

# Project Implementation Practices in Provision of Services in Public Institutions in Rwanda: A Case of the Ministry of Public Service and Labour

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**Abstract:** *Project activities in private and public sectors are on the increase and this calls for better project management to ensure successful completion of projects that the organizations are engaged in. This study sought to establish how project implementation practices have led to the provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda. The study focused on four objectives of the study which were; to assess how the use of information technology practices influence provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda, to assess how the adoption of stakeholder involvement practices influence provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda, to establish the role of donor partnership practices in provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda and to determine the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda. The research adopted descriptive survey design. A total of 108 questionnaires was distributed to respondents. The respondents were purposively selected from the levels of Directors, Project Managers and Program Officers who are the main custodians of information of their organizations. Primary and secondary data was collected for the study. The researcher used a questionnaire to collect primary data from the population and secondary data was collected from the Government reports and other related studies. A pilot on the instrument was conducted at Ministry of Public Service and Labour to determine instrument reliability. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions. The collected data was edited, coded and classified; the data was analysed using descriptive statistics and some level of inferential statistics which helped to interpret the correlation of the independent variable to the dependent variable. SPSS version 21 statistical tool was used for data analysis. From multiple regressions, it was inferred that the use of information technology was significant in explaining the provision services at a 1% significance level, followed by monitoring and evaluation, donor partnership practices, and lastly stakeholder participation. The study concluded that monitoring and evaluation has greatly contributed to organizational learning and result orientation. Information technology has substantively contributed to knowledge management. Adequate stakeholder engagement and the donor partnership practices are a huge asset for the sustainability and success of projects. The study recommends the adoption of project management implementation practices by Organizations implementing projects and further research on other project management implementation practices contributing to success of projects.*

**Keywords:** Project, Performance, Project Management, Project Performance, Project Success

## 1. Introduction

With the increasing number of activities that take place in both private and public sectors to improve performance, the organizations find it difficult to manage all the projects (Samset & Volden, 2015). According to (Samset & Volden, 2015) ways to govern these projects should be put in place to avoid loss of resources that would eventually lead to loss on the part of the organization. For an organization to achieve its goals and objectives project management has been found to be a key strategy. With growing issues on achieving relevance and success, project management is key and should also be adopted as a model in the organization (Carvalho & Rabechini, 2011). Project management is therefore an important component of the success of the organization (Ellatar, 2009). Project management is defined as a process that is established in an organization to organize and manage the resources that are in place for specific activities in the organization to avoid wastage (Muller, 2009). This research project was based on project implementation practices in provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda.

## 2. Statement of the Problem

Society has gone through many significant changes which have an impact on provision of services and management

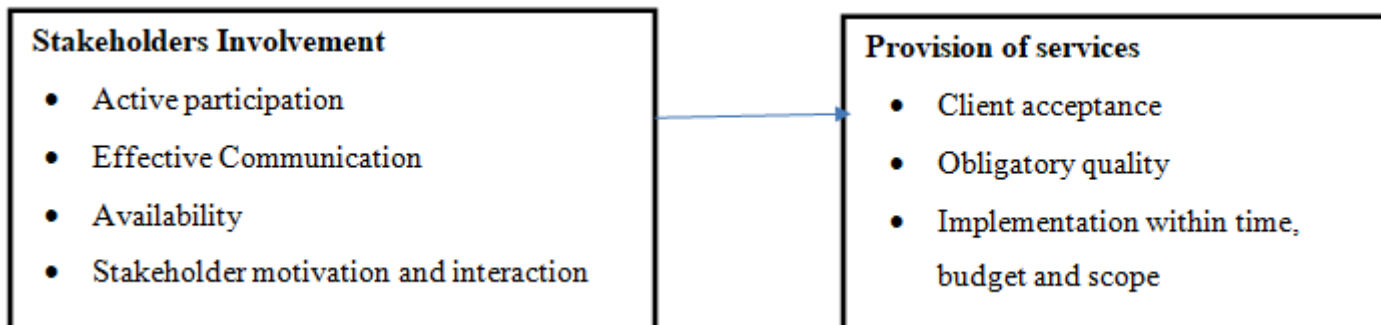
as a whole. Evolving trends have an impact in modern project management practice. The trends have placed new demands on service providers of the 21st century. Some of these trends include increasing demand for accountability by agencies funding projects in government institutions, stakeholder awareness of their rights in projects that they are part of an increasing interest in evidence to support practice. Institutions have adopted various management strategies to meet the demands of the current need to generate deliverables that will meet the funding partners and stakeholders' expectations.

