

Project Planning and Project Success in Local Government of Rwanda

A Case of Watershed Management Project (KWAMP), Kirehe District

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Abstract- This paper is mainly assessing project planning and its success in local government of Rwanda with a case study of Watershed Management Project (KWAMP), in Kirehe District. The specific objectives were assessing the influence of project budgets in planning process on project success, determining the influences of project human resources and manager's competencies in project planning on project success, and analyzing the contribution of respecting project timelines in project planning process on project success of Watershed Management Project in Kirehe District. Methodology used in research design are descriptive research design, and target population of 100 people with a sample size of 80 respondents. Data are collected using questionnaires and documentary review while data were analyzed using SPSS as analysis software, descriptive statistical method and correlation coefficient.

The findings of the study confirmed that 86.2% of respondents agreed that they have idea on project budget of KWAMP project in Kirehe, and also confirmed that project budget of KWAMP is a basis of planning process that assisted in achieving project success. The results also indicated that the project human resource and manager's competencies in project planning influence the successful of Kirehe Watershed Management Project as confirmed by 86.2% of respondents. Based to the results of this study, project planning that lead to success of KWAMP project including project budgets, project human resource and manager's competencies, respect of project timeliness, Government policies, and laws and regulations which show a positive and very strong correlation with project success of KWAMP. It was found that KWAMP should offer much training to beneficiaries in order to be well integrated in projects activities.

Index Terms- Project planning, project success, local government, KWAMP

I. INTRODUCTION

Project planning worldwide is an important aspect in project management. For ensuring proper planning, the concerned project planners should consider the financial resources, skilled

human resources, project timelines and effective communication between project implementers and project owners. The skills are very important aspect to ensure effective and successful project planning (Kerzner, 2003). While a project success is one of the most critical aspects for all grassroots levels, national and international development agencies. But it is a major challenge in many developing countries where large number of projects implemented at huge costs often tend to experience difficulties with sustainability, (Khan, 2000).

When thinking of project success and its sustainability, three things must be born in mind such as the community involvement, project results and external assistance. So, a project is sustainable if the community/beneficiaries are capable on their own without the assistance of outside development partners to continue producing results for their benefits (Luvenga *et al.*, 2015).

Major development organizations including multilateral agencies such as World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have arrived at a near consensus that projects cannot be sustainable and long-lasting unless community's participation is made central to the planning and management of the projects. Some of the projects in developing nations have filled the implementation process but they have not bring much benefits to their beneficiaries, and others proved to be unsustainable (Kumar, 2002).

Due to the lack of community involvement this has led to poor operation and maintenance of water projects in many Africa Countries in past years, where the demand for water supply projects is localized, and hence managerial decisions about levels of service, location of water facilities and the cost sharing should be made locally. The project requires careful planning to establish total scope of efforts, define and refine objectives, planning should be based on resources, customer demands and should be based on market size (Zwikael & Smyrk, 2015).

In East Africa perspective, for example in Rwanda, Kirehe community-based Watershed Management Project operates in Kirehe District, since 2009 as an agricultural investment project implemented by MINAGRI, originally co-financed by IFAD, WFP, DED and the Government of Rwanda. The overall goal of KWAMP was to reduce rural poverty in Kirehe District, primarily through an improvement in household food and nutrition security,

asset ownership and quality of life indicators, particularly amongst vulnerable groups including woman-headed households, orphans and those living with HIV/AIDS. The project goal would be achieved through the development of sustainable profitable small-scale commercial agricultural activities in Kirehe District. Through these activities, sustainable incremental income from farming and related economic activities would contribute to poverty reduction among the poor majority in Kirehe. It operates in the 18 watersheds of Kirehe district and aims at reaching 22,500 direct and 10,000 indirect beneficiaries (GoR-KWAMP report, 2016).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Despite the fact that project planning, requires careful planning before it is undertaken or implemented, due to the limited budget, unskilled human resources, low manager's competencies and/or sometime noncompliance to the timelines as agreed, all these lead to some African projects taking long period for completion and some of the projects also remain unachievable (Young, 2010).

