

**CHALLENGES FACING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF RAPID RESULTS
INITIATIVE STRATEGY AT NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT MANAGEMENT
AUTHORITY**

BY;

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A MANAGEMENT RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILMEENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE
OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION IN THE SCHOOL OF BUSINESS,
UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

OCTOBER 2010

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this research work is my original work and has not been presented to any other university for a degree award or anywhere else for academic purposes.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my wife Ruth Kashumpa and Children Kosen, Koileken and Sirintai. They are the source of my strength. They are part of my reason for continued hard work and commitment to academic success. May this piece of research work always inspire them to rise to greater heights of prosperity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to pay tribute to my project supervisor, Florence Muindi who provided the coaching and guidance that saw the successful completion of this project. Thanks to the Ag. Director General NEMA, Dr. Ayub Macharia for authorizing collection of data from the Authority. I also thank most sincerely senior staff members at NEMA for taking time of their busy schedules to provide the necessary information for this project. In the same vein, may I register gratitude to Mahat Mohamed and Fred Ogola of Geothermal Development Company who often times provided logistical support that contributed significantly to the success of this research work. In Addition, my dad John ole Tialal inspired me to climb the academic ladder owing to his ample beginning to an accomplished school administrator of his time. Further, I thank my late uncle, Hon. Charles ole Tialal for not only laying the foundation stone for education in our family, but also for transformed the lives of the Maa community right from the colonial error to post independence Kenya. Above all, I thank the almighty Gog for his continued guidance, protection and direction throughout my studies.

ABSTRACT

Rapid Results Approach has been adapted as a structured methodology for building and practicing Results Based Management (RBM) that is required for successful implementation of the Kenyan Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS). The power behind the approach is that it stimulates “group adrenalin” which is vital in overcoming inertia. It creates a sense of excitement that comes from working on achievement of short-term goals whose results have an impact on development. It further creates a sense of urgency, personal challenges, clearly defines success and raises stakes and visibility for success or failure. It enables people to collaborate in a new team spirit and lets them tap into their full potential of energy and creativity.

This was a case study aimed to investigate the challenges facing the implementation of Rapid Results Initiative strategy at NEMA. It was a descriptive research design while data for the study was obtained from 20 Managers (Director General, Directors deputy directors and Chief Officers) within NEMA using interview guides and was analyzed using content analysis.

Findings of the study revealed that although NEMA successfully implemented the RRI, the organization faced various challenges that included: lack of cooperation from staff since they were used to the old system; inadequate funds; poor strategic planning inadequate staff and resources; delayed communication and poor coordination between the departments. The study recommends that the Government should enact laws to provide legal and institutional frame work for PSR & PC to play a supervisory role over the government agencies implementing RRI programs to ensure that RBM guidelines are followed. NEMA should be strengthened and capacity built to effectively monitor and evaluate its RRI programs. This will be a departure from the current system where they train a few officers from various departments and expect them to champion the implementation process of RRI.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

DEO:	District Environment Officer
ERS:	Economic Recovery Strategy
GOK:	Government of Kenya
NEMA;	National Environmental Management Authority
OOP:	Office of the President
PDE:	Provincial Director of Environment
PSR&DS:	Public Sector Reform and Development Secretariat
PSR&PC:	Public Sector Reforms and Performance Contracting
RRA:	Rapid Results Approach
RRI:	Rapid Results Initiative
RBM:	Result Based Management

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iv
ABSTRACT.....	v
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS.....	vi
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.1.1. The Concept of Strategy.....	2
1.1.2. Strategy Implementation.....	3
1.1.3. Public sector Reforms in Kenya.....	4
1.1.4. Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) in Kenya.....	5
1.1.5. National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA).....	7
1.2. Statement of the problem.....	8
1.3. Objective of the study.....	9
1.4. Significance of the study.....	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW.....	11
2.1 The Concept of Strategy Implementation.....	11
2.2 Approaches of Strategy Implementation in the Public Sector.....	13
2.2.1. Results Based Management.....	14
2.2.2. Public value theory.....	15

2.2.3. Goal setting approach.....	16
2.3. The Concept of RRI.....	17
2.4. Challenges of strategy implementation.....	18
2.4.1. Poor Management Control Systems in the Public Sector.....	18
2.4.2. Public sector culture.....	20
2.4.3. Resistance to Change in the public sector.....	21
2.4.4. Political Influence.....	23
2.4.5. Inadequate Resources.....	24
CHAPTER THREE:RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	26
3.1. Research Design.....	26
3.2. Data Collection Procedure.....	26
3.4. Data Analysis.....	26
CHAPTER FOUR:DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION.....	27
4.1. Introduction.....	27
4.2 Demographic Information of the Respondents.....	27
4.2.1. Respondents' Gender and Ages	27
4.3 Strategy Implementation and Challenges at NEMA.....	27
CHAPTER FIVE:SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	35
5.1. Summary of findings.....	35
5.2. Conclusion.....	36
5.3 Recommendations.....	38