Project Management is one of the management strategies employed by some of the institutions to achieve quality. A research done in South Africa on the researchers' opinions on project management and whether it made a difference in healthcare research projects related to alcohol and pregnancy indicated that, 93.8% of respondents agreed that project management increased the effectiveness of the project, communication, teamwork, and application of the interdisciplinary group of researchers' expertise (Fageha & Aibinu, 2012). Therefore, factors influencing performance implementation of projects in public institutions in Rwanda. There have been several studies carried out on the assess project implementation practices in provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda, however none has carried out a specific study focusing on project

implementation practices in provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda. This study sought to fill this gap.

### 3.Objectives of the Study

### 4.Conceptual Framework



### 5.Research Methodology

- **Research Design:** This study adopted a descriptive survey
- **Target Population:** The target population of the study was 108.
- **Sample size:** A sample size of 86 respondents was determined from a total population of 108 respondents using the formula by Yamane
- **Data Collection tools:** Primary data was collected by the use of questionnaires. A structured Likert scale type questionnaire was used as a data collection instrument and review of existing literature related to the study topic.
- **Data Analysis and Processing Technique:** Analysis of data included sorting, cleaning and organization of data from the questionnaires. The study generated both qualitative and quantitative data. The information was then coded and entered into a spreadsheet and analyzed

The general objective of this study was to determine project implementation practices on the provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda. Its second specific objective was to assess the influence of stakeholder’s involvement practices on provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda.

using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 and was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The main quantitative techniques used included descriptive statistics such as absolute and relative (percentages) frequencies, measures of central tendency and dispersion (mean and standard deviation respectively).

### 6.Summary of Research Findings

#### 6.1: Stakeholder Involvement practices in Provision of Services

Stakeholder involvement practices ensure that there is ownership of a project to both the beneficiaries and partners. This is due to demand to demonstrate results and accountability requirements on projects and also the need to incorporate their expectations as a measure of project performance.

**Table1:** The interaction with the stakeholders can be described as

	Frequency	Percent
Active (one on one with the project team)	37	47.4
Facilitated (There is a go between the project team and stakeholders)	23	29.5
Total	60	76.9
Missing System	18	23.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The findings in table 1 indicate that (majority) 37 respondents indicated that the project team had active

interaction with stakeholders, 23 indicated that the interaction was facilitated.

**Table 2:** Description of the stakeholders’ availability

	Frequency	Percent
Valid	Continuous	70.5
	Irregular	29.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>

From the findings, 55 of the respondents agreed that the organization’s stakeholders were continuously available

whereas 23 respondents indicated that the stakeholders’ availability was irregular. This implies that majority of the

organization/ project had stakeholders who were continuously available.

**Table 3:** Respondents’ opinion on the Stakeholder involvement practices in Provision of services

Stakeholders’ involvement practices	Mean	Std. Dev
The organization has invested time and resources to identify who their stakeholders are	3.91	0.282
The organization has regular discussions with the stakeholders regarding the projects	3.75	0.531
There is a formal communication channel to the project stakeholders	4.08	0.408
The organization engages stakeholders in putting in place a process to monitor and evaluate progress	3.79	0.508
The organization has measures put in place to motivate stakeholder participation	3.70	0.55
The support of the stakeholders has contributed to the success of the projects	4.08	0.408

The findings in table 3 indicate that the respondents agreed that; the project has formal communication channel to stakeholders (mean=4.08), and that the project stakeholders have contributed to the success of the project (mean=4.08). The respondents also agreed that; the organization has invested time and resources to identify stakeholders (mean=3.91). In addition to this, respondents agreed that the organizations have regular discussions with stakeholders regarding the projects (mean=3.75). Finally, respondents agree that the organizations engage the stakeholders in monitoring and evaluating progress (mean=3.79) as well as instituting measures to motivate stakeholders (3.70).

**6.2: Inferential Analysis**

The study applied a Linear Model to determine the predictive power on the influence of project management

implementation practices on provision of services. This included regression analysis, the Model, coefficient of determination. In addition, the researcher conducted a multiple regression analysis so as to test relationship among variables (independent) on the influence of project management implementation practices on provision of services. The researcher applied the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS V21.0) to code, enter and compute the measurements of the multiple regressions for the study. Coefficient of determination explains the extent to which changes in the dependent variable can be explained by the change in the independent variables or the percentage of variation in the dependent variable (provision of services) that is explained by all the four independent variables (donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation and Information and technology practices).

