FACTORS AFFECTING THE PERFORMANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANISATIONS’ PROJECTS IN KENYA. A Case of Marsabit District.

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DECEMBER, 2011.

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Factors affecting the performance of
DECLARATION

This is my own work and has not been presented for academic reasons or otherwise in any other forum or university.

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Declaration</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of figures</td>
<td>II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of tables</td>
<td>III</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgement</td>
<td>IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of abbreviation</td>
<td>VI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of terms</td>
<td>VII</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction ................................................. 1
1.1 Background of the study ......................... 1
1.2 Statement of the problem ......................... 4
1.3 Objectives .................................................. 5
1.3.1 General objective ....................................... 5
1.3.2 Specific objectives ................................. 5
1.4 Research questions ..................................... 6
1.5 Scope of the study ...................................... 6
1.6 Significance of the study ....................... 7
1.7 Limitations of the study ......................... 7

## CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature review ........................................ 8
2.1 Introduction ............................................ 8
2.2 Definition of project performance ............... 9
2.3 Criteria for project performance .................. 9
2.4 Factors affecting the performance of projects ... 13
List of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Factors of performance</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Indicators of performance</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Conceptual framework</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Project managers’ qualifications</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Time schedule</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Project budget</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Level of objectives achievement</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Factors ranking</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table</td>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.1 level of education</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.2 project managers' skills</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.3 project implementation activities</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table 4.4 monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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ABSTRACT

Project management is an activity of planning and executing project activities as to achieve the set goals and objectives. A project has been commonly defined as a temporary endeavor with a defined beginning and end, undertaken to meet a unique goal and objective as to bring about beneficial or added value to the beneficiaries. The performance of a project towards meeting its objectives is dictated upon by interplay of diverse factors which if not well monitored and managed would wreck the project, and block it from achieving the objectives set during the initiation. In Kenya, over fifty percent projects have been declared non-performing or non-satisfactory. The figure becomes even larger when the NGO projects are put in the spotlight. This study was therefore sought to investigate the factors that affect the performance of NGO projects in Kenya especially the NGOS in Marsabit. There had been limited research done in this area, and this research was to form the basis for researchers and academicians to further explore other factors that affect the performance of projects. Out of the twenty five active NGOS in Marsabit by then, twenty four NGOS were sampled and their projects studied in details. The study was done in Marsabit district. In this study, data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The data collection methods were questionnaires, interviews and publications. The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical method and presented in pie charts, bar graphs and percentages. The research established that close to 78% of the project managers had either a first degree or postgraduate degree. Out of these 80% were males while only 20% were females. The research also found that over 58% of the projects had time overruns and only 25% of them had been completed within the set time frame, while others were totally abandoned mid-way. The research also established that, out of the projects studied only 41.7% had successfully met their objectives while other either failed or wrapped up prematurely. The research found that 58% of the projects had exceeded their budget estimates and only 37.5% were completed within the budget. The research concluded that, the non performance of the projects was to a greater extent attributed to several factors as pointed out by the respondents; 44% was due to inadequate project management skills, 23% due to lack of elaborate monitoring and evaluation of the project progress, 11% due to inadequate qualifications of the project team members, 12% due to lack of executive management’s support, and 9% due to ineffective user involvement in the project activities. The research therefore recommends that project managers should be adequately equipped with project management skills through continuous training, to enable them effectively oversee the management of the project activities, and that there should be a continuous monitoring and evaluation of the projects to ensure that they stay on course. The NGOS should also ensure that team members are vetted accordingly to ensure that they meet the minimum required qualifications. The NGO coordination board should also closely monitor the NGO activities and projects to ensure that projects runs in accordance with the set objectives and that projects don’t stall midway.
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NGO – Non-Govermental Organisation.

ROI – Return On Investments

CBO – community based organizations

MBO – Management By Objectives

PM – Project Manager

QA – Qualitative Analysis

PMBOK – Project management body of knowledge.
Definition of Terms

**Project** – A project is a temporary endeavor, having a defined beginning and end (usually constrained by date, but can be by funding or deliverables) undertaken to meet unique goals and objectives, usually to bring about beneficial change or added value.

**Objective** – this refers to the milestones that defines or are used to rate the project as either having been successful or not. They are specific targets which the project aims to address.

**Failure** – this refers to the projects inability to meet the objectives for which it was designed.

**Resources** – Human, material or financial requirements of the project, necessary for the project activities to take off.

**Beneficiaries** – This refers to people who are intended to benefit from the projects output.

**Stakeholders** – This refers to all that have special interest in the project.

**Management** – The science of organizing, planning, controlling, and directing the project activities.

**Cost** – Refers to the material, financial and or human resources expended in the project implementation.
Risks – This refers to the deterrent factors that may hinder the smooth implementation of the project activities as reach a conclusive and satisfactory end.

Scope – this refers to the target or the expected outcome of a project i.e limit of expectations.

Performance – this refers to factor are used to rate the project as either being a success or not such as attainment of the project targets/objectives.
1.0 Introduction

This chapter sought to give a general perspective on the project life and the aspects that culminate into the initiation of any given project (objectives) and the activities that follow suit.

1.1 Background of the Study

Projects are ventures initiated to meet or address a certain challenge in the society or in an organization. Projects usually require huge capital and human resources as to meet their objectives. Despite the availability of these resources, a project may either fail or succeed depending on the various factors that come into play. One of the vaguest concepts of project management is project success. This is because the beneficiaries of the projects usually have different needs and expectations; it is very unsurprising that they interpret project success in their own way of understanding (Cleland & Ireland, 2004). "For those involved with a project, project success is normally thought of as the achievement of some pre-determined project goals" (Lim & Mohamed, 1999) while the general public has different views, commonly based on user satisfaction. "In the same way that quality requires both conformance to the specifications and fitness for use, project success requires a combination of product success (service, result, or outcome) and project management success" (Duncan, 2004).

Cases of projects wrapping up before achieving their objectives or meeting their set goals are on the rise. For instance, According to Standish Research, 70% of major projects fail to meet their objectives; 50% exceed their original cost estimates by a whopping 200%; and 20% are ultimately cancelled (Standish research report 2009) this has further been backed by several other researches that have lamented on the cost among other effects of the failed projects.
One World Bank Study, which analyzed 46 cancelled projects, identified investment commitments to those projects to $21bn. A Research conducted on 214 Information systems (IS) projects, to identify the cause of failure in the European IT projects revealed that only one in eight information technology projects can be considered truly successful (failure being described as those projects that do not meet the original time, cost and (quality) requirements criteria).

To gauge whether a project has been a success or a failure we need to adopt a sound criteria which can accommodate the diversities of project management. Primal success criteria have been an integrated part of project management theory given that early definitions of project management included the so-called 'Iron Triangle' success criteria – cost, time and quality. (Atkinson, 1999) Atkinson argues that "as a discipline, project management has not really changed or developed the success measurement criteria in almost 50 years". To meet the urgent need of modernizing the out of date success criteria, he suggest the ‘Square Route’ (figure 3) success criteria instead of the ‘Iron Triangle’, where he groups the criteria that other academics have proposed. The main change is the addition of qualitative objectives rather than quantitative, namely the benefits that different group of people can receive from the project. These benefits are seen from two perspectives, one from the organizational view and one from the stakeholders view. This means that a successful project must bargain between the benefits of the organization and the satisfaction of end users. The fourth corner of the ‘Square Root’ is the Information System which includes the subjects of maintainability, reliability and validity of project outcomes.

