

# Factors for Implementing Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the Development Process: Stakeholders' Perspective from Ethiopia

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**Abstract:** *This paper presents the findings of a study that assessed factors for adopting PPP in public service delivery and development projects in Ethiopia. A questionnaire survey was conducted considering professionals and practitioners from different institutions. The survey respondents were selected individuals with hands-on experience in PPP related issues and private sector development programs. They were asked to rate the relative importance of the identified six factors on the basis of Likert scale style. The data were analyzed using econometrics software - Stata version 12 to calculate mean score ranking, and an independent sample t-test. The findings of the top three ranks were investigated. Ranked top by the survey respondents was the 'existence of PPP specific legal framework (MS=4.8), followed by 'Existence of PPP dedicated Public Agency' (MS=4.6), and the third was 'Government Guarantee' (MS=4.4). The rankings show that in general the prevalence of legal and institutional framework and also governments' willingness to provide 'guarantee' are the most important factors for the implementation of PPP in development projects and public service delivery activities. The mean comparison test result shows the presence of significant difference in three factors among the private and public sector respondents. These findings provide an idea of the factors that could attract potential partners to engage in PPP projects. The findings indicate that the stakeholders from different sectors and levels have more or less similar perception and opinion regarding how the government should attract partners to engage in PPP arrangements in the process of development and public service delivery.*

**Keywords:** Public Private Partnership (PPP), Development, Projects.

## 1. Introduction

Government is a traditional provider of public services and an operator of public service delivery institutions and development projects using resources from public sources i.e., taxes and levy. However, the ever-increasing disparity between the capacity of the public sector to generate resources and the public demand for new facilities has forced governments to look for new funding methods and sources. Public private partnership (PPP) as a new funding method is an increasingly popular phenomenon and a global trend [1].

PPP is a long-term contractual arrangement between a public-sector agency and a private-sector entrepreneur whereby resources and risks are shared for the purpose of developing a public facility. For the public sector, the principal aim of a PPP is to achieve value for money [2]. In relation to this [3], elaborate that the public sector can secure value for money in the public service delivery,

While ensuring that the PPP partnering private-sector entities meet their contractual obligations properly and efficiently. As a consequence, many countries are now contemplating PPP as an arrangement between public and private sectors to finance, design, build, operate and maintain public infrastructure, community facilities and related development projects.

Though the potential advantage of PPPs in public service delivery and development process is well understood by most public policy makers and professionals around the globe, the extent of adopting PPP in public service delivery and development process in countries around the world in general and developing countries in particular is quite slow. Perhaps being unaware of some of the factors may preclude

the enablers of the system from creating conducive environment for PPP implementation. Particularly developing countries who are striving hard to alleviate poverty and bring about development should effectively mobilize their resources and use their capacities for the success of their development goals. In light of this, Ethiopia, as a developing country striving hard to develop, should work harder to mobilize its available capacities from all sectors to keep forward its development targets. PPP is one of the best potential mechanisms to mobilize resources (be it of public, private and civil society) in the form of collective action towards development and efficient public service delivery. Hence, in line with this argument, it is imperative to study what specific factors affect adoption of PPP in Ethiopia from stakeholder's perspective.

Studies by [4] in UK and [5] in Hong Kong and Australia tried to investigate the attractive factors for adopting PPP in their respective study area. The study in UK revealed that the top three attractive factors were "transfer of risk to private sector", "solving the problem of public sector budget constraints" and "non-recourse or limited recourse public funding" [4]. The same study examined the differences between the public and private sectors respondents' perceptions on the importance of the attractive factors and reported that there are no significant differences in perception except for a few factors that are not among the top three attractive factors [4], [6].

A similar study done by [5] in Hong Kong and Australia reported that the top three attractive factors for PPP in Hong Kong include "provide an integrated solution for public services", "facilitate creative and innovative approaches" and "solve the problem of public sector budget restraint". The top three attractive PPP factors for Australian respondents were

"provide an integrated solution for public services", "facilitate creative and innovative approaches" and "save time in delivering the project". The findings of the above studies reveal that factors perceived by respondents from different countries are not the same. This implies that factors attracting adoption of PPP may differ on the basis of the specific objective condition of the study area or country.

Therefore, the unique characteristics of PPP in each country influence the PPP attractiveness in the country [6]. Because of this, the case in Ethiopia can be expected to be different not only because of the unique characteristics of the prevalent PPPs but also because of the undeveloped conditions for PPP. Hence this study assesses factors attracting the implementation of PPP in Ethiopian development process, on the basis of the stakeholders' perspectives.