**Table 4:** Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.732 <sup>a</sup>	.536	.503	.130
a. Predictors: (Constant), (donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation and Information and technology practices)				

From the Table given above, the R square is given as 0.536 which is an indication that predictor variables (donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and

evaluation and Information and technology practices) explicate 53.6% of provision of services leaving 46.4 percent unexplained.

**Table 5:** ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
1	Regression	.575 <sup>a</sup>	3	.192	6.388	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	1.379	82	.017		
	Total	1.953	85			
a. Dependent Variable: provision of services						
b. Predictors: (Constant), donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation and Information and technology practices						

From Table 5 above, the significant value (P=0.000) show that there was a strong significant relationship between the independent variables (donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation and Information

and technology practices) and dependent variable (provision of services). The P- value of 0.000 which is less than 0.05 denotes that the model of provision of services is significant at the 5 percent significance level.

**Table 6:** Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.783	3.750		1.009	.317
	Information technology practices	.739	.248	.444	-2.982	.004
	Stakeholder’s involvement practices	1.308	.283	1.231	4.615	.000
	Donor partnership practices	.319	.363	1.075	.879	.383
	Monitoring and evaluation practices	.163	.155	.230	1.050	.298

From the data in the above table the established regression equation was

$$Y = 3.783 + 0.739 X_1 + 1.308 X_2 + 0.319 X_3 + 0.163 X_4$$

The equation above concluded that provision of services was extremely swayed by donor partnership, stakeholder engagement, monitoring and evaluation and Information and technology practices. Given all the predictor variables constant at zero (0), provision of services will be 3.783. The regression coefficient for Information and technology is 0.739. This shows that the relationship between stakeholder engagement and provision of services is positive. This suggests that better and efficient communication enhances effective provision of services positively and vice versa. The regression coefficient for Stakeholder's involvement practices is 1.308.

This means that the relationship between planning and provision of services is positive. This indicates comprehensive planning lead to improvement in the implementation of effective projects and vice versa. There was also a positive regression coefficient for donor partnership having a coefficient of 0.319. This implies that when the viability of financial support is high, there is always a clear indication of project completion and related proper management of the funds, hence more effectiveness in provision of services and vice versa. The study found a positive relationship between monitoring and evaluation and provision of services having a regression coefficient of 0.163. This shows that having effective monitoring and evaluation influences the effectiveness of provision of services positively and vice versa.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 7.1 Conclusions

The study concluded that all the organizations utilized information and technology facilities in the implementation of the services. In addition, the study concludes that information and technology have to a large extent contributed to organizational learning from past projects. The Findings further concludes that, the backbone of communication within and without the organizations in this study is information and technology. It can also be concluded that the use of information and technology has enabled the organizations to integrate several projects. Finally, the study concludes that information technology has positive significant effect of provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda.

The study concludes that the organizations were adequately engaging the stakeholders in an active way rather than having facilitated engagement where there is a go between. In addition, it can be concluded from the findings that most organizations invested time and resources to identify their stakeholders and had regular discussions. The stakeholders in the organizations have been proactive and their presence continuous. The organizations have formal communication channels with stakeholders and to a larger extent, have mechanisms for stakeholders' motivation. Finally, the study concludes that

stakeholder engagement practices have significant influence in the provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda.

The study concluded that the organizations have established functional partnerships with donors. The findings conclude that the practices that have ensured healthy partnership with donors include: having a donor partnership manager or focal person, having some form of partnership agreements and developing an interdependent rather than a top-down relationship with donors. The study therefore concludes that, adoption of donor partnership practice has significant role in the provision of services in public institutions in Rwanda.

### 7.2 Recommendations

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

Organizations implementing projects need to adopt project management implementation practices to ensure successful and sustainable projects. To enhance sustainability of the projects, donors' accountability is key and thus project management implementation practices such as donor partnership and monitoring and evaluation area key asset in achieving this. Monitoring and evaluation should be undertaken in every step of project implementation and not a onetime event as it is common with many selected projects. This will help identify, loopholes and deviations from overall projects goals, and correct them early as to ensure successful quality implementation. Selected projects should not only invest in technology, but also training of the project team on usage of the same technology. This will increase skills and their disposal and level of efficiency in increasing project implementation. From the study, it is evident that monitoring and evaluation practices rate highly as a best practice in projects. This therefore means that, organizations can never go wrong in devoting enough resources to this factor while ensuring adequate training to all personnel on the use monitoring and evaluation practices and utilization of results in decision making.

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