Further Kezna, (2001) suggests that, a successful project must be completed 'with minimum or mutually agreed upon scope changes', even though stakeholders
constantly have different views about projects’ results Maylor, (2005), without disturbing the main work flow of the organization and without changing the corporate culture. A project manager’s main responsibility is to make sure that he delivers change only where necessary. Otherwise, he is doomed to find strong resistance from almost all organizational departments Kerzner, (2001) which ultimately could lead to project’s failure to perform.

A more structural approach to project performance is grouping the criteria into categories. Wideman, (1996) describes four groups, all of them time-dependent: ‘internal project objectives (efficiency during the project), benefits to the beneficiaries (effectiveness in the short term), direct contribution (in the medium term) and future opportunity (in the long term)’. The characterization of time dependent is based on the fact that performance/success varies with time. All the above performance criteria ‘should be simple and attainable, and once defined, they should also be ranked according to priority’ right track associates, (2003). Straight forward criteria are easy to understand by everyone involved in the project and therefore commitment is guaranteed.

Unrealistic criteria can put a ‘failure’ label on many projects because of the unreachable standards, can generate low team esteem and team performance in future projects and finally generate unfair disappointment among the stakeholders. During the initiation phase all factors that relate to the project performance are carefully put into scrutiny, and further reviewed during other stages i.e. initiation, planning, execution and closure. If then all projects go through the same process, what brings about the success of some and non performance of others?

The programmes initiated by the NGOs in Marsabit district arouse further interest concerning this issue. In Marsabit there have been a myriad projects initiated by various NGOS, which
unfortunately never lived to see the course for which they were born, while others have thrived in the very same environment bringing out a ray of hope where it was deemed extinct.

Going by the definition of a project as a complex, non-routine, one time effort limited by time, budget, resources and performance specifications designed to meet customer needs, (Gray & Larson, 2006) it is obvious the material and human resources going into the drain in relation to the non-performing projects is regrettable. It is on this platform that this study seeks to address the underlying factors that affect the performance and eventually the success of projects.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Globally, various organizations have been crying foul over the many projects whose performances fall below the target and the hardy cash gone down the drain (Standish research report 2009). In Kenya the number of projects that have so far proved defunct and futile ventures in relation to their objectives is desperately alarming. The situation seems terribly worse when NGO and CBO programs are put into the spotlight. The overall performance of a project is a key factor to ascertain the success of a project. This is usually determined by the attainment of the project objectives and the sustainability of the project thereafter. (Reuben O. M. et al 2005). The number of projects initiated by various NGOS in various parts of Kenya, forms a worthy spectrum to the curiosity of researchers. For instance, From the NGOs co-ordination board, there have been about one hundred and fifty eight NGOS that have registered in marsabit. (NGOs co-ordination board, 2005) but shockingly almost 85% of these NGOs wrapped up long time without making any impact in relation to the objectives they were pursuing. Currently only twenty five NGOS seem to be actively operating in Marsabit central district. The resources committed by these NGOS to the various projects are enormous, However the performance of
most of them in relation to the objectives for which they were initiated and their impact is negligible. However some of them have produced wonderful results, proving a great success. Various researchers among them; Maranga et al, (2005), and, (2010) have addressed some of the factors that affect the performance of projects, though on divergent perspectives.

This study, therefore, intended to investigate the factors that affect the performance of NGO projects in Kenya, especially the NGOs in Marsabit district, as to help reduce the alarming rate of projects’ non-performance and create an enabling road map to the achievement of the projects objectives and by providing relevant information that would help improve the performance.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The study aimed at achieving the following objectives:

1.3.1 General objective

To identify the factors that influences the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

The research was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To establish the effect of project management skills in the performance of NGO projects
2. To evaluate how monitoring and evaluation affects the success of NGO projects
3. To determine how user involvement affects the performance of NGO projects
4. To establish how the qualification of the project team members affects the performance of NGO projects

5. To evaluate the effect of executive management’s support to the performance of NGO projects.

1.4 Research Questions

The researcher was guided by the following research questions:

i. How did the project management skills influence the performance of NGO projects?

ii. How did monitoring and evaluation contribute to the overall performance of NGO projects?

iii. How did the user involvement affect the performance of NGO projects in Kenya?

iv. How did the qualifications of the project team members affect the performance of NGO projects?

v. Did the executive management’s support affect the performance of NGO projects?

1.5 Scope of the Study

The study was carried out in Marsabit district. According to the Ngos coordination board, 2005, the district has had one hundred and fifty seven (157) registered NGOs, but its only twenty five NGOS that seemed to be active by then. The study was therefore be limited to the investigation
of the factors that influenced the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit, based on those 25 active NGOs.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this research were to be of significant to the NGO council in that it was to incite them to develop appropriate measures to check the activities of the NGOs and advise them accordingly. It was also to benefit the NGOs and other organizations as to device sound tracking and monitoring of their activities as to improve their performance in relation to their target objectives. It was also useful to the government especially the Ministry of Social services as to closely monitor the registration and operations of NGOs, in relation to their objectives. The research also added to the scholarly stock and opened avenues for further research as it pointed to other gaps in relation to project management.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

This study was limited by time. The time required to gather the information was limited hence limited the sample population to the manageable size in line with the available time. It was also limited by finances since this was an expensive undertaking which required a lot of travelling among other expenses. In terms of data the study was limited in that the project managers were not anxious to release certain baits of information in relation to their projects.
2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

A project is a temporary endeavor, having a defined beginning and end (usually constrained by date, but can be by funding or deliverables), undertaken to meet unique goals and objectives, usually to bring about beneficial change or added value Gray & Larson, (2006). The temporary nature of projects stands in contrast to business as usual (or operations), which are repetitive, permanent or semi-permanent functional work to produce products or services. The primary challenge of project management is to achieve all of the project goals and objectives while honoring the preconceived project constraints. Typical constraints are scope, time, and budget. The secondary—and more ambitious—challenge is to optimize the allocation and integration of inputs necessary to meet pre-defined objectives.

The integration of the objectives into the project management comes from the earlier ground work done by the proponents of management by objectives (MBO). The term "management by objectives" was first popularized by Peter Drucker in his 1954 book 'The Practice of Management'.

Objectives being the major milestones that defines the success or failure of any given project among other parameters, the project management spends the better part of the project time in the initiation stage which essentially entails the plan of which and how the objectives will be achieved.
2.2 Project Success

The Project Management literature has several definitions of project success. A project may be completely or partially successful. A stringent definition of complete project success could be that all key stakeholders are satisfied with the project outcome. A more relaxed requirement may be that satisfaction of the project sponsor, only, is paramount. Widerman, (2000) states that in general terms that the requirements for project success are subjective, multi-dimensional and potentially dynamic throughout the life of the project. Also, the terms on which the outcome is judged should be defined at the start of the project. An alternative viewpoint on project success could be that all four of the tetrad project constraints: time, quality, scope and cost, need to have been addressed to the satisfaction of all key stakeholders. Mangione, (2003) defines project success in the simple economic terms of a positive Return On Investment (ROI), whereby returns from the product exceed the ongoing cost of production. This would tend to emphasize the importance of quality and cost above time and scope, whereby late delivery of fewer functions than were originally proposed is not critical provided the customer accepts this. Johnson et al. (2001) describe the work of the Standish group in describing a successful project as meeting planned time, budget and functionality constraints. This ignores the quality aspect, which may result in large maintenance costs beyond the project hand-over stage. Studies suggest that most projects disasters are avoidable Heekens,( 2002). Many times, warning signals occur long before the project has begun to fail.