## 2. Literature Review

PPP is an institutionalized form of cooperation of public and private actors, which, on the basis of their own objectives, work together towards a joint target [7], [8]. While PPP was originally treated as part of the privatization movement, there is a growing consensus among professionals that PPP does not simply mean the introduction of market mechanisms or the privatization of public services. Rather, it is a sort of collaboration to pursue common goals, while leveraging joint resources and capitalizing on the respective competences and strengths of the public and private partners [8].

According to [9] and [3] the multiple objectives of PPP include promoting infrastructure development, developing the local economy, reducing costs, increasing construction and operation efficiencies, and improving service quality by incorporating the private sector's knowledge, expertise and capital. These have attracted increasing interest from policy makers, researchers and industry practitioners.

The seemingly cogent argument with regard to the advantages of PPP is that if public services and facilities were financed solely by government, it would then impose tremendous pressure on government's financial ability [10]. The argument therefore is that it would be beneficial if government could partner with the private sector rather than provide for its people using the meager taxpayers' money, while at the same time creating business opportunities for the private partners [10] who are also part of the public at large. The major attractions of PPP for the government are the potential of accruing efficiency, value and monetary gains from the projects. Thus by implementing PPP it is possible to promote private sector innovation, improve the dynamic efficiency as well as the quality of service [6], [11].

As PPP developed over the years, the perceived advantages have become more obvious and the reasons for adopting this approach have gone beyond relieving the public sector's financial burden. In line with this argument, build, operate, transform (BOT), which is one of the PPP models, provides a win-win situation and a number of benefits such as 'relief of financial burden, relief of administrative burden, reduction in (inefficient) bureaucracy, better services to the

public, encouragement of growth [12], [10]. While PPP can be instrumental to exploiting the comparative advantages of public and private sectors in mutually caring ways, several issues are salient and deserve careful attention when contemplating a PPP arrangement in public service delivery and development process. The government as a traditional public service provider should maintain its involvement in PPP, whether in its capacity as partner or regulator.

The central role of government is vital especially where accountability is critical, cost-shifting presents problems, the timeframe is long, or societal normative choices are more important than costs [13], [8]. In this sense, PPPs should not be expected to substitute public sector. In other words, PPPs do not imply "less government" but a different governmental role [8]. Hence the public sector should continue to set standards and monitor product safety, efficacy and quality, and establish systems whereby citizens have adequate access to the products and services they need.

Several factors help account for the increased interest in and popularity of PPP. The promise of efficiency savings and a reduced burden on strained public resources has certainly struck a positive chord in countries operating under tight budgets [8].

According to [4], [14], [15], and [12], there are different factors attracting potential partners to engage in PPP. These include: to solve the problem of public sector restraint, to provide integrated solutions, to reduce public money tied up in capital investment, to facilitate creative and innovative approaches, to reduce the total project cost, to save time in delivering the project, to transfer risks to the private sector, to reduce public sector administrative costs, to benefit local economic development, and to accelerate project development. Though the salience varies, almost all factors happen to attract partners to come together in the form of PPP arrangements to resolve the problems or make use of the opportunity. The Ph.D. dissertation study of [5] more specifically identified the privileges or attractions for the private sector to engage in PPP. These may include: government sponsorship, government financing, government guarantee, tax exemption and reduction and incentive of new market penetration. The existence of PPP dedicated policy, legal and institutional framework and public agency is also among the factors affecting the adoption of PPP [13], [17], and [18].

## 3. Research Methodology

The stakeholders' perspectives about the factors attracting implementation of PPP were solicited by using a questionnaire survey. The researcher used some fitting factors stated in the questionnaire template designed by Cheung [5]. The researcher believes that using the available list of factors was advisable compared to developing a new list of factors from scratch. As well described by [6], these are recognized by the sector and global scientific community as several articles using the same list of attractive factors have been published in reputable refereed scientific journals. This study shall also add to the body of knowledge in the area of interest.