REFERENCES.....	40
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APENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Strategies are formulated and implemented by organizations in order to achieve a more favourable position. Over the years a large number of concepts and techniques have been proposed on how organizations should develop a suitable strategy. Some of these concepts and techniques concentrate on matching an organization's resources and skills with the opportunities and risks created by its external environment (Porter 1985; Buzzel 1987), while others focus on the organization's resources and capabilities as drivers of competitive advantage (Grant 1991). All these concepts and techniques imply that it is possible to determine a strategic direction for an organization on a systematic basis. However, it is increasingly being realized that such a notion can only be applied if the underlying assumptions are not changing fast and if the goals of an organization are well defined (Mintzberg 1990).

The noteworthy statement “. . . great strategy, shame about the implementation . . .” (Okumus and Roper, 1998, p. 218) captures the essence of the problem that strategy implementation suffers from a general lack of academic attention (Alexander, 1985; Edgar and Taylor, 1996; Noble, 1999; Aaltonen and Ikavalko, 2002; Otley, 2003). Indeed, Okumus and Roper (1998, p. 219) go on to observe that “. . . despite the importance of the strategic execution process, far more research has been carried out into strategy formulation rather than into strategy implementation . . .”, while Alexander concludes that literature is dominated by a focus on long range planning and strategy “content” rather than the actual implementation of strategies, on which

In today's highly dynamic business environments, however, both public and private organizations must constantly adapt to the fast changing circumstances. Strategy formulation and implementation should become a cognitive process as opposed to a process of conception. It is in this light that organization learning has become a main focus of attention for research and the ability to learn has been recognized as the only source of sustainable strategies (Nonaka 1991). Strategy formulation should therefore be

regarded as a continuous learning process. Such a learning process, however, is very complex as it encompasses individual learning mechanisms as well as those of group learning and organization learning.

1.1.1. The Concept of Strategy

Understanding what strategy is has been complicated by the proliferation in the number of schools of strategic thought and by the undisciplined, even reckless, use of the term (Mintzberg, Ahlstrand, Lampel 1998). Understanding strategy has also been made more difficult by the popularity of the resource methods that Donaldson and Hilmer (1998) call the techniques du jour. Porter (1996) addresses this in "What is strategy?," where he protests that the: . . . remarkable number of management tools and techniques: total quality management, benchmarking, time-based competition, outsourcing, partnering, reengineering, and change management . . . have taken the place of strategy.

Understanding strategy has been hurt by the tendency to view strategy as a stand-alone phenomenon, rather than as a causally linked element in the PSR Troika. In theory, the concept of strategy is difficult to sustain without a means-ends dichotomy. In practice, it is extremely difficult, if not impossible, for executives to make strategic decisions without knowing what is the end goal or objective. For example, choosing between Porter's "low cost" or "differentiation" generic strategies, or deciding to develop a non-generic third option, is almost impossible without applying policy as the dependent variable in the decision-making process.

Strategy is driven by its purpose, and its purpose is to achieve policy. Strategy must include a plurality of inputs, a multiplicity of options, and an ability to accommodate more than one possible outcome. But where policy is ignored or where there is no end-means linkage between policy and strategy, strategy has no means-end object. In these situations, strategy suffers from being a means without an end, an end in itself, or a means of achieving an operational end, rather than being a design or plan for achieving the company's policy goals and objectives (Porter 1996).

1.1.2. Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation has attracted much less attention in strategic and organizational research than strategy formulation or strategic planning. Alexander (1991) suggests several reasons for this: strategy implementation, people overlook it because of a belief that anyone can do it, people are not exactly sure what it and where it begins and ends. Furthermore, there are only a limited number of conceptual models of strategy implementation.

Organizations seem to have difficulties in implementing their strategies, however. Researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation: e.g. weak management roles in the implementation; lack of communication; lacking commitment to the strategy; unaligned organizational systems and resources; poor coordination of responsibilities; inadequate capabilities; competing activities; and uncontrollable environmental factors; (Alexander,1991;Giles, 1991; Galpin 1998 Lares-Mankki,1994; Beer and Eissentan, 2000).

Strategy implementation has usually been regarded as being distinct from strategy formulation and as a matter of adjustment of organizational structures and systems (Galbraith 1980; Hrebiniak and Joyce, 1984; Higgins, 1985; Thomson and Strickland, 1987; Pearce and Robinson, 1994). It seems that this approach is limited and a number of new prospective to this problematic phenomenon has emerged.

Pettigrew's (1987) framework for strategic change also sheds some light on analysis of strategy implementation. Pettigrew contends that the content, the context and the process are intertwined and affect one another. This is an important impact on strategy implementation research. In order to understand implementation, which is close to the process in Pettigrew's model, also the content of strategy and the context in which it takes place must be understood.

