# Effect of Internal Teamwork Practices on Performance of Projects in Rwanda: A Case of Cornerstone Development Project

### Modeste Ntaganda<sup>1</sup>, Dr. Patrick Mulyungi<sup>2</sup>

Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture and Technology

Abstract: Evolution of teamwork and its concept started during the industrial revolution, where most organizations shifted from the hierarchical approach and used scientific management to design organizations and jobs. As per the report of formative evaluation of Cornerstone Development Project of December, 2017; the project is equipped by enough resources necessary to implement its activities, however, despite these potential resources available, Cornerstone Development Project did not managed to implement its activities as expected. The findings from that formative evaluation recommended the project owners to improve their internal teamwork practices since the evaluation findings revealed that there are poor internal teamwork practices. Therefore this research aims at to analyze the effect of internal teamwork practices on performance of projects in Rwanda by focusing on Cornerstone Development Project. The study was guided by three specific objectives including determining the effect of internal accountability on performance of Cornerstone Development Project to assess the effect of internal cohesiveness on performance of Cornerstone Development Project and to establish the relationship between internal communications on performance of Cornerstone Development Project. The researcher used descriptive research design where quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used. The target population of this study was fifty eight (58) employees of Cornerstone Development Project. In this study the researcher calculated the sample size use Yamane formula and come up with a sample size of 51 respondents. To achieve the objective of this study the researcher collected primary data using questionnaires. Means, standard deviation and frequency distribution were used to analyze data. Data presentation was done by the use of frequency tables for easy understanding and interpretations. The study concluded that internal team accountability have an effect on performance of Cornerstone Development Project. The research findings revealed that there is presence of self-assessment practices that enable the team to work accordingly. Furthermore research findings revealed that there is ownership of team members that enable the project team to implement the project accordingly. The research findings revealed that team members support each other and this enables them to implement the project's activities accordingly, there is significant and positive relationship between internal team cohesiveness and performance of Cornerstone project. The study concluded that in Cornerstone Development Project there are effective discussions among the project team members. Furthermore the researcher concluded that there is effective listening among the project team members. The project managers should foster internal team accountability so as to ensure that every project team member is responsible for his/her assigned responsibilities; they should also make sure that there is ownership of team members so as to enable the project to implement the project accordingly. The project managers and owners should foster internal team cohesiveness since it has been seen to be a big factor contributing to project performance. The project team members should respect each other so as to create a favorable working environment that enables the project team to implement the project activities accordingly. The project implementing team should always batter on the internal communication since it is the essence for performance of any project.

Keywords: Internal Teamwork Practices, Project Performance

### 1. Introduction

Evolution of teamwork and its concept started during the industrial revolution, where most organizations shifted from the hierarchical approach and used scientific management to design organizations and jobs. According to Taylor (1911), scientific management methods call for optimizing the way tasks were performed by simplifying the jobs, so workers could be trained to perform their jobs in the best ways. This resulted in more simplified jobs and provided benefits to skilled workers. However, during the 1920s and 1930s, the scientific management model questioned, since it created issues with people's relationship to work, although the model functioned well. Workers become alienated and difficult to motivate, in addition to no task flexibility, changes were difficult to implement. Later on, the Hawthorn studies (Mayo 1933) discovered internal teamwork factors had some implications on effective implementation of organizational activities. This substantial impact on productivity resulted in work groups able to effectively enforce norms-positive or negative to the organization. After World War II, more research was conducted with regards to teamwork.

According to Levi (2007), the research indicated that organizing people into teams was one way to improve the operations of organizations and productivity. It was not until the 1960s and 1970s that the term "team" was refined. Companies in the manufacturing industries were changing their operating methods, as Japanese companies successfully developed high quality products with minimal cost. These changes adopted the team concept and later become the foundation for organizations in the late 1980s. The use of teamwork, a group of employees with interdependent interactions and mutually- shared responsibilities Sundrom has improved dramatically during the past decades. A study conducted by Ostermann (1994) indicated that over 50% of the 700 organizational units studied were using teams and over 40% had more than half of their employees working in teams. Lawler et al. (2005) proved the trend continues to gain momentum, where 60% of the 313 organizations studied stated increments in the use of teams over the next decade. Only 3 % plan to discontinue the use of teams. Additionally, according to Cohan and Bailey (1997), 85% of

Volume 7 Issue 10, October 2018 www.ijsr.net

companies with 100 or more employees use some types of teamwork. Mohrmar et al. (2005) indicated that application of a team is an essential element in a company, where organizations restructuring were determined based on teamwork. Teamwork is no longer applied only to manufacturing, but also to management, service, problemsolving, projects and other works. Recent developments in teamwork and teams in organizations have heightened the need to determine better ways to utilize teams, especially in project management. Highly effective teams have proven to establish good working relationships and potentially achieve greater outcomes, since conflicts within teams are minimized (Demkin, 2008).