Necessarily, however, some adjustments were made with the list of factors on the basis of objective conditions of the study area. Accordingly, three factors attracting implementation of PPP in development projects and public service delivery activities, namely: ‘government support in providing guarantees’, ‘government support in providing loan’ and ‘tax exemption or reduction’ were adopted from Cheung’s [5] PhD dissertations. The other three factors: ‘prevalence of PPP specific legal framework’ [19], ‘prevalence of PPP dedicated public agency’[20], and ‘Government’s willingness to share risks’[20] are included in the list of factors to measure the perspective of stakeholders regarding what factors attract adoption of PPP. The latter three factors are used as PPP success factors in [5]. This is perhaps due to the difference of level of development and expansion of PPP between the study areas of Cheung [5] and this study. Since her study was comparative study of Hong Kong and Australia the mentioned three factors were well developed relative to conditions in Ethiopia. So in Ethiopia either these conditions are not there or they are not well developed. Presumably, because of this, the potential partners in Ethiopia may expect these conditions to be put in place before they engage themselves in PPP contract.

Factors taken as success factors in another setting, notably in UK, Hong Kong and Australia, may convincingly be taken as attractive factors for developing countries like Ethiopia. Generally, PPP success factors can be taken as attractive factors for the private sector to engage in PPP, and vice versa. Moreover, the researcher learned from his unstructured interview with some stakeholders that issues such as PPP specific legal framework, PPP dedicated public agency and government readiness to share risks are sine qua non for the potential partners to partake in PPP arrangements. Hence, the six attracting factors as shown in Table 1 are used to develop the survey questionnaire as designed for this study.

**Table 1:** List of factors attracting adoption of PPP in public service delivery and development

Factors	Supporting literature
Government support in providing guarantee	[5], [10]
Government support in providing loan	[5]
Tax exemption or reduction	[5]
Prevalence of PPP dedicated public agency	[20]
Prevalence of PPP specific legal framework	[19]
Government’s willingness to share risks	[20]

Source: Literature Review Output

#### 4. Sample and Data Collection Procedures

An empirical cross sectional questionnaire survey was conducted from January 2014 to March 2014 to analyze the major factors attracting PPP implementation in public service delivery and development projects in Ethiopia. In this study, the target survey respondents included individuals from the public, private, and civil society sectors, and also development partner institutions, think-tank and available PPP institutions. The survey respondents were requested to rate their degree of agreement against each of the identified factors attracting the private sector partners to engage in PPP according to a five-point Likert Scale (1= Least Important,

2=Less important, 3=Important,4= More important, and 5 = Most Important).

Target respondents were purposely selected using snowball sampling technique based on their direct hands-on involvement in PPP related issues and their willingness to participate in the survey. List of public, private, civil society, development partners, and Think-tank and PPP institutions, was created by considering potential, direct or indirect involvement in issues related to PPP implementation in Ethiopian context. Then a kind of quota sample was assigned to each institution for purposely-selected individual practitioners or professionals on snowball sampling procedure.

#### 5. Response Rate and Background of Respondents

A total of 127 survey questionnaires were distributed to target respondents who are working in different public, private, civil societies, development partner, think-thank and PPP institutions. A total of 121 completed questionnaires were returned representing a high response rate of 95.2 %.

As it is shown in Table 2 below, among the 121 respondents, 41 (32.2%) engaged in the private sector, 39 (30.7%) in public sector, 12 (9.4%) in the civil society sector, and 13 (10.2%) in PPP. The remaining 10 (7.8%) and 6 (4.7%) were from the development partners and think-thank institutions, respectively. The majority of the respondents were from the private and public sectors representing 80 (63 %) of the whole sample stratum.

**Table 2:** Response Rate of the Questionnaire

Sector	Distributed			Returned			Response Rate %
	Sex			Sex			
	F	M	Total	F	M	Total	
Civil society	3	9	12	3	9	12	9.4
Development partners	2	8	10	2	8	10	7.8
PPP	4	9	13	4	9	13	10.2
Private Sector	12	31	43	12	29	41	32.3
Public Sector	11	32	43	11	28	39	30.7
Think-Tank	1	5	6	1	5	6	4.7
Total	33	94	127	33	88	121	95.1

As it is depicted in Table 3, the survey respondents comprised well-educated, experienced and matured practitioners from five sectors with direct or indirect influence on PPP implementation. For instance, 63 (52%) and 35 (30%) of them are MA and BA degree holders, respectively. This constituted about 98 (82%) of the total sample. The remaining 4 (3.3%) and 19 (15.7%) are Ph.D. and Diploma holders, respectively. With regard to their age, 108 (89.3%) are between 31-50 years of age, making the sample stratum dominated by matured people.