Another issue influencing the study of strategy implementation is the perspective one has on the strategy. Is strategy first formulated then implemented, or vice versa? If one believes that strategies are explicit (Mintzberg, 1978), implementation means carrying

out a predetermined strategic plans. If, on the other hand, one holds an emergent view on strategy, one does not believe that strategy is first created and then implemented, but that strategy emerges and evolves without interventions by strategic planners, or in spite of (Mintzberg, 1978).

1.1.3. Public sector Reforms in Kenya

To facilitate the transformation of the Public Service from process oriented to a Results Oriented Management culture in Public Service delivery, and to provide a mechanism that supports the achievement of the national priorities, the Government developed the 'Results for Kenyans' programme. This programme sets performance standards and the related institutional framework, and builds the capacity of leaders to manage change in the achievement of targeted Results for Kenyans, which are efficient, effective and ethical. This programme operates on a premise that Kenyans have a right and a need to know.

The government therefore seeks this opportunity to engage and dialogue with stakeholders on the overall Reform agenda. In this regard, transformative leadership and integrity have been identified as critical components of an effective service delivery system that fosters capacity building for self-sustaining culture of delivery of targeted results. Meanwhile, democratizing reforms into the Millennium have resulted in greater public scrutiny of the Government performance. In response to this challenge, the Cabinet in September 2004, called for the introduction of RBM in the Public Service. This called for a paradigm shift on the part of the leadership, management and staff of the Public Service from process to a results orientation.

The civil service reform program (CSR) was first launched in Kenya in 1993 (Sawe, 1997; Obongo, 2007) to improve efficiency and productivity. Following the launch, the government created a steering committee on the Civil Service Reform Program (CSRP) at the national, provincial and district levels and in each ministry with a national secretariat as its operational arm. The government then conducted sensitization seminars to ensure that all actors in the reform process were properly and adequately sensitized (Nzioka, 1998). The reform programs were designed to be implemented in three phases: Phase I (1993-1998), which focused on containment. Phase II (1998-2001), which

focused on performance improvement. Phase III (2003-to date), whose focus will be refinement, consolidation and sustenance of reforms. Policy issues dealt with under phase I included: staffing, civil service organization, training and capacity building, financial management, performance management, pay and benefits.

Reflecting on his experience, Nzioka (1998) argued that were CSRs to herald the emergence of a civil service that is efficient, productive and result-oriented in consonance to the then prevailing Kenya's vision of being "newly industrialized country" (NIC) by 2020, then they should be geared towards: debureaucratisation, decentralization, forge strategic alliances, develop a quality culture, be global and information technology driven. These are the same sentiments expressed by KCG (2003). Phase I reforms program ushered in phase II reforms towards mid-1998. However, phase II reforms only gained momentum following National Alliance Rainbow Coalition (NARC) government in 2003 (Obongo, 2007). Phase II reform witnessed a series of ministerial and sectoral initiatives. The launch of governance reforms; justice, law and order sector reforms; judicial reforms; capacity building and training; e-governance; results based management (RBM); participation in quality awards and reintroduction of performance contracts were witnessed (Nyamweya, 2007; Government of Kenya, 2007; Kombo, 2007; World Bank, 2007; Obongo, 2007; Kenya Institute of Administration, 2008; Kobia and Mohammed, 2006). Thus, while remarkable progress in entrenching a performance-oriented civil service reforms agenda has gained momentum, there still remains room for improvement and much more remains to be done.

1.1.4. Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) in Kenya

RRI is defined as an implementation strategy of planned effort towards achievement of a meaningful, challenging result in a short period, usually 100 days. The concept stems from the realization that traditional change efforts have not lead to tangible result although they embrace critical change elements such as Missions and Vision statements, capacity building, new processes and structures, new policies and procedures and communication campaigns. These elements however are deficient in urgency and excitement that comes from working on the achievement of short term and compelling results. (Ministry of Health, Health Services Reform Secretariat, 2007).

Rapid Results initiatives are strategy focused and often emerge and evolve over time, while projects have a task-oriented view and are time-bound (Bryde, 2003). A strategic initiative signals important changes in an organization, affecting its long-term direction and the scope of its activities. Operations are affected as the strategic initiative is deployed, changing day-to-day routines. In contrast, a project is a unique one-off activity with a specific, clearly stated outcome, and has well defined boundaries including a specific start and finish date (Grundy, 1998; Herroelen, 2005). Projects are usually short duration, and implementation tends to be routine, using existing structures (Moncrieff, 1999).

The Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) was initially piloted as a Result Based Management (RBM) tool in the Ministry of Water and Irrigation, Ministry of Health, Local Government and Ministry of Agriculture between 2004 and 2005. However, from 2006 to date, it is estimated that over 65 government agencies namely Ministries, State Corporations, Local Authorities and Regional Authorities have either implemented First Wave of RRI or are currently on 2nd and 3rd waves of RRI. Pursuant to Cabinet Memo No. (04) 106 of 24 September, 2004, the Government adopted the Results Based Management (RBM) approach in the Public Service to improve Public Service performance and service delivery. This effectively instituted RBM for Ministries/Departments, State Corporations, Local and Regional Development Authorities. The implementation of this Cabinet Memo required the establishment of a results-based Performance Management Framework (PMF) that would establish consistency in performance target setting, implementation, monitoring and reporting - and how to use that information to enhance institutional and individual performance in the Public Service.