2.3 Criteria for Project performance

Lim and Mohamed, (1999) define a criterion as a principle or standard by which anything is judged. The Oxford Dictionary further defines performance as a favorable outcome. When combining these terms together, criteria of project performance can be defined as the set of
principles or standards by which favorable outcomes can be completed within a set specification Chan et al.,(2002). In each industry, every project team or individual has its own idea of project success and its dependent on project type, project size, project participants, clients, experience of owners etc.

In the early 1990s a project was considered successful when it was completed within time, cost, achieved the desired performance utilizing the resources effectively and was accepted by the client. Time, cost and quality are the basic criteria to project success, and are discussed in almost every article on project success, such as that of Belassi and Tukel, (1996), Walker, (1995, 1996) and Atkinson, (1999). These three criteria are called the “iron triangle”. In the modern day there are certain additions to the above definition of success of a project. A project is now called successful if it has minimum scope changes, does not disturb the main work flow of organization and does not deviate from the company's culture norms.

In addition to the basic criteria, Pinto and Pinto, (1999) discussed that a project's performance is also dependent on project’s social aspects which refer to the satisfaction of interpersonal relations between the project team. These subjective measures are known as “soft” measures. Pocock et al, (1996) further advocated for absence of legal claims to be a criteria for a successful project which then called for “safety” to be an indicator of project success. Kometa et al, (1995) comprehensively assessed project performance to include safety, economy (construction cost), maintenance cost, time and flexibility to others. In the figure below Atkinson, (1999) divides projects success into three stages as indicated in the figure2.1 below:
Over the last decade a lot of research has been done to propose different criteria for project success. Figure 2 below consolidates the findings and provides a comprehensive framework for measuring success of most of the projects.
For any project to claim success the above factors must have been considered. Many research studies have been conducted to determine the reasons for project management non-performance. Project Managers (PMs) are usually held responsible for the performance or non-performance of their projects; therefore, most studies revolve around PM’s Skills. In the 2001 CHAOS report (The Standish Group International, 2001, p6), business, communication, responsiveness, process, results, operational, realism and technological skills are mentioned as some of the most
important skills a project manager should have to deliver success. The development and design of a project requires skills that range from soft people skills to sophisticated technical skills.

2.4 Factors Affecting the performance of Projects

2.4.0 Introduction

There are several factors that affect the performance of projects. However, the simplest way to separate them is to divide them into two categories: Those under the scope of the Project Management role and those that are generally outside it or at least outside the Project Manager’s influence. The Standish Group (CHAOS: A Recipe for Success, 1999) among other researches agree that the following, factors form the backbone of every project’s success:

2.4.1 Factors Within the Project Manager’s Control

Project Managers have a pivotal role in project outcomes. There are many areas where deficiencies in the Project Manager’s activities can lead to project failure. The Project Management Body of Knowledge over emphasizes on these factors and draws our attention to their significance in project success or failure. Among them:

2.4.1.1 Integration Management

The lack of a clear project definition and plan is a basic neglect of responsibility on the Project Manager’s part, usually to the major detriment of the project. In addition, this must be accompanied by ongoing revision as required as almost inevitable time, scope, cost or quality slippages occur. These revisions must also be managed to ensure control of the changing
baseline is maintained, otherwise it can become unattainable. In essence the project manager should integrate and manage as one piece all the aspects of the projects in a balanced manner and view the end from the beginning.

2.4.1.2 Scope Management
Poor initial scope definition or underestimation of project complexity, along with a failure to progressively elaborate and document scope changes, can lead to project failure as deliverables fall short of expectations. Melymuka, (2000) identifies scope requirements and scope creep as major causes of stakeholders dissatisfaction. Project Managers must be prepared to say no when necessary to limit scope. They must also ensure all deliverable components are small enough for the scope of each to be sufficiently clear.

2.4.1.3 Time Management
A failure to identify and define all activities required for the project, as well as gross underestimation of these activities, can make it very difficult to meet project deliverables on time. Delays can cause increasing stakeholders anxiety which can result in project termination. In addition, if activities are poorly scheduled, bottlenecks can be created as human resources are unevenly loaded, creating stress and inefficiencies. Underlying all these time management activities is a project baseline that may change due to other issues.

2.4.1.4 Cost Management
Both static and dynamic issues can affect project budgeting. Inadequate provision for required resource scope and cost during the initial planning stage will lead to a “cost blowout” later in the project which may cause a challenge. Even if a project is properly costed, the Project Manager
needs to ensure there are no dynamic cash-flow issues by carefully balancing spending with income during the development process. This is especially relevant when a large initial development investment is required that is only recovered when the stakeholders approves project completion.

2.4.1.5 Quality Management
Performing regular quality evaluation and remedial action where and when required is essential if the quality of the project deliverables is to be as required. A project will fail if the quality during development is too low for the stakeholders to maintain faith in the final outcome.

2.4.1.6 Human Resource Management
Project managers are very lucky if they have the option to choose their project team. More often, their team is inherited to the project from various sectors of the organisation. It is vital to have a good project team to work with, with core skills that can be evolved to core competences and capabilities for the whole organisation. All members of the project team must be committed to the success of the project and the overall mission of the company. Apart from their skills and commitment, project team members should have clear communication channels to access "both the functional manager and the project manager within a matrix organization. Effective management of this dual reporting is often a critical success factor for the project" (PMBOK Guide, 2004, p215). Poor team planning and development, including under-staffing, vague responsibilities and instability, lead to lack of staff motivation and direction. This will cause a lapse in quality and slow down progress.
2.4.1.7 Communication Management

Good communication between the Project Manager, team members and the project stakeholders is essential for avoiding misunderstandings. In Getting The Sponsor You Need, 2000) it is explained that untimely reporting of issues to the executive sponsor does not allow them the maximum opportunity of providing assistance – “the level of help you get is inversely proportional to your delay in asking.”

2.4.1.8 Risk Management

Failure to manage risk items, often in the form of untested assumptions, by adequately addressing them early in a project, can lead to a huge cost blowout later on, as the severity of these items becomes fully apparent. The ability of the project management to foresee the likely eventualities that may wreck the project is a vital factor for the success of the project. Kulik, (1997), Malmuka, (1997) and Buttrick, (2000) et al, have emphasized on risk management as an important component of the Project Management. All business activities are undertaken in an environment of uncertainty, arising from a range of sources Hillson, (1999). These include technical issues, commercial constraints, management issues and external dependencies. Successful projects however do not seek to avoid uncertainty, because they recognize the relationship between risk and reward. The “zero risk” enterprise or project does not exist, and indeed is not desirable, since the available benefits are determined to a large extent by the degree of risk an organisation is prepared to confront. Risk is however not the same as uncertainty. Risk arises when uncertainty has the potential to affect objectives, and can be defined as “Any uncertain event or set of circumstances that, should it occur, would have an effect on one or more objectives” (Association for Project Management 2004). There are uncertainties that cannot
affect objectives, and which are therefore not risks. It is this relationship between risk, uncertainty and objectives that makes risk management such an important contributor to both project performance and business benefits.