**Table 3:** Survey Respondents by Level of Education and Age Category

	Sector	Level of Education					Age			
		BA	DIP	MA	PhD	Total	Category	F	M	Tota
1	Civil Society	4	1	7	1	12	18-	3	5	8
2	Development	3	0	6	1	10	31-	18	30	48
3	Public Private	2	4	7	0	13	41-	11	49	60
4	Private sector	13	7	21	0	41	>50years	1	4	5
5	Public Sector	11	7	18	0	39				
6	Think Thank	0	0	4	2	6				
	Total	35	19	63	4	121		33	88	121

As shown in Table 4, 68 (56.2%) and 53 (43.8%) of the respondents possessed more than 11 years and 5 years of work experience, respectively.

**Table 4:** Survey Respondents by their Service Year

	Sector	Years of Service				Total
		< 5	6-10	11-20	>20	
1	Civil Society	1	3	4	4	12
2	Development Partners	2	4	3	1	10
3	Public Private	2	7	3	1	13
4	Private Sector	5	9	19	8	41
5	Public Sector	4	14	12	9	39
6	Think Thank	0	2	2	2	6
	Total	14	39	43	25	121

## 6. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using the econometrics software - Stata Version 12.0. The descriptive statistics of the mean score was computed for the five-point Likert Scale based on the importance of each of the 6 factors. Then on the mean scores, the factors were ranked according to the importance as perceived by respondents as well as by the private and public sectors independently. An independent sample t-test was carried out to statistically examine the difference in the perceptions of the two groups of respondents.

## 7. Findings and Discussion

### 7.1. Overall Respondents' Perceptions on the Importance of the Attractive Factors

Table 5 illustrates the mean scores and the rank of the relative importance for each of the 6 factors based on the rating of all survey respondents. The result shows that the 6 factors were well perceived by all respondents to be either "more important" or "most important" because the mean scores for the factors range from 4.1- 4.8.

Moreover, the mean score rank results of all respondents indicates that three factors found to be most important in their ascending order of importance. These are: "existence of specific PPP law" (MS=4.8), "existence of PPP dedicated public agency" (MS=4.6), and "government guarantee" (MS=4.4).

The prevalence of specific legal framework for PPP is perceived by respondents as the basic and most important factor to implement PPP in public service delivery and development projects. Furthermore, the Stata version 12 software summary statistics shows that 84.2% of respondents expressed their perception by rating as 'strongly agree' i.e.,

most important. When we see the rating of respondents from different sectors separately, 85.3% of the private sector respondent and 76.9% of public sector respondents rated as 'strongly agree'. Interestingly enough, 100% of the respondents from the existing PPP rated the relative importance of PPP specific legal framework as 'strongly agree'. Moreover, 83.3% of civil society respondents rated the prevalence of legal framework as most important factor for PPP implementation as 'strongly agree'. This finding clearly indicates that PPP stakeholders in Ethiopia strongly believe that the federal government of Ethiopia has to devise a specific legal framework for PPP as a prerequisite so that potential private and civil society partners would freely involve or engage in public service delivery and development oriented projects with government under PPP arrangement.

The second most important factor for PPP implementation in Ethiopian, as perceived by most respondents was 'the existence of PPP dedicated public agency'. This factor seems vital in a sense that a mere existence of PPP specific legal framework, may not serve the purpose, without owning institutions to implement the provision stipulated in it. Put differently, the legal framework with its supporting rules and regulations needs to be owned by public agency with a full mandate to run and execute according to norms and provisions stipulated in it. Unless an institutional arrangement is put in place, the mere existence of rules and regulations may not serve the purpose.

This finding supports the recommendation of [8] suggesting that 'while PPP can bring added value' to the partners, 'a sound legal and regulatory framework and complete transparency are essential elements'. Also important is the presence of strong structure at the level of central administration to steer and guide policy implementation.

**Table 5:** Perception of overall Survey Respondents about the Relative Importance of Factors

Variables	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Government guarantee	121	4.404959	0.996481	3
Government provision of loan	121	4.22314	0.73584	5
Tax exemption or reduction	121	4.371901	0.720327	4
Existence of specific PPP law	121	4.818182	0.447214	1
Existence of PPP dedicated public agency	121	4.636364	0.483046	2
Government willingness to share risk	121	4.190083	0.767182	6

**Table 6:** Public Sector Survey Respondent's Perception Regarding the Relative Importance of Factors

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Government guarantee	39	4.025641	1.347262	5
Government provision of loan	39	4.205128	0.86388	3
Tax exemption or reduction	39	4.102564	0.911762	
Existence of specific PPP law	39	4.717949	0.559545	1
Existence of PPP dedicated public	39	4.589744	0.49831	2
Government willingness to share risk	39	4.153846	0.744752	4