In the implementation of the first wave of RRIs, the organizational leadership group identifies a set of strategic priorities from the Strategic Plan, Annual Work Plan or the Performance Contract that would benefit from RRI. A sponsor result leader, strategic leader and team leader are then appointed for each focus or Strategic Challenge Area. The portfolio of focal (thematic) areas then moves into the RRI cycle-Shape – which is

Launch, Implement and Scale-up. As the RRI move through this cycle the results advance the achievement of the organizations overall strategy (Public Service Reforms and Development Secretariat 2007).

1.1.5. National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA)

The Environmental Management and Co-ordination Act (EMCA) of 1999 was enacted against a backdrop of a deteriorating state of Kenya's environment as well as increasing social and economic inequality and their negative impact on the environment. Under the Act, the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA), managed by the Board, exercises general supervision and coordination on all matters relating to the environment and is the principal instrument of Government in the implementation of all policies relating to the environment. The establishment of the National Environment Management Authority (NEMA) is provided for by the Environmental Management and Coordination Act ((EMCA) of 1999. The Act of Parliament which came into force in January, 2000, provides for the establishment of a legal and institutional framework for the management of the Environment. It accepts the general principles that; The environment is the foundation of our national economic, social, cultural and spiritual advancement. Part V Section 42 (4) of EMCA 1999 gives NEMA the mandate to undertake the protection and conservation of the environment.

Indeed, in its five year strategic plan (2005-2010), NEMA's vision is "to be a world class Environmental Authority that ensures a clean and healthy environment for all" its mission is " To safeguard, restore and enhance the quality of the Environment through co-ordination and supervision of stakeholders for sustainable development" Furthermore, the strategic plan highlights the Authority's motto as " Our Environment, our life" while the core values are; Teamwork and partnership building, Efficiency and effectiveness, Accountability and Transparency, Excellency and professionalism, Creativity and Innovation, Courage of conviction, Sensitivity and responsiveness and Results oriented. In exercise of its mandate, NEMA identified eight (8) sites each in every province for rehabilitation. This was captured in the performance contract of 2007/08 financial year. This coincided with the period NEMA introduced RRI after recognizing the fact that it

was not acting fast enough in the implementation of the key areas of service delivery to meet its performance targets.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Public organizations face a common challenge when implementing new strategic initiatives aimed at achieving rapid results and how to successfully manage the changes that will occur as the new initiative is deployed. Some researchers note that public organizations fail to implement up to 70 per cent of their strategic initiatives (Beer and Nohria, 2000; Miller, 2002). Pilkington and Fitzgerald (2006) note that two central themes of operations management concern the case study method and best practices in relation to strategy and context. Key operations and management question here is: how do managers implement strategic initiatives in an organizational excellence environment? From a result based management and an operations management perspective, research suggests that adopting and implementing the right practices is essential to attaining “world-class” results (Brown et al., 2007; Laugen et al., 2005).

The challenges of entrenching sustained economic growth and reducing poverty demand the transformation of the Public Service to one that is more focussed, efficient and increasingly responsive to the needs of those it serves. The public service must therefore direct its energies towards implementation of well defined core functions and policy priorities as outlined in the Kenyan Vision 2030, various other government policy documents and articulated in respective performance contracts. This therefore calls for adoption of implementation strategies that will enhance the completion and efficiency of public projects and services. It also requires that we collectively address systematic and operational impediments to delivery of services of Kenyans (Public Service Reform and Development Secretariat, 2006).

Most government ministries and State Corporations including NEMA are either on the 2nd or 3rd wave of the initiatives. However, the enthusiasm witnessed during initial implementation of Rapid Results Initiative and anticipated up-scaling has not been realised as earlier envisaged (PSC 2008). NEMA embraced RRI as a strategy to deliver on its critical performance contract targets for 2007/2008 financial year. The thematic

areas that were identified for implementation were seven namely: Enhanced inspection of projects; Enhanced environmental awareness; Enhanced financial processes; Rehabilitation of degraded sites; improved office accommodation; Disposal of idle assets; and improved registry records management. Each of this thematic area had a team to fast track the process within 100 days that was running from 22nd November 2007 to 29th February 2008.