# 2. Statement of the Problem

As revealed by various studies; it's obvious that any organization benefits when its employees are working together synergistically. Good teamwork helps to build morale in the workplace, which makes workers more productive and ultimately improves performance. For organizations that have excellent teamwork, problemsolving is easier since people with different skills and knowledge will work together to produce a creative solution environment which will lead to effective accomplishment of their assignments. Without good teamwork in the workplace, it's difficult to progress as a project. In fact, 86% of employees and executives state that workplace failures are a direct result of a lack of collaboration, lack of cohesiveness, ineffective communication and lack of respect among teammates. The goal for a team is to show its desirability of cooperative relationships through project performance. To ensure that project teams successfully complete their projects, it is necessary for project; to promote measure and evaluate their teams' effectiveness. (Mohrman1995). Organizations from both private and public sector are increasingly embracing the practice of project team effectiveness in anticipation that this will translate to improved project performance, and most of project managers around the world appreciate that project performance is integrally linked to project team effectiveness.

As per the report of formative evaluation of Cornerstone Development Project of December, 2017; the project is equipped by enough resources necessary to implement its activities, however, despite these potential resources available, Cornerstone Development Project did not managed to implement its activities as expected. The findings from that formative evaluation recommended the project owners to improve their internal teamwork practices since the evaluation findings revealed that there are poor internal teamwork practices. Therefore this research aimed at to analyze the effect of internal teamwork practices on performance of projects in Rwanda by focusing on Cornerstone Development Project.

# **3.** Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study was to analyze the effect of internal teamwork practices on project performance in Rwanda. Its specific objectives were to determine the effect of internal team accountability on performance of Cornerstone Development Project, to assess the effect of internal team cohesiveness on performance of Cornerstone Development Project and to establish the effect of internal team communication on performance of Cornerstone Development Project.

# 4. Conceptual Framework



**Source:** Researcher compilation (2018)

# 5. Research Methodology

- **Research Design**: The researcher used descriptive research design where quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were used; this involved the collection of data from the respondents and analyzing their responses with the relation to the topic and area of the study.
- **Target Population:** The target population of this study was fifty eight (58) employees of Cornerstone Development Project.
- Sample Size: The sample size of the study equaled to 51 employees of Cornerstone Development Project in Rwanda.
- Data Collection Instruments and Procedure: To achieve the objective of this study the researcher collected primary data. These ones were collected through questionnaire. A questionnaire is a document containing all respondent's answers or reactions. A questionnaire has been developed and distributed to the employees of Cornerstone Development Project in Rwanda. A questionnaire was suitable because with it, it is easier to collect information from the respondents; it is less expensive since it saves time as well as human and financial resources and it offers greater anonymity and in some situations where sensitive questions are asked, it helps to increase the likelihood of obtaining accurate information. To collect primary first-hand data; the questionnaires were self-administered through a drop and pick later method where the researcher delivered the questionnaires in person at the respondent's places of work.
- **Data processing and analysis**: The primary data collected were checked for completeness and comprehensibility. Data were then summarized, coded

and tabulated. Means, standard deviation and frequency distribution were used to analyze data. Data presentation was done by the use of frequency tables for easy understanding and interpretations. Linear regression was used to establish the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The linear regression equation that has been used for this study is:  $Y = \beta 0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + e$ . Where: Y represents the dependent variable which is project performance,  $\beta 0$  represents Constant, $X_1$  represents internal accountability index, $X_2$  represents internal cohesiveness index,  $X_3$  internal communication index,  $\beta_1$ ;  $\beta_2$ ;  $\beta_3$ ;  $\beta_4$  represent regression coefficient and e represents the error term.

### 6. Summary of Research Findings

# 6.1 Determination of the effect of internal team accountability on performance of Cornerstone Development Project

To determine the effect of internal team accountability on performance of Cornerstone Development Project, respondents were asked to highlight how effect internal accountability in regards to the following variables:

 Table1: Self-assessment practices in Development Project

Response	Response Frequency Percentage		Cumulative
			Percentage
Strongly agree	8	15.7	15.7
Agree	35	68.6	84.3
Disagree	8	15.7	100.0
Total	51	100.0	

Source: Field Data (2018)

According to the findings in Table1, 68.6% of all respondents agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project they have self-assessment practices that enable them to work accordingly, 15.7% of all respondents strongly agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project they have self-assessment practices that enable them to work accordingly while only 15.7% of all respondents disagreed that in Cornerstone Development Project they have self-assessment practices that enable them to work accordingly while only 15.7% of all respondents disagreed that in Cornerstone Development Project they have self-assessment practices that enable them to work accordingly.