2.4.1.9 User Involvement

The most critical factor identified is user/stakeholders involvement in the project planning stage. Additionally, design, implementation and testing involvement, all increase the likelihood that the project completion would result in the user’s needs being met. Sponsors and stakeholders must be active project participants. Buttrick, (2000) also explains that the current and future needs of a project will be much better understood by users and customers through their involvement in workshops and focus groups. Simulations and prototypes are also useful in getting the stakeholders’ attention and commitment. Greer, (1999) encourages the active project sponsor participation in defining deliverables, promoting progress and facilitating access to the review and opinions of end users and to required documentation.

2.4.1.10 Clear Business Objectives

Objectives are used to measure the value of project deliverables. Many projects fail because of a disconnect between strategic vision and tactical project deliverables, often as a result of poorly defined project/programme objectives. It is important that the project is consistent with the organisation’s strategic framework and its success will create value for the business by leading towards a clear, competitive advantage. The motivation for undertaking the project should be fully understood and widely and regularly communicated to all stakeholders. Greer, (1999) explains this in terms of a “documented business need”. Buttrick, (2000) points out that the clarity of a company’s business strategy determines how successfully projects can be selected on
a strategic benefit basis. This in turn can determine company performance on a basis of project success rate.

2.4.1.11 Small Milestones

In general it has been found that smaller projects are more successful due to greater manageability. For a larger project, manageability can be improved by adopting an iterative approach, by evolving deliverables in successive approximations over shorter timeframes. This approach is advocated by Hyde, (2002) as a way of addressing changing requirements.

2.4.1.12 Competent Staff

Kulik, (1997) advises that highly productive programmers will greatly improve project potential. It is important that such people are acquired then empowered to perform by protecting them from distractions. The success of any given projects is highly dictated by the quality of the manpower in operation. Therefore, since the implementation activities of the projects rely on them, it is important to cream the right skills if success is to be attained.

2.4.1.13 Proper Planning

There is a widespread emphasis on the contribution of proper planning to project success. Greer, (1999) described it as “everything and ongoing”, and advocates use of a “time-tested, proven project life cycle”, or as expressed by Buttrick, (2000) – “the same simple and well defined framework”. Project tracking is another important aspect of this. Being constantly aware of project status (Melymuka, (1997) and constantly addressing and revalidating project viability (Buttrick, (2000) helps to keep things on track.

2.4.1.14 Procurement Management

Poor management of the procurement process can leave a project short of resources at critical stages. Some deliverables may require special third-party tooling with long lead times which, if
not properly planned for, can have dire consequences for the project due to the inflexibility of such times.

2.4.1.15 Project Monitoring and Evaluation.

Monitoring and evaluation is the process of collecting and analyzing information about the project that tells you whether you are on track to reach your objectives, and whether or not the project achieved or contributed to the desired impact. In order to know whether or not you are on track to achieving your program’s objectives, you must monitor the project during implementation as well as evaluate its impact at the end of the project. Monitoring the progress of the project allows you to adapt the program as needed to ensure that you attain your objectives. If well conducted, the major pitfalls that wreck projects can be identified in good time and necessary corrective and cautionary measures taken.

If the above aspects of project management are carefully undertaken, then we would avert most of the regrettable consequences of failed projects.

2.4.2 Other Factors Not Mentioned In PMBOK

Within the Project Management role, Hamil, (2003) recognizes two distinct areas: the development Process itself and the facilitation of the effecting of that process. A major deficiency in either of these areas would almost certainly lead to project failure unless sufficient team-member heroics or good luck occurred to overcome any deficiency.

2.4.2.1 Development Process

The development process would usually be based on a combination of generally accepted product development principles as well as those specific to the industry, the organisation, as well as the actual product being developed (or desired development process outcome). Common process deficiencies as listed by Hamil, (2003) are inflexibility and insufficient or excessive
complexity. Melymuka, (2000) points out that, this commonly leads to failure if the Project Manager disengages from the process for any period. Process disengagement can be complete, or it may involve less major departures such as skipping project stages or going ahead without fully preparing for each stage. In the worse case scenario of having to follow a seriously deficient process, the best option is to improve, then resume following the process rather than discarding it completely. This is also supported by Cantor, (2002), who advises that the answer for a late project is to accelerate the process rather than drop it.

2.4.2.2 Project Manager Roles and Responsibilities
The Body of Knowledge (A Guide To The Project Management Body Of Knowledge) on these roles, contains several areas of Project Manager responsibility that must be addressed throughout a project’s life. Project failure could occur because of the cumulative effects of deficiencies in several of these areas. Alternatively, it could occur because one area in particular is so bad that it compromises the whole project, regardless of anything else. As quoted in Hamil, (2003), “management of projects is still treated in a very amateurish way”. An experienced (and talented) Project Manager will possess particular characteristics that enhance team performance. Of particular importance are dynamism and strong leadership combined with teamwork Kulik, P (1997). Positivity and the ability to listen yet still lead are also important (Melymuka, K 1997). In addition, conveying a sense of urgency (while not panicking) will also enhance project performance by minimizing team member complacency.

2.4.3 Factors Outside the Project Manager’s Control
Occasionally, despite the best efforts of the Project Manager, a project fails due to unforeseen or unavoidable external factors. The project’s context within the organization can be more important than the direct project activities. There are a number of factors that have the potent to
wreck the project and which the project manager has no direct control of. Among these factors includes:

2.4.3.1 The external environment

External environment can be the political, economic, socio-culture and technological (PEST) context in which the project is executed. Factors like the weather, work accidents or the government's favourable or unfavourable legislation can affect the project in all of its phases. "Note that if a client is from outside the organization, he should also be considered as an external factor influencing the project performance" (Belassi & Tukel, 1996, p145). Competitors should also be accounted as external factors which can undermine project success because the original project could be overshadowed by a more glamorous and successful project launched by another organization.

2.4.3.2 Under-quoting by Marketing

Despite the best efforts of the Project Manager to provide a realistic quotation, a Marketing Department may often reduce prices to unrealistic levels to win business for strategic purposes. The Project Manager is then left with the unenviable task of trying to pursue the development process with little resource and little immediate financial reward at the end for either the project team or the whole organization.

2.4.3.3 Trouble with Third-Party Suppliers

The supply of resources to the project may be disrupted because a critical source of resources had delivery problems or worse still has disappeared altogether. This reinforces the need to seek alternative suppliers wherever possible thus leading to project delays among other effects.
2.4.3.4 Work Continuity not guaranteed after project completion

Staff may become distracted and low on motivation due to uncertainty of work continuity after the current project has finished. This has been one of the major causes of project failure especially in the non-governmental organizations since the team members want to delay the project as to stay longer in the job.

2.4.3.5 Corporate/Executive management support

Top management support is the principal success factor for many projects Tukel & Rom, 1998, p48) (CHAOS Report, 2001, p4) (Cleland & Ireland, 2002, p210) (Tinnirello, 2002, p14) , which means that no project can finish successfully unless the project manager secures true support from the senior or operational management. It is extremely difficult to work in a hostile environment where nobody understands the benefits that the project will deliver to the organisation. Low or falling executive interest and commitment to the project can result in inadequate staffing and funding and unfulfilled commitments. This is a sign that a project is headed for oblivion unless some renewed management enthusiasm can be generated. Having company executive support, with priorities actively set by top management, contributes significantly to project success. The Standish Group particularly recommends that a ‘project champion’ be found in the form of an executive sponsor with a vested interest in the project’s success. This person or group should always being given a clear picture of project status and business relevance. Whilst this may come with the cost of some loss of independence, Kulik, (1997) lists the resulting benefits of more secure resource provision and strengthening of team stability against unwanted enlistment of team members by other projects. Or as Greer, (1999) puts it, the prevention of “multi-project logjams”. Thomsett (Getting the Sponsor You Need,
2000), emphasis the sponsorship element as “the single biggest predictor of project success or failure”.