As elsewhere in the world, some projects in Rwanda fail due to the management team who do not pay much attention to planning procedures. This may be also happened to KWAMP Project especially due to the constraints of limited budget to execute the project, lack of skilled human resources and manager's competencies. And also noncompliance with project timelines to allocate project completion. It is that case coming the idea of investigating on how does project planning influence project success of local government of Rwanda especially KWAMP project, in Kirehe District.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The overall general objective of this paper is to assess the influence of project planning on project success in local Government of Rwanda. Specific objectives of this study are to assess:

- i. The influences of project budgets in planning process on the project success of Kirehe Watershed Management Project, in Kirehe District.
- ii. The influences of project human resources, and manager's competencies in project planning on project success of Kirehe Watershed Management Project, in Kirehe District.
- iii. The contribution of respecting project timelines in project planning process to project success at Kirehe Watershed Management Project, in Kirehe District.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

An effective project planning needs to be accurate and also action oriented for achievements. In public sector, project planning and decision making are important for achieving project goals and alternative course of actions (Thomas, 2002). Project planning is based on institutional objectives, framework methodology, strategies, tactics, targets, and deadlines for achievements the project outcome (Caughron and Mumford, 2008). Project planning requires technical skills and refers to three levels which are; end user level, technical level and project management level. All levels are also known as project

management conception planning, project design and contract plan (Young, 2010).

The project success is the satisfactory end result of the project in terms of achievements. The basic components of project planning are including project budget, project human resources and manager's competencies as well as respect of project timelines. While project success were determined by achieving on the expected quality standards, community involvement and beneficiary satisfaction (Kerzner, 2013).

2.1 Project Budget and Project Success

Project is prepared based on budget or resources in terms of costs to make it feasible. Project implementers are the ones to estimate approximate costs the project incurred during implementation process. The budget may be generated from organization own assets, funders, community, customers or from suppliers. The project budget need an appropriate project schedule and documents related to past records and as such the factors that contribute to project success (Osburn, and Mumford, 2006). Establishing the project budget requires the group of people to discuss, share ideas and make decisions that facilitated project success (Thomas, and Mengel, 2008).

2.2 Project human resource and manager's competencies on project success

Human resources are important in project planning. The skills and competences of team members within an organization ensure that organization is capable of elaborating and designing proper planning activities. So, human resources is an important aspect in the organization that contributes to the successful of project planning, if they are involved at all levels in decision making (Heerkens, 2005).

Human resources participation in the planning process also gets them involved in project roles, responsibilities, reporting relationship, and this leads to good staffing management plan. The project requires fulltime human resources to allow proper planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation that influence project success (Anthony, 2007). Successful projects entirely depend on proper planning with the commitment to complete it in specified time period and this should be coupled with appointment of skilled human resources (Freeman, 2009).

2.3 Respecting project timelines on project success

The project timelines based on accurate knowledge and define the activities in the form of sequences, resources, duration and schedule development that influence project success (Project Management Body of Knowledge "PMBOK", 2008).

Project timelines require careful control regularly and more often in order to detect derivations earlier. It determines activity duration basing on the information regarding the scope of work, resources and quality. It is estimated that based on inputs from different people, group of people, project team who are familiar with the nature of work and content in specific schedule activity for project achievement (PMBOK, 2008).

2.4 Success of Project local government

The quality is considered as coordinated activity which involves direct and control based on established policies, quality objectives, quality planning, quality assurance, quality control and

improvement. Quality has become one of the key competitive variables generating the needs for evaluation and spending of resources by which an organization expect to achieve on competitive market (Prabhakar, 2008). Quality of the project determines the objective to be achieved and fit the ongoing operations of activities in line with the available resources. A project with good quality is determined by proper planning so as to meet the project success. The success of project requires fully participation of the community in project planning, control and implementation process (Mansuri, and Rao, 2004).

III. DATA SOURCE AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

The quantitative and qualitative approaches used as component that based on development of questionnaire filled by research participants. (Kothari, 2004). Study design enables author to get a great depth of response resulting in better and in detailed an understanding of the causes of project success of KWAMP, in Kirehe District. The target population was the 100 staff of KWAMP project that including engineers, project managers, financial managers, project planning officers and monitoring and evaluation team.

3.1 Sample size and Sampling procedure

The sample size of 80 respondents was drawn from target population of the study. While sampling error of 0.05 (5%) and formula of Taro Yamane are adopted in sampling process. A random sampling technique was also adopted in all categories in Kirehe Watershed Management Project (KWAMP).

3.2 Source Data

Data were collected into two categories including primary and secondary data. In this study, the primary data were collected using self-administered questionnaire addressed to respondents from KWAMP. In terms of secondary source, document review were done on existing books and reports that talk about KWAMP.