 Table 2: Ownership of team members in Cornerstone

 Development Project

	Response	Frequency	Percentage	Cumulative		
				Percentage		
	Strongly agree	13	25.5	25.5		
	Agree	38	74.5	100.0		
	Total	51	100.0			

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 2 demonstrated that 74.5% of all respondents agreed in Cornerstone Development Project, there is ownership of team members that enable them to implement the project accordingly and 25.5% of all respondents strongly agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project there is ownership of team members that enable them to implement the project accordingly. The study findings revealed that all of the respondents confirmed

that in Cornerstone Development Project there is ownership of team members that enable them to implement the project accordingly.

	Development Project Cornerstone						
	Response	Response Frequency Percentage		Cumulative			
	_		_	Percentage			
	Strongly agree	4	7.8	7.8			
	Agree	34	66.7	74.5			
	Disagree	13	25.5	100.0			
	Total	51	100.0				
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 Table 3: Being responsible for project team member in

 Development Project Cornerstone

Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings in Table 3 revealed that 66.7% of all respondents agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is responsive to his/her assigned responsibilities, 25.5% of respondents disagreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is responsive to his/her assigned responsibilities while only 7.8% of all respondents strongly agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is responsive to his/her assigned responsibilities while only 7.8% of all respondents strongly agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is responsive to his/her assigned responsibilities.

 Table 4: Effective implementation of the project activities in

 Development Project Cornerstone

Response Frequency Percentage Cumulative								
Response	riequency	rereentage						
			Percentage					
Agree	26	51.0	51.0					
Strongly disagree	10	19.6	70.6					
Disagree	15	29.4	100.0					
Total	51	100.0						

### Source: Field Data (2018)

According to the findings in Table 4, 51% of all respondents agreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is focused and committed to effective implementation of the project's activities, 29.4 % of all respondents disagreed that that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is focused and committed to effective implementation of the project's activities while only 19.6 % of all respondents strongly disagreed that in Cornerstone Development Project every project team member is focused and committed to effective implementation of the project's activities.

**Table 5:** Descriptive Statistics on determination of the effect of internal team accountability on performance of

Cornerstone Development Project						
Indicators	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation			
Self-assessment	51	2.16	.880			
Ownership of team members	51	1.75	.440			
Assigned responsibilities	51	2.43	.964			
Effective implementation	51	2.78	.879			
Valid N (listwise)	51					

Source: Field Data (2018)

From Table 5, the mean values for the effect of internal team accountability on performance of cornerstone development project are respectively 1.75; 2.43 and 2.16 which are rounded off to 2 the code for agree and the mean values for effective implementation which is rounded off to 3 the code for strongly disagree. The standard deviation of three statements is greater than 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the

# Volume 7 Issue 10, October 2018 <u>www.ijsr.net</u>

mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogamous expect ownership of team members which presented the standard deviation which is less than 0.5meaning that respondents' answers on this statement were not far different from the mean in other words their answers to the statement were homogeneous.

# **6.3** Assessment of the effect of internal team cohesiveness on performance of Cornerstone Development Project

 Table 6: Descriptive Statistics on assessing the effect of internal team cohesiveness on performance of Cornerstone

 Development Project

Development Project						
Indicators		Mean	Std.			
			Deviation			
Team members respect each other	51	1.39	.493			
Team members support each other	51	2.51	1.286			
Sitting together and make a consensus decision	51	3.06	.810			
Valid N (list wise)	51					

### Source: Field Data (2018)

The findings from Table 6 showed that the mean values for the second and third statements are 2.51 and 3.06respectively which are rounded off to 3 the code for strongly disagree. This means that in general respondent were strongly disagree on assessing the effect of internal team cohesiveness on performance of Cornerstone Development Project and the first meanis1.39 respectively which is rounded off to 1 the code for Strongly Agree, the standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogamous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

# 6.4 Establishment of the effect of internal team communication on performance of Cornerstone Development Project

**Table 7:** Descriptive Statistics on establishing the effect of internal team communication on performance of

Cornerstone	Development	Project

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	Indicators	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation
	Project effective discussions	51	2.94	.881
	Project constructive disagreement	51	3.45	.673
	Project effective listening	51	2.04	.894
	Valid N (listwise)	51		
3	ouroot Field Data (2018)			

#### Source: Field Data (2018)

From Table7, the mean values for the first and the second statements are rounded off to 3 the code for strongly disagreed expect the third statement which is round of to 2 the code for agree. The standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogamous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

 Table 8: Descriptive Statistics on Performance of cornerstone project

contensione project							
Indicators	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation				
Meeting the Project objectives	51	2.43	1.082				
Meeting Planned time and cost	51	2.59	1.099				
Satisfying stakeholders	51	2.98	1.010				
Valid N (list wise)	51						

#### Source: Field Data (2018)

From Table 8, the mean values for all statements are rounded off to 3 the code for strongly disagree. This means that all respondents have strongly disagree that the performance of cornerstone project. The standard deviation of all statements is above 0.5 meaning that respondents' answers on these statements were far different from the mean, in other words, their answers to the statement were heterogamous. This means that respondents' views on the above statements were varied.