Whereas strategic management has been widely researched by management scholars in Kenya such as Kombo (1993); Kangoro (1998); Gekonge (1999); Bwimbo (2000); and Awino (2001); only a few studies; (Aosa 1992); Koseke (2003); Muthuiya (2004); and Machuki (2005) have been done on the component of strategy implementation in Kenya. While research into operations strategy and rapid results initiatives has investigated leading practices in determining strategic content, it is only recently that processes for implementing strategic initiatives have begun to be examined (Brown and Blackmon, 2005; Ketokivi and Schroeder, 2004; Minarro -Viseras et al., 2005). Strategy implementation has been studied from a single management perspective such as project management (Bryson and Bromiley, 1993; Minarro-Viseras et al., 2005), or as a component of performance management or strategic control (Chenhall, 2003; Langfield-Smith, 1997). Such studies have focused on single projects or initiatives, but practitioners typically work in a dynamic and complex environment where there are multiple initiatives being implemented (Dawson, 2003; Pettigrew et al., 2003). RRI as a strategy implementation tool has generally not received the same attention as the other components of strategy implementation such as Performance Contracting, Performance Appraisal System (PAS) and the Balance Score card. This study is designed to fill this gap, by emphasizing on the challenges faced by NEMA during the implementation of the Rapid Results Initiatives (RRI) strategy.

1.3. Objective of the study

The objective of this study was to determine the challenges facing the implementation of RRI strategy at National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA).

1.4. Significance of the study

The study assisted the management of NEMA to address the shortcomings in its service delivery; challenges experienced in the implementation of RRI, and provide guidance in the up scaling of its activities for enhanced service delivery.

Policy makers such as the government found the study invaluable in the implementation of policies aimed at achieving rapid results in the public sector as a whole. The policy makers also obtained knowledge of the RRI dynamics and the responses that are appropriate and specific for both governmental and non-governmental organizations, they therefore obtained guidance from this study in designing appropriate policies that ensured the effective implementation of the RRI strategies.

The study was also useful to scholars and academicians. It provided information to potential and current scholars on RRI strategies in various organizations and those who wished to use the findings as a basis for further research on Rapid Results Initiative strategy implementation both in the public and private sector.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Strategy Implementation

In reality, some strategies are planned and some strategies just emerge from the actions and decisions of organizational members. It is suggested that planned strategy and realizing, or emergent, strategy evolve hand in hand and affect each in the process of strategy implementation, where strategies are communicated, interpreted, adopted and enacted (Noble 1999). Implementing strategy successfully is about matching the planned and realizing the strategies, which together aim at reaching the organizational vision. The components of strategy are: implementation; communication; interpretation; adoption and action. If this interaction is successful, the organization's vision may be achieved.

According to Alexander (1985), the ten most frequently occurring strategy implementation problems include underestimating the time needed for implementation and major problems surfacing that had not been anticipated, in addition uncontrollable factors in the external environment had an adverse impact.

Based on empirical work with 93 firms he observed that senior executives were over optimistic in the planning phase and it is noteworthy that the first two issues which occurred most frequently in Alexander's study are planning issues. He also found the effectiveness of coordination of activities and distractions from competing activities inhibited implementation, in addition key tasks were not defined in enough detail. With regard to people, the capabilities of employees involved were often not sufficient, leadership and direction and "training and instruction given to lower level employees were not adequate" (Alexander, 1985, p. 92). Although the least frequent in this study in many cases the information systems used to monitor implementation were not adequate.

Al Ghamdi (1998) replicated the work of Alexander (1985) in the UK and found for 92 percent of firms implementation took more time than originally expected, that major problems surfaced in 88 percent of companies, again showing planning weaknesses. He found the effectiveness of coordination of activities as a problem in 75 percent and distractions from competing activities in 83 percent cases. In addition key tasks were not

defined in enough detail and information systems were inadequate in 71 percent of respondents. What is interesting is that there is congruence between these findings, which implies that lessons have still not been learned; as Al Ghamdi states, “the drama still continues” (Al Ghamdi, 1998).

More recent articles confirm notable barriers to successful strategy implementation about which there appears to be a degree of accord including Beer and Eisenstat’s (2000) “. . . six silent killers of strategy implementation . . . ” These comprise: a top-down/laissez-faire senior management style; unclear strategic intentions and conflicting priorities; an ineffective senior management team; poor vertical communication; weak co-ordination across functions, businesses or borders; and inadequate down-the-line leadership skills development (Beer and Eisenstat, 2000, Pg. 134). It is recognized that such change requires a shared vision and consensus (Beer et al., 1990) and “failures of strategy implementation are inevitable” if competence, coordination and commitment are lacking (Eisenstat, 1993). Corboy and O’Corrbui (1999), meanwhile, identify the “. . . deadly sins of strategy implementation” which involve: a lack of understanding of how the strategy should be implemented; customers and staff not fully appreciating the strategy; unclear individual responsibilities in the change process; difficulties and obstacles not acknowledged, recognized or acted upon; and ignoring the day-to-day business imperatives. Overall though, it is increasingly acknowledged that the traditionally recognized problems of inappropriate organizational structure and lack of top management backing are not the main inhibiting factors to effective strategy implementation (Aaltonen and Ikavalko, 2002, pg. 416).

