

# Stakeholder Management and Project Performance of Open Air Market Projects in Nyeri County, Kenya

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**Abstract:** Project performance is evaluated differently by various stakeholders of the project based on their expectations in relation to the actual quality, cost and time. The aim of this study was to investigate the influence of stakeholder management on project performance with the specific objectives being: to determine the influence of stakeholder need and expectation identification; communication; conflict management and stakeholder participation on project performance. The research adopted both descriptive and explanatory research design. The target population was all the six Open air upgrading projects in Nyeri County funded under Economic Stimulus Programme. The target population was appropriate as it represented all the constituencies in Nyeri County. The study targeted 255 respondents out of which 213 successfully filled the questionnaire. The respondents comprised of project managers, vendors, general public, project staffs and the local authorities. The researcher used questionnaires to collect primary data. Descriptive data analysis was employed in the study where the researcher ran the data through the SPSS to obtain the descriptive statistics such as: the mean, mode, frequencies and percentages. The findings of the study were presented using charts, graphs and tables. The results of the study established that the coefficients of independent variables were positive and significant and thus these factors determine project performance. It was recommended that: the government must ensure the aspect of stakeholder involvement is adequately covered during the feasibility study of the intervention; that the channels, format, frequency and responsibility of sharing of the progress report to the stakeholders be well defined during the conception stages of the intervention; that project management must change their reactive approach on occurrence of conflict but rather adopt a proactive approach in determining the highly susceptible issues and identify possible solution.

**Keywords:** Stakeholder Management, Project Performance, Open Air Market projects

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## I Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the study

Project management discipline focuses on managing the various activities in a project intended to deliver the objectives of the intervention. A number of different project management approaches such as iterative, lean, phased and incremental approaches may be used. Effective methodology employed must put into considerations the overall objectives of the project, cost, time in addition to roles and responsibilities of all the stakeholders of the project. The project goals and objectives are set on the onset of the project.

Whilst some goals can be defined in quantifiable terms others are difficult to define in quantifiable parameter such as quality and soft project goals such as project reputation (Ahmed & Fazel, 2009). Project management main challenge is to achieve all its set project goals within its given constraints in terms of time, quality, budget and scope. A project attracts different stakeholders with varying expectations of the outcome from the project. The level of urgency and priorities by the stakeholders has a tendency to change during the lifecycle increasing the project management challenge.

#### 1.1.1 Project performance

Project performance metrics focuses on the impact of the project at a point in time or over a fixed timeframe (Njogu, 2016). The value of the impact of the project should supersede the cost of the intervention. Project performance is directly related to the project potential success. A project is considered to be successfully implemented if it is carried on schedule; realizes the purpose the project was designed through achieving the goals and objectives identified; the project is completed within the budgets commonly known as the project Triangle (Hammad, 2013). Despite the many literatures educating the project managers on the various tools and techniques aimed at increasing the likelihood of the success of a project, 7 out of 10 projects are considered unsuccessful (Kelbessa, 2016). These projects are considered unsuccessful either because they