6.5 Estimated parameters for Internal Accountability, Internal Cohesiveness and Internal Communication with the Performance of cornerstone project

	Table 9: Model Summary							
Model	Model R R Square Adjusted R Square Error of the Estimate							
1	.704 <sup>a</sup>	.496	.464	.792				
Source: Field Data (2018)								
a.	a. Predictors: (Constant), Internal accountability,							
	Internal cohesiveness and Internal communication							

From the table  $9AnR^2 = 0.496$ , indicates that 49.6% of internal accountability, internal cohesiveness and internal communication can be explained by the performance of cornerstone project leaving only 50.4% of the variation in the dependent variable being explained by the error-term or other variables other than project success.

Table10: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Tableto: ANOVA							
	Model	Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.	
		Squares		Square			
	Regression	29.016	3	9.672	15.413	.000 <sup>b</sup>	
	Residual	29.493	47	.628			
	Total	58.510	50				
Source: Field Data (2018)							
a. P	redictors: (Con	stant), Intern	al acco	untability	у,		
-		1 7		•			

Internal cohesiveness and Internal communication

b. Dependent Variable: Performance of cornerstone project

The table20 shows that predictors: Internal accountability, internal cohesiveness and internal communicationan effect on dependent variable, Performance of cornerstone project. This is statistically significant with a p-value (.000).

Table 11: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.				
	Coefficients		Coefficients						
	В	Std.	Beta						
		Error							
(Constant)	.970	.539		1.801	.078				
Internal accountability	.558	.170	.454	3.279	.002				
Internal cohesiveness	.700	.299	.319	2.343	.023				
Internal communication	243	.138	198	- 1.764	.084				

### Source: Field Data (2018)

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of cornerstone project

# Volume 7 Issue 10, October 2018

<u>www.ijsr.net</u>

The results indicate that internal accountability, internal cohesiveness and internal communication have statistically significant effect on Performance of cornerstone project with a positive coefficient of determination of 0. 704 (table 19) indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between internal accountability, internal cohesiveness and internal communication with Performance of cornerstone project. The coefficients of independent variables (IA, IC and IC)  $\beta_1, \beta_2$  and  $\beta_3$  are respectively 0.558; 0.700 and -0.243 with a statistically significant (p = 0.00). Therefore, the model equation derived is:  $y = 0.970 + 0.558x_1 + 0.700x_2 - 0.000x_1 + 0.000x_2 - 0.000x_2$  $0.243x_2 + e$ . The positive coefficient further demonstrates that a 1% increase in the internal accountability attributed to 0.558% improvement in Performance of cornerstone project the t-statistic value (3.279) indicates the effect is statistically significant at 95% confidence level. An increase of 1% on will internal cohesiveness increase Performance of cornerstone project given by 0.7 % at the t-statistic value (2.343) indicates the effect is statistically significant at 95% confidence level while a negative coefficient demonstrates that a 1% decrease in internal communicationa decrease of -0.243 on Performance of cornerstone project with tstatistic value (-1.764) indicates the confidence level of 95% the effect is statistically significant. This demonstrates that Performance of cornerstone project exhibited in terms of internal accountability, internal cohesiveness and internal communication.

# 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Conclusions

According to the interpretation of collected and analyzed data during the course of this study; the researcher came up with the following conclusions:

- The study concluded that internal team accountability have an effect on performance of Cornerstone Development Project. The research findings revealed that there is presence of self-assessment practices that enable the team to work accordingly. Furthermore research findings revealed that there is ownership of team members that enable the project team to implement the project accordingly.
- 2) The research findings revealed that team members support each other and this enable them to implement the project's activities accordingly, there is significant and positive relationship between internal team cohesiveness and performance of Cornerstone project
- 3) The study concluded that in Cornerstone Development Project there are effective discussions among the project team members. Furthermore the researcher concluded that there is effective listening among the project team members.

### 7.2 Recommendations

After analysis and interpretation of data, the researcher came up with the following recommendations:

1) The project managers should foster internal team accountability so as to ensure that every project team member is responsible for his/her assigned responsibilities; they should also make sure that there is ownership of team members so as to enable the project to implement the project accordingly.

- 2) The project managers and owners should foster internal team cohesiveness since it has been seen to be a big factor contributing to project performance. The project team members should respect each other so as to create a favorable working environment that enables the project team to implement the project activities accordingly.
- 3) The project implementing team should always batter on the internal communication since it is the essence for performance of any project.

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Volume 7 Issue 10, October 2018

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# Volume 7 Issue 10, October 2018

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