.8 percent) strongly agreed and 42.5 percent agreed that the availability of project budget and its well adherence greatly influenced project performance. Only a small percentage of the respondents strongly disagreed to this parameter (1.3 percent). Another small ratio of the respondents disagreed (2.5 percent). Of the total respondents, only 10 percent stated as being not sure whether the availability of a budget influences project performance. Similarly, 43.8 percent of the respondents agreed that timely flow and release of adequate project funds greatly influences project performance compared to 21.3 percent who disagreed to the same. On the contrary, the proportion of respondents who strongly agreed that timely flow and release of funds influences project performance (16.3 percent) equaled those that

disagreed on the same (16.3 percent). 18.8 percent stated that they were not sure that timely flow and release of funds influences project performance. When required to indicate on the likert scale to what extent availability of a well managed actual expenditure in relation to bill of quantities influence project performance, only 16.3 percent strongly agreed. Similarly, 37.5 percent agreed while 13.8 percent disagreed that availability of a well managed actual expenditure in relation to bill of quantities influence project performance. However, 10 percent disagreed on the same parameter while 22.5 percent were not sure.

Out of all the 80 respondents, 18.8percent strongly agreed that the inclusion of contingency (unforeseen events) in the budget influence projects performance while 12.5 percent strongly disagreed. Furthermore, 35.0 percent agreed that the inclusion of contingency (unforeseen events) in the budget influence projects performance while 16.3 percent disagreed. Those that stated as being not sure accounted for 17.5 percent. The respondents were further required to indicate to what extent the availability of supportive funding from other sources other than CDF has influence on the performance of CDF projects.10.8 per cent strongly disagreed, 12.3 disagreed 25.5 were not sure while 36.5 percent agreed and a small proportion (15 percent) strongly agreed. 15 percent of the respondents strongly disagreed that periodic auditing and financial expenditure reporting has any contribution to the performance of CDF projects while 13.8 percent disagreed. On the contrary, a higher percentage of the respondents (32.5 percent) agreed that auditing and expenditure reporting influences projects performance while 21.3 percent strongly agreed. These findings are in line with those of Wabwire (2010) who recommended the promotion of overall government transparency and accountability in CDF budgets and expenditure programs. He also notes that the government should enforce economic periodic audits to increase accountability of the fund. As noted by NTPA (2010) availability of the budget and its adherence is a key instrument to projects performance. The body noted that in Mwea constituency, Ksh 5,950,000 was wasted due to badly implemented projects and another Ksh 600,000 on abandoned projects between the years 2003 and 2008.

Table 4.1: Project budget parameters and their influence on project performance

Variable		**Strongly disagree**	**Disagree**	***Not sure***	**agree**	**Strongly agree**
The availability of project budget and its well adherence	%	1.3	2.5	10.0	42.5	43.8
The timely flow and release of adequate project funds	%	5.0	16.3	18.8	43.8	16.3
A well managed actual expenditure in relation to bill of quantities	%	10.0	14.0	22.5	37.5	16.1
The inclusion of contingencies in the budget	%	12.5	16.3	17.5	35.0	18.8
Available supportive funding from other sources other than CDF	%	10.8	12.3	25.5	36.5	15.0
Periodic auditing and financial expenditure reporting	%	15.0	13.8	17.5	32.5	21.3

4.1 Inferential Statistics

4.1.1 Pearson Correlation

A Pearson correlation was carried out to determine the relationship between the budget and the performance of CDF projects. Pearson correlation coefficient was computed at 95 percent confidence interval (error margin of 0.05). the results were tabulated as illustrated below.

		Project performance
Budget	Pearson Correlation	.117
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003
	N	80

There was a partial positive and statistically significant correlation between level of project performance or project performance and budget (r= 0.117, p= 0.003). The influence of project budget on CDF projects when correlated with the performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County has Pearson Correlation Index of 0.117. It falls between +0.100 to + 0.400 which means that the project budget parameters have significance in the performance/performance of CDF projects in Vihiga county. The interpretation of correlation coefficient shows that project budget has significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga county because the P value was p= 0.003or P<0.05.

4.1.2 Regression analysis model.

Table 4.2 Summary model

Step	-2 Log likelihood	Cox & Snell R^2	Nagelkerke R^2
1	76.243[a]	.161	.633

a. Estimation terminated at iteration number 6 because parameter estimates changed by less than .001.

Nagelkerke R Square (R^2) is the coefficient of determination and it shows how level of project performance varied with budget. The Nagelkerke R Square was 0.633. This implies that there was a combined variation of 63.3percent of the factors influencing level of project performance. There were therefore other factors influencing level of project performance.

Table 4.3 Regression coefficients

Variables in the Equation									
		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95percent C.I. for EXP(B)	
								Lower	Upper
Step 1[a]	Budget	.839	.652	1.656	1	.045	.432	.121	1.550
	Constant	5.878	3.493	2.832	1	.092	356.965		
a. Variable entered on step 1: Budget									

Predictors: Budget, the dependent variable: project performance

The following regression analysis was obtained: **$Y= 5.878 + 0.839X_1+Xe$**

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Data emanating from this study revealed that the budget has a significant influence on the performance of CDF projects. The interpretation of correlation coefficient showed that project budget has significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County at p= 0.003 or P<0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_{o1}): The project budget has no significant influence on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County will be rejected. The alternative hypothesis (H_{A1}) is true: The project budget has a significant influence on the performance of CDF projects.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The main objective of this study was to evaluate the influence of project budget on performance of CDF projects in Vihiga County. From the findings emanating from this research, CDF committees need to be aggressive in ensuring an all-inclusive effort in engaging the right tools in project budgets implementation, planning of contingencies, and risk performance monitoring. Much more effort needs to go into creating the right structures for use of project monitoring and evaluation tools, proper project budgeting especially through relevant project strategic plans to ensure 100 percent performance of started projects and reduction of budgetary cost and time overruns. There is need to release the findings of this study for further scholarly research by other researchers in other counties to bring into light other critical factors that hinder the performance of CDF projects.

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