Rather, the major challenges to be overcome appear to be more cultural and behavioural in nature, including the impact of poor communication and diminished feelings of ownership and commitment (Alexander, 1985; Giles, 1991; Corboy and O’Corrbui, 1999; Aaltonen and Ikavalko, 2002; Franco and Bourne, 2003). Aaltonen and Ikavalko recognise the role of middle managers, arguing they are the “key actors” “who have a pivotal role in strategic communication” (Aaltonen and Ikavalko, (2002), meanwhile Bartlett and Goshal (1996) talk about middle managers as threatened silent resisters

whose role needs to change more towards that of a “coach”, building capabilities, providing support and guidance through the encouragement of entrepreneurial attributes.

Strategic control systems ensure that “the immense effort put into preparing lengthy and detailed strategic plans is in fact translated into action” (Bungay and Goold, 1991, pg. 32). Strategic control systems provide the short-term targets that deliver long-term goals. So successful strategy implementation is substantially dependent on effective strategic, as well as management control systems. Indeed, Tavakoli and Perks (2001) argue that as new strategies will inevitably require change, these control systems are particularly imperative since the situations organizations find themselves in will generally have no precedent. Strategic controls are especially required to provide a balance between longer-term organizational goals and shorter-term operational demands (Bungay and Goold, 1991). Furthermore, they need to incorporate both “feedback” and “feed forward” information, thus enabling managers to know if they are “on track” while also providing opportunities to adapt and revise strategies when required (Goold and Quinn, 1990; Goold, 1991; Otley, 1999; Tavakoli and Perks, 2001).

As can be seen, this model indicates that in order to support successful strategy implementation particular control approaches are more suitable in different circumstances. It can be seen that there is a need to establish co-ordinated strategic and management control mechanisms, which should incorporate both financial and non-financial performance indicators. Furthermore, these control systems should be sufficiently flexible to deal with increasingly dynamic and competitive arenas. Without such systems it is argued strategy implementation will not be possible. It has been suggested that “new” performance management frameworks like the Balanced Scorecard can, by forming the basis of strategic control systems and providing a vital link between strategy and action, assist organizations to achieve effective strategic implementation (Nyamweya 2007).

2.2 Approaches of Strategy Implementation in the Public Sector

Internationally, governments have engaged in numerous reforms and initiatives designed to improve cost effectiveness and efficiency, to increase quality of public services, to

become results-oriented and citizen focused, and to emphasize strategic and business planning (OECD, 1995; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). This global paradigm shift in public sector management integrates concepts, tools and management techniques adopted from private sector management and calls for a new relationship between governments and citizens (Metcalf and Richards, 1987; OECD, 1990; Metcalf, 1993; Dunleavy and Hood, 1994; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000). These reforms, expanding through the 1980s (Savoie, 1994), became collectively known as new public management (Pollitt, 1990; Hood, 1991; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000), and have been responsible for a number of changes in the public sector (Osbourne and Gaebler, 1993; Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000; Kettl, 2000; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000).

2.2.1. Results Based Management

In most OECD countries, new public management has been the key theme in advancing public sector management including a stronger focus on programme outcomes or results under the general title of results-based management (RBM) (OECD, 1995; Bourn, 2000; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2000; OECD, 2002). Results-based Management can be argued to represent a fundamental shift in public sector managerial accountability, incorporating results into programme accountability (Hood, 1995). This is clearly in addition to executives' historical accountability for programme resources, activities and outputs. However, the literature also notes that the essential ideas underlying results-based management (RBM) are not new either in theory or practice (Drucker, 1974; Neely et al., 2002).

Canada, for instance, has intermittently experimented with RBM concepts since the late 1960s (Dewar, 2000; Savoie, 2003). Certainly, over the last decade, traditionally the time required to achieve major organizational cultural change, RBM has been a consistent focus of Canadian central agencies. Nevertheless, the Auditor General of Canada (2005) and other stakeholders report that RBM has attained, at best, limited progress as a strategic or management tool. Why would this be? One possible explanation could be that the implementation of results-based management (RBM) has failed to take into account some critical aspect or to address some systematic impediment, or alternatively, perhaps

another undiscovered or identified issue remains unresolved. It could be argued that in adopting RBM from the private sector, the bureaucracy has failed to acknowledge key differences between the two sectors (Allison, 1997; Clark, 2001). For example, contested perspectives of multiple stakeholders of programme objectives and goals make determination of desired program outcomes difficult. This, coupled with the absence of the clear profit objective from the private sector (Peters, 1993), suggests that RBM frameworks must be adapted, not adopted, for public sector use (Kaplan and Norton, 2001). It could also be argued that to be meaningful, beyond political rhetoric, Results-based Management should introduce and/or support changes in executives' focus and activities. For example, one key area of change would be the acquisition and use of programme "outcome" information in actively managing for results (Drucker, 1995; Mintzberg and Bourgault, 2000).

