

The Influence of Planning on Project Success in Rwanda-A Case of Soma Umenye Project

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Abstract: *The purpose of this research was to assess the influence of planning on the success of projects and was carried out in Soma Umenye project as the case study with the following objectives; to identify the effect of coordination of activities on success of Soma Umenye project, to examine the influence of resource mobilization on the success of Soma Umenye project and to assess the contribution of activity scheduling on the success of Soma Umenye project. The researcher reviewed both theoretical and empirical literature related to the influence of planning on the success of projects, a conceptual framework showing the relationship between the two variables was done as well as a critical review showing the gap that needs to be filled by the research. The research design used was descriptive and analytical while the population was 65 employees of Soma Umenye project and the sample size was 56. Sampling techniques used were purposive and simple random. Data collection tools were questionnaires and interviews. The collected data was presented using tables and analyzed based on percentages and frequencies. The researcher found out that planning in Soma Umenye project has multiple benefits that are all focused towards success of the project which means that project success is an important factor in the success of projects, it is through planning that the project is able to put its resources together and planning makes the project activities move smoothly in an organized way that is able to effect success and respondents contacted revealed that planning in the project has multiple benefits that are likely to contribute to the project success and that there is a positive relationship between project planning and project success. the plans scheduled in Soma Umenye project are strategic plans, short terms plans, intermediate plans, implementation and evaluations plans. The plans scheduled have helped Soma Umenye project to succeed through streamlining the project activities, putting resources in order and facilitating the project planning and implementation. The researcher concluded that the plans scheduled in Soma Umenye project are strategic plans, short terms plans, intermediate plans, implementation and evaluations plans. The plans scheduled have helped Soma Umenye project to succeed through streamlining the project activities, putting resources in order and facilitating the project planning and implementation. The researcher recommended that Soma Umenye project should continue carrying out planning because it is important in effecting project success.*

Keywords: Project Planning, Project Success, Soma Umenye

1. Introduction

Project planning can be an intimidating endeavor, especially for a group or community implementing the process for the first time. It is important to remember there is not really a “wrong” way to plan a project. Oftentimes, the process will take a logical course by itself once you begin, with one step naturally leading into another. Often, project planning begins with the formation of a local project planning committee or group. Whenever possible, tribes and organizations should use a team approach to plan new projects which involves staff, community members, community or organizational leadership, and a grant writer or consultant if necessary. The committee members play an important role in keeping the project planning process on track while also ensuring everyone has the opportunity to participate. The committee can organize meetings, conduct surveys, gather and analyze information, and meet with other agencies and organizations (BCA. 2013)

2. Statement of the Problem

Many projects are always undertaking various project, some of them succeed while others fail at different stages of the project implementation. In order to ensure that projects succeed and achieve their objectives, management is concentrating of planning so that they can have a clear picture of where they want to go and how to get there (BCA. (2013) Many projects that have planned properly have always succeeded in achieving their intended objectives while those with lack or have poor planning have always failed at either the initial stages or failed to achieve the

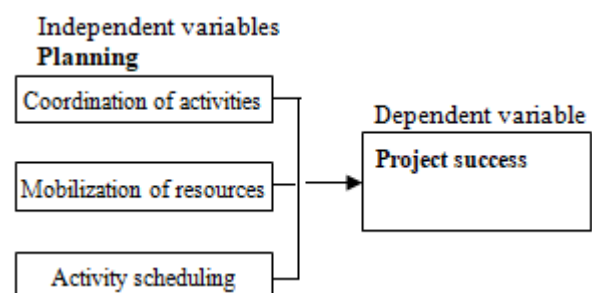
anticipated results while others are not successfully completed. However, there is limited understanding on the influence of planning on project success. It is against this background therefore, that the researcher intends to carried out this research and assess the impact of planning in project success.

3. Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this research was to assess the influence of planning on the success of projects in Rwanda. The specific objectives of this research included the following

- 1) To identify the effect of coordination of activities on success of Soma Umenye project
- 2) To examine the influence of resource mobilization on the success of Soma Umenye project
- 3) To assess the contribution of activity scheduling on the success of Soma Umenye project

4. Conceptual Framework of the Study



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5. Methodology

- **Research Design:** The researcher designed a descriptive and analytical research based on both qualitative and quantitative data
- **Target Population:** The population of the research will be 65 employees of Soma Umenye project located in Kacyiru sector-Kigali City.
- **Sample size:** The sample size of this research equaled to 56 employees of Soma Umenye project
- **Data Collection Instruments:** The data were collected using questionnaires and interviews

6. Research of research findings

6.1 The effect of coordination of activities on success of projects

Table 1: Rating of the benefits planning in Soma Umenye project using a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 is very important and 5 is less important

Rating	1		2		3		4		5		Total	
	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%	Fr	%
Planning enables the projects to achieve its set objectives	45	80	8	14	3	6	0	0	0	0	56	100
Planning sets the project direction	50	89	4	7	2	4	0	0	0	0	56	100
Planning enables proper coordination of activities	40	71	10	18	6	11	0	0	0	0	56	100
Planning enables managers to carry out effective evaluation	51	91	4	7	1	2	0	0	0	0	56	100
It helps the project to know the sources of funds and the responsibilities to be undertaken	30	54	20	36	6	10	0	0	0	0	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table1, respondents said planning enables the projects to achieve its set objectives (80%) while 89% said planning sets the project direction and 71% said planning enables proper coordination of activities.91% of respondents said Planning enables managers to carry out effective evaluation and 54% said It helps the project to know the sources of funds and the responsibilities to be undertaken. The statements that respondents made and agreed to strongly signify that the project planning is a very crucial factor in the success of projects.

Table 2: Description of planning process in Soma Umenye project

Description	Frequency	Percentage
Very satisfied	33	59
Satisfied	14	25
Fair	9	16
Dissatisfied	0	0
Very dissatisfied	0	0
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table2, respondents contacted described the planning process in Soma Umenye project as very satisfied (59%) while 25% of respondents said they were satisfied and 16% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied a situation they described as fair. This led the researcher to the

understanding that contacted respondents appreciated the role of planning in the success of Soma Umenye project and therefore planning contributes to success of projects.

6.2 The influence of resource mobilization on the success of projects

The researcher in this section presented, analyzed and interpreted the views of respondents in relation to the factors that affect success in projects so that conclusion can be made.

Table 3: Views of respondents on whether they consider resource mobilization important

Views	Frequency	Percentage
Resource mobilization is important	40	71
Resource mobilization is not important	6	11
Not sure	10	18
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2013

According to table3, respondents contacted revealed that resource mobilization is important in Soma Umenye project (71%) while 11% of respondents said the project is not important and 18% of respondents said they were not sure. This led the researcher to the understanding that Soma Umenye project is success because of the achievements derived from planning. When respondents were asked to give reasons for their answers, they said the project has become more reputable (33%) while 30% of respondents said the project is sustainable and 25% said the project has led to the satisfaction of respondents. 12% of respondents said the project is has been able to attain to use its resources effectively. This led the researcher to the understanding that resource mobilization due to the benefits derived from project planning.

Table 4: Determinants of success in Soma Umenye project

Determinants	Frequency	Percentage
Sustainability	15	27
Attainment of project objectives	14	25
Timely delivery of services	10	18
Environmental friendly	8	14
Realistic goals	9	16
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table4, respondents revealed that the determinants of project success are sustainability (27%) while 25% said attainment of project objectives. 18% of respondents said timely delivery of services and 14% of respondents said environmental friendly and 16% said realistic goals. This led the researcher to the understanding that the success of the project is greatly attributed to the ways organization of resources is planned in a way that promotes success of the project.

6.3 The contribution of activity scheduling on the success of projects

The researcher in this section presented the views of respondents on the impact of planning on the success of projects so that relevant conclusions can be made.