2.4.3.6 Bad Luck

Despite diligent planning, risk analysis and mitigation, circumstances can conspire to derail project activities to an extent where an apparently feasible project losses all potential and ultimately fails.

The environment and atmosphere of projects have proved to be highly slippery. Therefore, if any given project does not embrace the dynamisms of project management in their day to day running of the projects, more and more projects are destined to fail at the expense of the needs or gaps for which they were choreographed. We can however conclude that, to achieve project success while simultaneously avoiding failure is a task that constantly challenges Project Managers and forces them to draw on knowledge, skills and instinct in a diverse range of methodological and interpersonal areas.

2.5 Effects of non-performing projects

According to statistics prepared by the World Bank PPI Database, (2001), investment commitments for private sector infrastructure projects in the emerging markets grew dramatically during the 1990s, from $18bn in 1990 to a record $128bn in 1997. By the end of 1990 a number of these projects had been cancelled prior to completion or otherwise deemed to have been nonperforming and the much large number of them were distressed and required a renegotiation of their substantive economic terms. It is difficult to quantify the costs to stakeholders of distressed and failed private infrastructure projects. One World Bank Study, which analyzed 46 cancelled projects, identified investment commitments to those projects of $21bn. This figure does not include the vastly larger number of renegotiation situations where
investors and lenders took significant “haircuts”. Nor does it begin to address the broader costs to the citizens, communities and businesses in the countries affected, such as the time and money costs of failed services—water, power, sewer, telecom, etc.—interrupted services, and misallocated resources when project sponsors and host governments clash and projects are delayed or cancelled. Failed projects not only affect the would-be project beneficiaries economically but also psychologically, and emotionally. This is because the obvious focus by the beneficiaries is on the end results (outputs) which they hope would address the challenges they have been facing or produce economically viable results worth the undertaking. When their dream is prematurely clinched by the non performance of the projects, their desperation or challenge is almost doubled, bearing in mind that they have the wound to heal and the challenge that was, as a result of the gap which the project was to fill.
2.6 Review of the Previous Studies

The area of project management and the factors that affect projects has attracted a lot of attention from various scholars in this field. However there has been limited number of researches done on the factors that affect the performance of NGO projects in Kenya. Some of the researches done on this topic includes:

Muhia W. L (2011), in her research, she investigates the factors that influence the performance of CDF projects in Kenya, particular in Juja constituency. The research cites several factors such as monitoring and evaluation, project management skills among others as the key components in the performance of CDF projects. This paper builds on the same to establish how these factors apply in the performance of NGO projects.

Maranga et al. (2005), This study focuses on the factors that affect the performance of projects funded by the world bank in the developing countries. The study was limited to the criteria set by the bank such as relevance of the objectives, efficacy, efficiency, sustainability, impact of the project, outcome, bank performance, and borrower performance. The study was therefore not exhaustive in analysing other factors that affect projects performance, though it superficially looked at factors such as project management skills such as cost, time, project schedule/scope management as being among the key factors that affect the performance of projects.

the construction projects hence did not explore the factors in the wider all inclusive spectrum of projects performance.

All the above studies points to the fact that all aspects of a project’s life are significant and their effect to the health of a project cannot be understated. They therefore form an invaluable base upon which this research paper is founded in that they point to some gaps or aspects of project
management that requires further study, especially the NGO projects in Kenya, which this study intends to address.

2.7 Facts About Marsabit District

Marsabit District is an administrative district in the Eastern Province of Kenya. The district has a population of 121,478 (National population census 1999.) The district is located in northern Kenya bordering the eastern shore of lake Turkana, Isiolo and covers part of Chalbi desert. The district has three constituencies: North Horr Constituency, Saku Constituency and Laisamis Constituency which have now been declared independent districts. It is usually considered an arid area where drought and acute shortage of water is the major setback. The region is 95% pastoral, but with several tourist attractions.
2.8 Conceptual Framework

The following model shows the suggested links between the various project variables and the overall performance of a project.

Fig.2.3 conceptual framework

Independent variables

- Project management skills
- Project monitoring and evaluation
- Needs assessment and user involvement
- Executive/corporate support
- Qualified/committed project team

Intervening variables

- Project implementation activities
- Objectives
- Indicators

Dependent

Overall Project performance

The indicators of performance in relation to these projects include: time, budget, quality, attainment of the project objectives among others.
CHAPTER THREE

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology that was used in this study. It deals with the proposed research design, target population sample size, sampling strategy, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

The research design adopted by the study a descriptive research design. Descriptive research design is useful in cases where the research aims at studying the characteristics of a given situation (Kothari, 1990). Since this study aimed at studying the factors that affect the performance of projects in Kenya, they constitute the characteristics to be studied. This design also helped in generating statistical information about the performance of NGOS in Kenya (Orotho, 2005). This method involved an in-depth analysis of the NGO projects' performance in Marsabit district.

3.3 Target Population

The data from the NGOS Co-ordination board showed that there had been about one hundred and fifty seven NGOS registered in Marsabit district by then, but only twenty five among them were active while others had shifted their interest to other areas. The target population in this study was the project managers and project team members of those twenty five NGO projects in Marsabit distri
3.4 Sampling Design

Since the number of the NGOS studied was manageable, the study used a censure survey of the twenty five NGOS on the basis of their activities and objectives. In all the twenty four NGOS three questionnaires were given out as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ngo activities/sector</th>
<th>population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water and sanitation</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relief services</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>37</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some NGOS operate in more than on sector hence the disparity between the total population and the actual number of NGOS in the field.

3.5 Data Collection Tools

The data for this study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected through questionnaires served to the respondents through personal drop and pick method, and through interviews which were unstructured to allow for greater probing as to get more information and for easy interaction with the respondents. The second set of data was collected from the annual reports and assessment reports by the audit teams and the inspection teams among other secondary sources.
3.6 Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed using the descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics enabled the researcher to meaningfully describe the distribution of scores or measurements (Mugenda, 2003:118) descriptive statistics such as frequencies, mean, percentages etc were used. Inferential statistics were also used to draw conclusions from the sample and findings presented in frequency distribution tables, pie charts, bar graphs among others.
CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter has dealt with the personal information of the respondents, overview of project performance, effects of project management skills on a project, how monitoring and evaluation affects a project, user involvement, qualification of project team members and the support of the executive management's effect to the overall performance of the project.

4.2 Background Information

During this research seventy two questionnaires had been distributed amongst the twenty four NGOS.

4.2.1 Gender distribution

Out of the respondents reached 88.9% were males and only 11.1% were female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Management level</th>
<th>males</th>
<th>females</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Top management</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.2.2 Age Bracket of the Managers per Level

From the responses, the research established that the top level management positions were distributed as follows; age brackets 31-35yrs which constitutes 12.5%, 36-45yrs: 66.7%, and age 45yrs and above constituting 20.8%.