2.2.2. Public value theory

In order to better understand the complexity of moving towards a results-based environment, public value theory (Moore, 1995) was engaged as a key analytical lens in conducting the research analysis. Public value can be described as the contribution made by the public sector to the economic, social and environmental well-being of a society or nation, and can be generally defined as what the public is willing to make sacrifices of money and freedom to achieve (Kelly et al., 2002). Public value theory argues that the creation of public value is the ultimate goal of public sector programmes and activities – the value proposition that should guide public organizations (Moore, 1995, 2000). At the programme level, Moore's (1995) model suggests that to create public value, executives must address three key areas: cost-effective provision of high quality services; achievement of desirable end results; development and maintenance of a high level of trust between citizens and government.

While Kelly et al. (2002) note that the categories overlap, they suggest that considering the areas as sub-categories does provide a useful way of thinking about the dimensions of public value. The public value theory has gained acceptance in both academic (Bozeman, 2002; Kearns, 2004), and public sector practitioner literature (Kelly et al., 2002).

2.2.3. Goal setting approach

Implementation of rapid results initiative depends on the goals set by an organization. The underlying premise of goal setting theory is that conscious goals affect what is achieved (Latham, 2004). Goal setting theory asserts that people with specific and challenging goals perform better than those with vague goals, such as “do your best”, specific easy goals or no goals at all. Thus, goal setting theory assumes that there is a direct relation between the definition of specific and measurable goals, performance and expected results: if managers know what they are aiming for, they are motivated to exert more effort, which increases performance and achievement of results (Locke and Latham, 2002, 1990).

Challenging goals are usually implemented in terms of specific levels of output to be attained (Locke and Latham, 1990). Review articles (Locke and Latham, 2002; Rodgers and Hunter, 1991) suggest a positive relation between clear and measurable goals and performance. However, Locke and Latham (1990) acknowledge that task difficulty (which is associated with difficult to measure goals) reduces the impact of clear and measurable goals on performance.

Empirical evidence from the public sector provides somewhat mixed results. For example, Hyndman and Eden (2001) interviewed the chief executives of nine agencies in Northern Ireland. All their respondents indicated that a focus in mission, objectives, targets and performance measures had improved the performance of the agency for all stakeholders. Respondents also indicated that the poor implementation of the system (i.e. systems that value efficiency over quality and/or short-term over long-term results, p. 593), as well as the tendency to overemphasize numbers at the expense of judgment, could jeopardize performance.

Cavalluzzo and Ittner (2004) examine some of the factors that influence the development, use, and perceived benefits of results-oriented performance measures in US government agencies. Their findings indicate that metric difficulties (due to, amongst others, ambiguous or difficult to capture goals) are negatively associated with perceived current and future benefits from the US government’s performance measurement initiatives. This

suggests that US agency managers believe that the use of PM-practices may not improve performance in situations where ambiguity of objectives is high. Although goal setting theory suggests that clear and measurable goals should be positively associated with performance, empirical evidence on this issue in the public sector is inconclusive. The main problem appears to be associated with the impact of clear and measurable goals on long-term, qualitative performance.

2.3. The Concept of RRI

The Rapid Results Approach (RRA) is a results-focused learning process aimed at jump-starting major change efforts and enhancing implementation capacity. It tackles large-scale medium and long term change efforts through a series of small-scale, results-producing and momentum-building initiatives. The premise of the Rapid-Results approach is to create a context for planning and for enhancing implementation capacity, by helping ministries work on sharply-defined initiatives that will ensure delivery of the Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS) targets. The Government's adoption of the Rapid Results Approach (RRA) as one of the tools for implementing Results Based Management in the Public Service is therefore consistent with the focus on Results, Capacity enhancement and client ownership (Obongo, 2007).

Rapid Results Approach gave forth to Rapid Results Initiatives which taps into the human desire to succeed by creating real empowerment, motivation and innovation in working towards results. It strengthens accountability and commitment for Results while enhancing implementation capacity. It helps teams set challenging yet achievable, sharply defined, measurable and visible goals, using existing resources and capacities. This results into collaboration among team members, experimentation and discovery of new ideas. A rapid results goal must therefore in its definition have the following attributes: Action; Impact variable; Scope; Measurement; Time Frame (Obongo 2007).

The initiatives are structured in 100-day cycles from agreeing on goals to achieving results, with each goal directly connected to one or more of the overall objectives of the development effort. RRI achieves systematic change through a series of small-scale, results producing and momentum-building initiatives implemented within the 100 days or

less. In doing so, it helps leaders to continually adapt and refine their overall implementation strategy based on what works and what does not work on the ground (Chene 2008)

2.4 Challenges of strategy implementation

Reed and Buckley (1988) discuss problems associated with strategy implementation identifying four key areas for discussion. They acknowledge the challenge and the need for a clear fit between strategy and structure and claim the debate about which comes first is irrelevant providing there is congruence in the context of the operating environment. They warn that, although budgeting systems are a powerful tool for communication, they have limited use in the implementation of strategies as they are dominated by monetary based measures and due to their size and the game playing associated budget setting “it is possible for the planning intent of any resource redistribution to be ignored” (Reed and Buckley, 1988, p. 68). Another problem is when management style is not appropriate for the strategy being implemented, they cite the example of the “entrepreneurial risk taker may be an ideal candidate for a strategy involving growth, but may be wholly inappropriate for retrenchment” (Reed and Buckley, 1988, p. 68). Goal setting and controls are also recognized as problematic, identifying co-ordinated targets at various levels in the organization is difficult and the need for control is heightened as uncertainty and change provide a volatile environment, a point supported by Tavakoli and Perks (2001).