Table 5: The influence of activity scheduling on the success of Soma Umenye project

Benefits	Frequency	Percentage
Proper implementation of the objectives	13	23
Increased sustainability	16	29
Setting realistic and attainable objectives	9	16
Easy mobilization of resources	8	14
Smooth flow of project activities	10	18
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table5, respondents contacted revealed that the influence of activity scheduling in projects are proper implantation of the objectives(23%) while 29% said increased sustainability and 16% said setting realistic goals and attainable objectives. 14% said easy mobilization of resources. 18% of respondents said smooth flow of project activities. The researcher realized that planning in Soma Umenye project has multiple benefits that are all focused towards success of the project which means that project success is an important factor in the success of projects.

Table 6: Respondents views on the relationship between planning and success of Soma Umenye project

Views	Frequency	Percentage
They are related	43	77
They are not related	6	11
Not sure	7	12
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table7, respondents contacted revealed that project planning and success are related (77%) while 11% of respondents said they are not related and 12% said they were not sure. This led the researcher to the understanding that there is a positive relationship between project planning and success of Soma Umenye project. When the respondents were asked to give reasons for their answers, respondents said proper planning leads to improved project success (40%) while 38% said it is through planning that the project is able to put its resources together and 22% said planning makes the project activities move smoothly in an organized way that is able to effect success.

Table 8: Respondents comments on the impact of planning on project success in Soma Umenye project

Views	Frequency	Percentage
Planning and success are positively related	12	21
Planning sets the project activities in order	20	36
Planning guide project managers towards project success	15	27
Planning sets the project on truck	8	16
Total	56	100

Source: Primary data, 2018

According to table8, respondents contacted commented that planning and success are positively related (21%) while 36% of respondents revealed that planning sets the project activities in order and 27% of respondents said planning guides the project managers towards project success and

16% of respondents said planning sets the project on truck. This led the researcher to the understanding that respondents contacted revealed that planning in the project has multiple benefits that are likely to contribute to the project success and that there is a positive relationship between project planning and project success, respondents appreciate the relationship due to the multiple benefits it has had to the project.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations of the study

7.1 Conclusions

- 1) The researcher concluded that the plans scheduled in Soma Umenye project are strategic plans, short terms plans, intermediate plans, implementation and evaluations plans. The plans scheduled have helped Soma Umenye project to succeed through streamlining the project activities, putting resources in order and facilitating the project planning and implementation.
- 2) The researcher concluded that the factors necessary for project success are sustainability, attainment of project objectives, timely delivery of services, environmental friendly and said realistic goals. All the factors necessary for project success are available in Soma Umenye project and they all rotate around project planning.
- 3) Last but not least, the researcher concluded that proper implantation of the objectives, increased sustainability, setting realistic goals and attainable objectives, easy mobilization of resources and smooth flow of project activities. There is a positive relationship between planning and project success. Planning in the project has multiple benefits that are likely to contribute to the project success and that there is a positive relationship between project planning and project success, respondents appreciate the relationship due to the multiple benefits it has had to the project.

7.2 Recommendations

The researcher recommended that Soma Umenye project should continue carrying out planning because it is important in effecting project success. Planning helps to put resources together and make proper used of them hence leading to success.

The researcher recommended that employees of various projects in Rwanda should work hard aiming at ensuring that their projects succeed. This should be done because all the projects are started with the major aim of succeeding and fulfilling interests of the concerned stakeholders.

In addition to that the best strategic plans that lead to project success should be designed so that success is achieved with minimal strain.

7.3 Suggested areas for further research

The study suggest the following areas as necessary for future research in order to exhaust the field related to project planning and success.

- 1) Other factors contribution to success of the other project that planning should be research about in future so that project can have multiple of then and chose the best.
- 2) The researcher suggested that other ways through which planning is important in projects other that success should also be looked at.
- 3) The researcher recommended that in future research should be carried out on the benefits of project success.

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