While in both operational and technical management levels 31-35yrs constitute 50% and 62.07% respectively. These points out the fact that age seems to be a factor in the management position especially in the NGOs. It also points out that most of the qualified young people who are 35 years and below are not likely to gain entry in the top management levels of these organisations but will find their position in the operational and technical levels, which nevertheless form the crux of any given organisation.

4.2.3 Level of Education

The research established that most of the managers were either graduates or had post graduate degrees as indicated in the figure 4.1 below: (source research data, 2011)
Table 4.1: Above shows that majority of the project managers are graduates with either the first degree only or with a post graduate degree. This proves that the qualifications of the project manager is a key component to consider when assigning them the responsibility to steer the project activities.

4.2.4 Category of Projects

This being an arid area it turned out that most of the managers were involved in relief services and only 23% were involved in education and water and sanitation.

4.3 Project Performance

4.3.1 Project Time/Schedule

The project schedule is one of the prime goals of successful project management. In this study the results show that fourteen projects (58.3%) out the projects studied, were completed late. Only four projects (16.7%) were completed on schedule, and two projects (8.3%) completed ahead of time and while the other two projects were completely abandoned 8.3%.

Figure 4.2 Time Schedule. Source (Research data, 2011)
4.3.2 Budget

Considering the budget estimates the research established that fourteen (58.3%) out of the studied projects had exceeded their budget allocation, nine (37.5%) projects were completed within the budget estimates and only one project (4.2%) was completed below the actual budget estimates. Therefore considering the adherence to the project cost estimates 58.3% of the projects would be considered not to have met the performance criteria. Figure 4.3. Below.

Source (Research data, 2011)

4.3.3 Project Objectives

For any project to be considered performing, it has to meet or address the objectives for which it had been initiated. The study established that out of the projects studied, its only 48% of them successfully met the objectives, 32% had partially met them and 19% had all together failed and therefore wrapped up prematurely. Figure 4.4 below summarizes these findings.
The research established that most of the non-performing projects had no reliable monitoring and evaluation, and financial records. It was also established that the stakeholders' needs had not been fully considered in most of these projects during the initiation phase.

From the respondents, it was established that the major cause of this deviation was as a result of inadequate technical project management skills coupled by other factors such as inadequate needs assessment and user involvement.

4.4 Project Management Skills

During this study it was established that for any project to effectively run and achieve its set objectives, the necessary training and project management skills were necessary. The project management has to equip itself with adequate financial, human, and time management skills and also effectively synergize the project teams' effort as to drive powerfully towards a common goal. The project management has also to be thoroughly conversant with project management aspect especially the life cycle and project risk management skills. They should also constantly
review the project’s progress from one stage to the other. This therefore makes monitoring and evaluation as well as project success indicators vital aspects on which project managers should be acquainted. 69% of the projects that surfaced to be none performing had a great deficiency in most of these project management skills, thus creating loopholes for their non performance, while 31% had them in records but ignored their contribution in the success of their projects thus neglecting them in the implementation process. The following table summarizes these findings as per the respondents’ responses:

Table 4.2 project management skills

From the research findings the following were the responses of the respondents in relation to the question on the effect of project management skills in determining the performance of a project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which a manager is conversant with the project management skills greatly affects the performance of a project.</td>
<td>22 (91.7%)</td>
<td>2 (8.3%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The performance of a project is not so much dependent on the management skills</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2 (8.3%)</td>
<td>22 (91.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial, human, and time management skills are the pillars of a projects success</td>
<td>20 (83.3%)</td>
<td>3 (12.5%)</td>
<td>1 (4.2%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For any project to run smoothly, there should be a synergy among the project teams</td>
<td>14 (58.3%)</td>
<td>10 (41.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source (Research Data, 2011)
From the above data the effect of project management skills on the performance of a project ranges 92-99.9% thus proving how significance it is to the health and performance of a project. The research established that all the respondents agree on the significance of project management skills and not differed.

4.5 User Involvement

The data collected from the responses indicate that the respondents understand the value of involving the users/stakeholders in the implementation of project activities, this arises from the fact that 76% of the respondents said that user involvement is very important to the performance of a project and 24% simply agreed that it was important. The research also established that the user involvement in the life NGO projects in Marsabit was quite inadequate and passive. This therefore affects the performance of projects since the user needs are not adequately addressed.

4.6 Project Implementation Activities

The research established that only 43% of the projects studied, actively and effectively involved the stakeholders in the project activities, and had an elaborate financial and human capital management, systematic monitoring and evaluation schedules/records and elaborate work based structures for their projects. The remaining 57% had no consistent project implementation records and structures thus constituting a recipe for their non-performance. The research also established that 73% of the performing projects worked closely with the stakeholders on all the stages of their projects life cycle. This ensured an in-depth understanding of their needs, and eventually choreographing the project act ivies in line with those needs, which in essence constituted the project objectives. Table 4.3 below, summarizes the responses from the respondents:
The effect of the project implementation activities in determining the performance of a project is quite evident from table 4.3 above and cannot be over-emphasized. From the responses the close
to 99.9 % of the respondents agreed that the manner in which the implementation activities are carried out determines the success of project hence its performance.

4.7 Project Monitoring and Evaluation

The research established that 98% of the respondents acknowledge the significant effect of monitoring and evaluation in the performance and eventual success of a project. However the seriousness and the manner in which most of the NGOS did it left a lot to be desired. Additionally the results of M&E were not in most cases seriously addressed thus leaving most of the projects vulnerable. The table below summarizes the responses of the respondents in relation to the effect of monitoring and evaluation to the project’s performance:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and evaluation requires the involvement of all the concerned stakeholders</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5 (20.8%)</td>
<td>15 (62.5%)</td>
<td>4 (16.7%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The success of a project depends on how the implementation activities are monitored in relation to the project scope and plan</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>External evaluation of a project is an essential component in maintaining and improving the project team’s confidence, and also keeping the team members and stakeholders on track</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9 (37.5%)</td>
<td>13 (54.2%)</td>
<td>2 (8.3%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and evaluation ensures that the team remains focused on activities that relate to the project objectives</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and evaluation is a prerequisite to a sustainable project.</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18 (75%)</td>
<td>5 (20.8%)</td>
<td>1 (4.2%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monitoring and evaluation enables the project team to site the dark spots and other risks the project is likely to face and the appropriate</th>
<th>Strongly agree(4)</th>
<th>Agree 3</th>
<th>Disagree 2</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24 (100%)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
measure alleviate the risk.

From the responses over 85% of the respondents agreed that monitoring and evaluation and the eventual application of the findings to the project life determines the performance of a project in a big way.

4.8 Ranking of the Factors that Affect Project Performance

The respondents ranked the factors that affect the performance of projects in the following manner:

**Figure 4.5 factors ranking**

![Pie chart showing factors rating]

- **Project management skills** scored higher with 44%. This in essence concludes that with adequate project management skills even a weak project would deliver astonishingly impressive performance, whereas an otherwise good project would miserably fail if left in the hands of a deficient of project management skills. Monitoring and evaluation scored 23% in that for a smooth project progress, the team must be aware of where they are, what they have achieved, where they need to rectify, what indicators to look for among others. This
therefore, makes monitoring and evaluation a vital component for the success of a project.