3.3 Data Analysis Procedures

The data obtained from respondents of KWAMP project were edited, coded, and made statistical tables by using descriptive statistical method that describing frequencies, percentages of findings, and linear regression analysis was adopted as equation form of $Y = a + bX$ where X is the explanatory variable and Y is the dependent variable. The slope of the line is b , and a is the intercept (the value of Y when $X=0$). The study used linear regression by analyzing project planning in terms of “project budgets, project human resource and manager’s competencies, and respect of project timeliness” as independent variable, within project success in terms of “expected quality standards, level of community involvement, and beneficiary satisfaction “ as dependent variable. The study used the formula: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$. Where X_1 represents project budgets, X_2 represents project human resource, manager’s competencies, X_3 is a respect of project timeliness, X_4 is Government policies, laws and regulations, and ϵ represents standard error.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION FOR FINDINGS

The findings indicated the participation rate of respondents was 100.0% for responding the questions. The results were analyzed using computer software of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results are presented and interpreted in accordance with the research objectives. During this study at KWAMP, gender distribution of respondents confirmed to have both males and females participated in the study. This is justified by 55 (68.80%) of respondents who were males, while 25 (31.20%) of respondents were females.

Table 1: Gender distribution of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentages
Male	55	68.8
Female	25	31.2
Total	80	100.0

Source: *Data from field, (2020)*

Age is the time during which a person has existed. Concerning to the ages of respondents during this study at KWAMP project. The findings indicated that 47 (58.8%) were respondents who have less than 30years; 27 (33.8%) have between

31-40 years old, 4 (5.0%) have between 41-50years old and 2 (2.5%) have 50years and above.

Table 2: Distribution of respondents by Ages

Ages	Frequency	Percent
Less than 30 years	47	58.8
31-40	27	33.8
41-50	4	5.0
50years and above	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: *Data from field, (2020)*

The findings shown in the table 3 illustrates data on education level of respondents joined KWAMP Project of Kirehe District. Among of 100.0% respondent participated during this study, there

is no illiterate among of them; the 17 (8.8%) of respondents have secondary level; 12 (15.0%) have diploma/certificate, 44 (55.0%) of respondents have bachelor's degree; 12 (15.0%) have Master's degree while 5 (6.2%) of respondents have PhD.

Table 3: Education level Distribution of Respondents

Education level	Frequency	Percentages
Secondary level	7	8.8
Diploma/Certificate	12	15.0
Bachelor's Degree	44	55.0
Master's Degree	12	15.0
PhD	5	6.2
Total	80	100.0

Source: *Data from field, (2020)*

Koroit Eunice, (2013) said that success of projects has improved due to people having basic knowledge of management of the affairs of the project planning. It is important to know that almost 100% of the people have formal and informal education that indicates that people knows how to manage their own projects hence their projects can survive and can be sustained. The basic skills and knowledge of staff participated in project planning and implementation influences its project success.

Findings confirmed that more than 86.2% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that they have an idea on project budget of KWAMP, in Kirehe district. The project budget is in planning process that assisting in achievement of project success of KWAMP as confirmed by 82.5% of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed it. There are different sources of finance in achieving project success as confirmed by 91.2% of respondents, there are also prominent project financiers in project success confirmed by 86.2% respondents. Apart from financial funders, they have their own budgetary resources in achieving project success were confirmed by 76.2% of respondents.

4.2 The influences of project budgets in planning process on success of Kirehe Watershed Management Project

Table 4: Findings on project budgets in planning process and project success of KWAMP

Project budgets and its success	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	fi	%								
Having an idea on project budget	34	42.5	35	43.8	11	13.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
Project budget is as basis of planning process assist in achieving the project success	31	38.8	35	43.8	6	7.5	4	5.0	4	5.0
There are different sources of finance in achieving project success	32	40.0	41	51.2	7	8.8	0	0.0	0	0.0
There are prominent project financiers in project success	39	48.8	30	37.5	11	13.8	0	00.0	0	00.0

Apart from financial funders, they have their own budgetary resources in achieving project success	46	57.5	15	18.8	7	8.8	8	10.0	4	5.0
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Source: Field data, (2020)

The project budget needs an appropriate project schedule and documents related to past records and other factors contribute to project success.

4.3 The project human resource and manager’s competencies in project planning influences success at Kirehe Watershed Management Project

The findings on project human resource and manager’s competencies in project planning of Kirehe Watershed Management Project. Table 5 shows effectiveness of project human resource’s competencies in project planning on successful of KWAMP. This means that project planning based on the

expected quality human resource and managers ’competences as confirmed by 86.2% respondents who strongly agreed and agreed. There is existence of human resource enough to execute the planned projects at KWAMP Project as confirmed by 87.5% of respondents. The highest level of education in human resources assists in achieving the project success as confirmed by 81.2% of respondents. Human resource education specialization contributes in achieving project success as more than 80.0% of respondents confirmed it using strongly agree and agree. There are the human resources provided with capacity building to achieve the project success as confirmed by 85.0% respondents.