**Table 7:** Private Sector Survey Respondent’s Perception Regarding the Relative Importance of Factors

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. Dev.	Rank
Government guarantee	41	4.634146	0.733352	3
Government provision of loan	41	4.219512	0.689645	6
Tax exemption or reduction	41	4.439024	0.593666	4
Existence of specific PPP law	41	4.829268	0.441726	1
Existence of PPP dedicated public agency	41	4.707317	0.460646	2
Government willingness to share risk	41	4.268293	0.806982	5

**7.2. Differences in the Perceptions of the Public and Private Sectors' Respondents on the Importance of Attractive Factors**

Based on the mean score rankings, the results of the public and private sector respondents on the perceived importance of each factor are almost similar except for differences in three factors. Table 8, shows that all factors were perceived to be more important by the private sector respondents than by the public sector respondents. In this sense, in Ethiopia, PPP seems the main choice of the private sector to involve in development projects in collaboration with government in order to enhance its role in the process of overall development of the country. On the bases of the results illustrated in Table 8, the findings indicate that there is a significant difference in the perceptions of the public and private respondents in three factors: "Government support in providing loan", "Tax exemption or reduction " and "Prevalence of PPP specific legal framework", which show a statistically significant difference at the 5% significance level.

**Table 8:** Summary of the Independent *t*-Test Results for Attractive Factors for public and private sector respondents.

Attractive Factors	Mean		t-test		
	Private	Public	diff	t	Sign.
Government support in providing guarantee	4.4	4.38	.030	0.135	0.8930
Government support in providing loan	4.3	4.05	.266	1.535	0.1290*
Tax exemption or reduction	4.5	4.3	.153	0.920	0.3603*
Prevalence of PPP dedicated public agency	4.49	4.48	.0006	0.005	0.9958
Prevalence of PPP specific legal framework	4.68	4.51	.170	1.005	0.3178*
Government’s willingness to share risks	4.6	4.51	.0969	0.642	0.5225

\*Significant at 5%

The private sector respondents perceived the attractive factor; “the prevalence of PPP specific legal framework ", as significantly more important compared to the public sector respondents. This may be because the private sector considers it critical to gain confidence in the PPP arrangements. Similarly, for the other two factors, which are “Tax exemption or reduction” and “Government support in providing loan", the private sector respondents perceived them as significantly more important compared to the public sector respondents. The private sector respondents believe that the issue of tax exemption and provision of loan services are among the most important factors motivating or attracting private partners’ engagement in PPP.

The findings of [10] also indicate the prevalence of significant difference between the perceptions of respondents in Hong Kong and Australia. Her comparative study did not consider public and private sectors separately but overall respondents on the basis of their homelands. Similar results are reported by [6] on the presence of significant differences between the perceptions of private and public sector respondents in Malaysia. The latter study further reported that public sector respondents perceived the factors as being more important than the private sector respondents. In contrast, the finding of this study implies that the private sector respondents in Ethiopia perceived the factors as being more important than the public sector respondents. The private sector respondents in Ethiopia perceived the attracting factors of PPP similar to that of the UK respondents [4].

**8. Conclusions**

The study examined factors attracting adoption of PPP in public service delivery and development projects in Ethiopia using questionnaire survey. The study evaluated the difference in the perception of the two main players in PPP, the public and the private sector. The findings indicate that in Ethiopia, the three main attractive factors for implementing PPP are "Prevalence of PPP specific legal framework”, “Prevalence of PPP dedicated public agency” and “Government support in providing guarantee”. In terms of the differences in perception between the public and private sector groups, the statistical test results indicated that there are significant differences in only three attractive factors.

The insightful difference between the respondents’ perception in the two sectors, the study finding, implies that the private sector in Ethiopia is ready to get involved in PPP arrangements provided that these attractive factors are put in place by the government. It is also valid to conclude from this finding that the Ethiopian government may consider offering these three important attractive factors to motivate and engage the private sector in development oriented PPP projects. Potentially, other attractive factors, such as tax exemption, risk sharing and loan provision may also be considered by the government to expedite engagement in, PPP projects.

Though further study is recommended, this work provides some insight and important information for governments and the private sector concerning practical conditions for the implementation of PPP, particularly in Ethiopia, but also for developing countries in general.

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