Executive management’s support scored 12% coming third in the list. This is because the executive are the financiers and without their goodwill a project despite its potent may be doomed to fail. Academic qualifications of the project team members were ranked fourth with 11%, followed by the stakeholder involvement scoring 9% respectively. This is not to mean that they are not significant but essentially this mean that, the performance of a project is to a greater extent affected by the aforementioned factors than the later.

4.9. Recommendations to improve the performance of projects.

![Diagram](image)

- equipping project managers with adequate project management skills
- ensure continuous monitoring and evaluation of projects and effect the findings
- thorough stakeholder involvement and needs analysis
- careful selection of qualified project team members
- sensitisation and mobilisation of executive management’s support

Figure 4.6: recommendations. Source (research data, 2011)

From figure 4.6 above, 52% of the respondents felt that to alleviate the alarming rate of non-performance in projects, the managers and the project teams should be thoroughly equipped with project management skills. This would enable them to monitor the project development from all the aspects leaving nothing to chance.
The challenges in any given project don’t just happen without prior signals, which might have been noted during monitoring and evaluation. Therefore 21% of the respondents recommended that project managers should ensure continuous project monitoring and evaluation, and the findings of this process thoroughly addressed.

Any project is aimed at addressing a certain need or challenge with the human society. Since this need is with the people, it is therefore very important to carry out a detailed needs analysis and constructively engage the stakeholders in all the stages of the project to ensure that the project activities are in line with the needs or issues that the project intended to address.

The efficiency in implementation of the project activities depends so much on the qualifications of the project team members; therefore it was recommended that project teams should be carefully vetted to ensure that they have adequate qualifications necessary for the project implementation.

The executive management is basically the financiers of any given project. Therefore, their support is necessary, since without their goodwill the project is likely to suffer in many ways. Therefore it was a feeling of close to 11% that the executive management should be thoroughly briefed of the project and their support sought as to ensure a smooth run of the project.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter gives the overall summary of the study and specific findings of this research. The conclusions were drawn to form the basis from which the NGOs in Marsabit and other regions, the NGO council and NGO coordination board could draw to come up with the necessary policies to aid in the improvement of the performance of NGO projects in Kenya.

5.2 Summary of the Findings

5.2.1 Background Information

The purpose of this research was to find out the factors that affect the performance of NGOs projects in Kenya and especially in Marsabit district. From the personal data collected, it was established that most of the top managers are in the age of 35-45 years and above, whereas operational and technical management levels were dominated by ages 31-35 years. This seems to be the group that is joining the NGO world and has not gained much experience though they have the necessary qualifications. Close to 78% of the project managers had a post graduate training or the first degree and only a fraction had the K.C.S.E certificate only though with experience and other on-job training qualifications. This therefore shows entry into each of the management levels depended so much on individual’s academic qualifications and experience.

5.2.2 Project Performance

From the study, it was found that over 58% of the projects were completed late and therefore time overrun. However in project management an overrun of less than 20% is deemed
acceptable. Its only 25% of the projects that had been completed within the set time estimate and 8.3% were abandoned all together. The study also found out that 58.3% of the projects exceeded their budget estimate, and only 37.5% were completed within the budget estimate. It was also established that 41.7% of the studied projects successfully met their objectives, 37.5% failed to meet the objectives and 20.8% were wrapped up prematurely.

5.2.3 Project Management Skills

The non performance of the projects was attributed to several factors as pointed out by the respondents. 44% was contributed to lack of adequate training on project management skills, 23% on lack of elaborate monitoring and evaluation of the project activities and eventual application of the M&E findings in the project. 11% on deficient qualifications of the project team members, 12% on executive managements support of the project and 9% on the effective and efficient involvement of the stakeholders in the activities of the project.

Project management skills form the backbone of the performance of any given project (Mohammed & Lim, 1999)

5.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

The research established that monitoring and evaluation contributed to a big margin of project performance and therefore needs to be taken seriously. 23% of the respondents attributed the non-performance of projects to lack of adequate monitoring and evaluation. The incorporation of the M&E findings in the life a project ensures that a project stays on course and is able to avoid the pitfalls which have wrecked most of the projects (chan et al, 2002)
5.2.4 User Involvement

The involvement of the user/stakeholders has a great effect on the performance of the project as it contributes to the better understanding of the needs and the appropriate activities in line to those needs which in essence comprises the objectives of the project.

The research established that adequate combination of the above factors placed the project at very high leverage of success hence performance.

5.2.5 Qualification of the Team Members

The effectiveness of the project team to implement project activities depends so much on their qualifications to handle various tasks assigned to the. The research established that close to 10% of the projects performance is dependent on the teams’ qualifications.

5.2.6 Executive Managements Support

The executive management being the financiers of the project activities have a big role in determining its success. The research established that over 12% of the projects’ success depends on the zealousness with which the executive management supported it.

5.3. Conclusions

From the research findings it can be concluded that most of the projects had failed to effectively perform within their set budgets, and time estimates, thus having overruns on both aspects this tallies with the premise advocated for by Atkinson,( 1999). This therefore affected the project in other aspects leaving it vulnerable to non-performance.
Project management skills form the crux of effective project performance. From the research findings, the non performance was essentially as a result of inadequate project management skills. The research established that over 89% of the projects failed to perform as result of deficiency in project management skills (Reuben el al, 2005).

Lack of quality monitoring and evaluation and incorporation of M&E findings in the life and progress of the project (Pinto et al 1996). Monitoring and evaluation points out the major aspects of the project which if not addressed may lead to the projects failure to perform effectively (Chan et al, 2002). The research established that close to 70% of the projects failed to perform due to their failure to incorporate the M&E findings in the life of the project.

The qualifications of the project team members were also identified as another factor which affected the implementation of the project activities. This was noted as one of the major factors that contributed to time and cost overruns since most of the team members had to be closely supervised and a times they made errors that cost the project both financially and time (Kezna, 2001). From the research findings the project teams qualifications contributed 11% to the effective performance of the projects.

Executive managements support was also noted as another major factor which if not well addressed led to project delays especially in the release of the necessary funds for various project activities in various phases. The executive management is the financier of the project and since they control most of the project resources both financial and human, the support is quite essential in the performance of a project. From the research findings this contributes to 12% of the projects performance.
Finally the level of stakeholders’ involvement from the very inception of the project affected the performance of the project in that the stakeholders are mostly in touch with the needs on the ground which the project aims to address and are therefore key in providing the necessary information in the pursuit of the project goals and objectives (Buttrick, 2000) this is the same premise held by Kezna, (2001), among others.

5.4. Recommendations

The research findings and conclusions leads to the following recommendations to the NGOS:

- Project managers should be adequately equipped with the necessary project management skills through continuous training as to enable them effectively oversee the project activities and ensure that the performance is not compromised.

- There should be a continuous monitoring and evaluation of the project activities throughout its life and the information gathered during the exercise absorbed to ensure that the project stays on course devoid of wrecking factors.

- To spare the organizations loss through non-performing projects, the NGO coordination board should ensure a close monitoring of the NGOS’ activities and ensure that they give comprehensive reports of their projects and the level of performance in relation to initial objectives.

- The NGOS should also ensure that a thorough needs assessment has been done before the take off of any project and the stakeholders are actively involved in the project activities from the very beginning to ensure that the project runs in accordance to the objectives for which it was initiated.
• NGOS should also ensure that team members are carefully vetted in relation to their qualifications and are given occasional but consistent on-job training to ensure their effectiveness in the running and implementations of the project activities.