Table 5: Effective project human resource’s competencies in project planning on successful of Kirehe Watershed Management Project

Effective project human resource’s competencies	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%	fi	%
The project planning based on expected quality human resource and managers ’competences.	41	51.2	28	35.0	7	8.8	4	5.0	0	00.0
There is existence of human resource enough to execute the planned projects at KWAMP.	32	40.0	38	47.5	6	7.5	4	5.0	0	00.0
The highest level of education in human resources assists in achieving the project success.	29	36.2	36	45.0	11	13.8	4	5.0	0	00.0
Human resource education specialization contributes towards in achieving project success.	33	41.2	31	38.8	12	15.0	4	5.0	0	00.0
There are human resources provided with capacity building to achieve the project success	40	50.0	28	35.0	8	10.0	4	5.0	0	00.0

Source: Field data, (2020)

The perceptions of respondents on the influences of project manager’s competencies in project planning on project success of KWAMP are shown on table 6 where manager’s competences in project planning bring about project success as strongly agreed and agreed by 83.8% of respondents. KWAMP achieve its objectives due to have competent management team in the project as confirmed by 96.2% of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed it. Acquiring skills, and training opportunities increase

manager’s competence in executing the planned project as confirmed by 80.0% respondents. The decision makers engaged in hiring competent management personnel to make project planning more successful confirmed by 86.2% respondents. Different projects activities accomplished in KWAMP due to competences of management team as confirmed by 85.0% respondents strongly agreed and agreed.

Table 6: The Manager’s competencies in project planning influences project success of KWAMP

Project manager’s competencies and successful of KWAMP	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	fi	%								
Manager’s competences in project planning bring KWAMP success	32	40.0	35	43.8	3	3.8	10	12.5	0	00.0
KWAMP achieve its objectives due to have competent management team in the project.	51	63.8	26	32.5	3	3.8	0	00.0	0	00.0
They acquired skills, training opportunities all increase manager’s competence in executing the planned project.	26	32.5	38	47.5	16	20.0	0	00.0	0	00.0
The decision makers engaged in hiring competent management personnel to make project planning more successful.	37	46.2	32	40.0	11	13.8	0	00.0	0	00.0
Different projects activities accomplished in KWAMP due to competence’s of management	32	40.0	36	45.0	4	5.0	8	10.0	0	00.0

Source: Field data, (2020)

Project human resource and managers’ competencies in project planning influences Kirehe Watershed Management Project successful through human resources participation in the planning process. Team used full time in proper planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this project as leading channel of its success in Kirehe District.

4.4 The respecting project timelines in project planning process contributes to success of KWAMP, in Kirehe District

Below there are the perceptions from respondents about how respecting project timelines in project planning process influencing project success of KWAMP. More than 82.5% of respondents strongly agreed and agreed that respecting project timelines resulting in proper planning within KWAMP project leads to its success. The projects succeeded due to effective set up of project timelines of KWAMP as confirmed by 82.5% of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed it as table 7 presents it as follows.

Table 7: Respecting project timelines in project planning process contribute to the successful of KWAMP in Kirehe District

project timelines and project success	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	fi	%								
The respect of project timelines result from proper planning within KWAMP Project	20	25.0	46	57.5	14	17.5	0	00.0	0	00.0
The projects succeeded due to effective set up of project timelines of KWAMP	28	35.0	38	47.5	7	8.8	3	3.8	4	5.0

Source: Field data, (2020)

Table 8 shows correlation matrix between the variables representing independent variable (project budgets, project human resource and manager’s competencies, respecting project timeliness) and dependent variable (expected quality standards, level of community involvement, and beneficiary satisfaction).

Table 8: Correlations Matrix table

		Expected standards	quality Level of Community involvement	Beneficiary satisfaction
Project budgets	Pearson Correlation	.536**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	80		
Project human resource and manager’s competencies	Pearson Correlation	.334**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002		
	N	80		
Respect of project timeliness	Pearson Correlation	.320**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004		
	N	80		
Government policies, leadership laws and regulation	Pearson Correlation	.362**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		
	N	80		

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Based to outcomes of this study, the research problem was solved, and objectives of the study were achieved. As conclusion, the project planning influence mainly project success of local government in Rwanda taking reference to results obtained from KWAMP Project.

Recommendations

The community committee has duties like, management of the site; bring together the community, and retaining the water project. It was found that projects fail due to managers who don’t pay much attention on the planning process, and lack of skilled human resources and manager’s competencies, and no respecting project timelines allocated the project completion might affect negatively the project success, Government institution projects

like KWAMP should thus put more effort in delivering the necessary trainings to their staff in order to have through insight in all projects activities.

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