5.5. Suggestions for Further Research

This research study was carried out on NGOS in Marsabit district and it would be necessary if a similar study was carried out in other regions to establish whether the same apply to them. Since the greatest chunk of project non-performance was blamed on lack of adequate project management skills, it would be necessary if a research was done to ascertain the effect project management skills on the performance of projects.

5.6 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited by the volume of information accesses since most of the managers were not willing to disclose much of the information relating to their projects.

The study was also limited in terms of finances since this study required a lot of travelling and other related expenses all which were to met by the researcher.
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Cammack, (2005), Principles of Project Management - 1st session, MSc in Project Management, Lancaster University
Cleland & Ireland, (2002), p210, Project Management: Strategic Design and implementation, McGraw-Hill Professional, USA


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National council of NGOs directory - 2005


QUESTIONNAIRE.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

PART A.

This questionnaire is meant for academic purpose to provide data necessary for assisting the NGO projects in their operations and performance. Kindly Tick appropriately for the question that requires a tick and write the responses for the others.

1) What is your gender
   Male [ ]    female [ ]

2) Under which age bracket do you fall
   Below 25yrs [ ] 26 – 30 yrs [ ] 31 – 35 yrs [ ] 36 – 45 yrs [ ] Above 45 yrs [ ]

3) What is your highest education level
   Primary [ ] secondary [ ] Certificate [ ] Diploma [ ] Bachelors [ ] Post graduate [ ]

4) Other training acquired
   Project management [ ] Accounting [ ]
   Human resource management [ ] No training [ ]
   Any other ( specify)

5) In which of the following positions or levels of operations do you operate
   Top management [ ]
   Operational management [ ]
   Technical /support management [ ]
   Other ( specify)

6) Which category of projects are you involved in
   Education [ ]
   Water and sanitation [ ]
   Relief services [ ]
   Other(specify)...
PART B

PROJECT PERFORMANCE

7) How would you rate the projects that you have been involved in, in terms of the following performance indicators: (tick appropriately)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Below the range</th>
<th>Within the range</th>
<th>Beyond the range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Budget</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8) To what extent would you consider the completion of those projects
   Fully [ ] partially [ ]

9) What factors might have affected the completion of the project
   Funding [ ] technical skills [ ] scope creep [ ] other ........................................

10) What objectives did you intend to achieve through the project
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................

11) In your opinion were these objectives realized?
   Yes [ ] No [ ]

   i) If yes, how would you rate the level of success?
   Excellent [ ] Very good [ ] Good [ ] Fair [ ]

   ii) If no, what would you recommend to ensure that the NGO projects achieve their set objectives
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................

12) Name the skills which you find necessary in the successful running of your projects
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................
   ..........................................................................................................................

53
PART C

PROJECT MANAGEMENT SKILLS

13) To what extent do the project management skills affect the performance of NGO projects?

   Very high extent [ ]  Great extent [ ]  Moderately [ ]  Very little extent [ ]  Not at all [ ]

14) To what extent do you agree with the following statements in relation to the effect of project management skills on the performance of NGO projects? (tick appropriately)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skill</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The extent to which a manager is conversant with the project management skills greatly affects the performance of a project.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The performance of a project is not so much dependent on the management skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial, human, and time management skills are the pillars of a project's success</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>For any project to run smoothly, there should be a synergy among the project teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

15) In relation to the NGO projects in Marsabit, to what extent do the following factors affect the performance of projects? Use a scale of 1-5, where 5= very great extent, 4= great extent, 3= moderate, 2= minimal extent, 1= No effect

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Analysing the needs of the users and factoring them in the</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
STAKEHOLDERS/USER INVOLVEMENT

16) How do you rate the role of the stakeholders in the success of NGO projects.

Very important [ ] Important [ ] Not important [ ]

17) In which ways do NGOS involve the beneficiaries of the project, in their project activities?

18) In your opinion, how would you rate the level of involvement of the beneficiaries

Adequate [ ] Fair [ ] Inadequate [ ]

19) At what stage should the stakeholders be involved in the life of a project?

Initiation stage [ ] Implementation stage [ ] Handing over stage [ ] all stages [ ]

20) How do you agree with the following statement in relation to stakeholder involvement in your organization. (tick appropriately)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>occasionally</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The project teams identifies the stakeholders and conducts a needs assessment as to factor their expectations

55
The project team designs activities geared towards meeting the stakeholders expectations

21) What recommendations would you give to increase the level of beneficiaries' involvement in the project?

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ACTIVITIES.

22) In the table below are the statements on how various aspects of implementation affects the performance of NGO projects. To what extent do you agree with them? (Tick appropriately).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>neutral</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In the implementation of project activities, all the stakeholders should be involved</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implementation process involves coordinating human, financial and other project resources in accordance to the project plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>During the implementation, Financial, Time and financial schedules and limits should be carefully monitored to ensure the success of the project</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The success of the implementation, depends on the active involvement and motivation of the project teams</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During the implementation of a project, the tasks should be broken down into manageable work structures and individuals apportioned appropriately to ensure effective project run

23) In relation to the implementation of NGO projects, how do the following factors affect the performance of projects? (tick appropriately)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Very greatly</th>
<th>greatly</th>
<th>No effect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordination of project resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procurement of project materials and process</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis of project risks</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agreement of project activities and project objectives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship between the project suppliers and the third party suppliers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PROJECT MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

24) The table below indicates various statements on how monitoring and evaluation affects the performance of NGO projects. To what extent do you agree with them? (Tick appropriately)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>agree</th>
<th>disagree</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monitoring and evaluation requires the involvement of all the concerned stakeholders</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The success of a project depends on how the implementation activities are monitored in relation to the project scope and plan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
External evaluation of a project is an essential component in maintaining and improving the project team’s confidence, and also keeping the team members and stakeholders on track.

Monitoring and evaluation ensures that the team remains focused on activities that relate to the project objectives.

Monitoring and evaluation is a prerequisite to a sustainable project.

Monitoring and evaluation enables the project team to site the dark spots and other risks the project is likely to face and the appropriate measure alleviate the risk.

25) In your opinion, how do you think project monitoring and evaluation can be done to improve the performance of NGO projects?

26) In your opinion how would you rank the following factors in relation to their effect on the performance of NGOS? Use a scale of 1-5 where 5= most important, 1=least important

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>factor</th>
<th>Rank</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project management skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project monitoring and evaluation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>User/stakeholder involvement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive management’s support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualifications of the project team members.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In your opinion what should be done to improve the performance of NGO projects in Marsabit?
Appendix 2.

LIST OF SOME OF THE NGOS IN MARSA BIT

1. Pastoralist community Initiative Development Assistance PACIDA
2. Christian children’s fund (C.C.F)
3. Pastoralists Integrated Support Programme (PISP)
4. Muslim league
5. Pastoralists development program
6. Friends of Londiani
7. Tumaini medical centre
8. Care international
9. World vision
10. Farm Africa
11. Save the children
12. Medicins sans frontiers – France
13. Parrains De le’ espoir Kenya
14. Horn of Africa development initiative (HODI)
15. Food for the hungry international
16. Ahadi Kenya
17. Tearfund disaster management team (DMT)
18. Ambassade de France au Kenya
19. Northern Aid
20. VSF Germany
21. Solidarities international
22. CAFOD
23. COR DAID
24. Pastoralists Shelter Organisation
25. Community initiative facilitation assistance (CIFA)