2.4.1. Poor Management Control Systems in the Public Sector

Management control systems focus on the implementation of the strategies and the attainment of the goals of the organization; they attempt to assure that the organization designs effective programs and implements them efficiently (Anthony and Young, 2003, p. 4; Merchant and Van der Stede, 2003, p. 14; Merchant, 1998, p. 2). Organizations can use three forms of control: output (results) controls, action (behavioural) controls, and clan (personnel/cultural) controls (Merchant and Van der Stede, 2003; Merchant, 1998; Ouchi, 1979). Output controls involve evaluating and rewarding individuals (and sometimes groups of individuals) for generating good results, or punishing them for poor

results. Action controls try to ascertain that employees perform (or do not perform) specific actions known to be beneficial (or harmful) to the organization. Finally, clan controls help to ensure that employees will control their own behaviours or that the employees will control each others' behaviours. Amongst others, clan controls clarify expectations; they help ensure that each employee understands what the organization wants. It should be noted that these forms of control are not necessarily discrete, and elements of all three forms may be found in any one organization.

Previous literature (Pollitt, 2006; Johnsen, 2005; Merchant and Van der Stede, 2003; Modell, 2000; Merchant, 1998; Mol, 1996; Gupta et al., 1994; Hofstede, 1981; Ouchi, 1979, 1980) suggests that output controls are most useful when objectives are unambiguous, outputs are measurable, activities are repetitive and the effects of management interventions are known. If these conditions are not met, reliance on other forms of control is necessary in order to efficiently and effectively achieve the goals of the organization. In that case, the performance measures may still be useful for "exploratory purposes" (expert control, trial-and-error control, etc; see Hofstede, 1981; Burchell et al., 1980); however, excessive reliance on performance measures for incentive purposes may result in dysfunctional effects.

From a control point of view, the most difficult case in public sector organizations is when objectives are (excessively) ambiguous. To some extent, objectives are ambiguous in most public sector organizations; yet when ambiguity of objectives is excessive, it is likely that the incidence of political control also increases (i.e. the organization is more likely to depend on power structures, negotiation processes, particular interests and conflicting values; cf. Vakkuri and Meklin, 2006; Hofstede, 1981, p. 198). There may be clear political benefits (and therefore incentives) to formulate ambiguous objectives: ambiguous, unclear objectives provide politicians the opportunity to react to changes in the political environment (Hofstede, 1981, p. 194).

Ambiguous goals may also prevent budget cuts in "pet projects": if the organization does not invest in efficiency and transparency, it is not clear to other politicians whether money can be saved (De Bruijn, 2002, p. 583). Finally, ambiguous goals decrease the

extent to which politicians can be held accountable for problems and disasters: a multitude of goals provides the opportunity to compensate underperformance in one area (for example, exceeding cost budgets) by referring to overperformance in another area (for example, reduction in the number of patients waiting; Bevan and Hood, 2006; Vakkuri and Meklin, 2006; Johnsen, 2005).

2.4.2. Public sector culture

While numerous cultures and sub-cultures exist within public-sector organizations, the underlying, traditional view of public-sector organizational culture has been characterized as a system of rational rules and procedures, structured hierarchies and a formalized decision-making process, with stability and predictability as central characteristics (Perry and Rainey, 1988). Parker and Bradley (2000) argue that this description fits closely with Weber's legal-rational model, which described bureaucracy as hierarchical, rule-enforcing and constituted by members with knowledge of rules and procedures. However, there is a call for greater flexibility within the benefits system, highlighted in the report *Working Lives: The Role of Day Centres in Supporting People with Learning Disabilities into Employment* (Beyer et al., 2004), which reports that in order to meet the challenges faced there needs to be much more flexibility within the system with the proviso of operating within clear national standards.

The social values held by public-sector workers are a further particular feature of public-sector organizations. These "social values" are found to be more important to public-sector workers than they are to those employed in the private sector (Hebson et al., 2003). It is due to these values that public-sector workers continue to demonstrate high levels of commitment (Guest and Conway, 2001).

The particular values held by public-sector workers are frequently referred to as a public-sector ethos. The public-sector ethos has been described as "a principled framework for action, something that describes the general character of an organization, but which, and more importantly should also motivate those who belong to it" (Public Administration Select Committee, 2002). It is argued that this ethos is not something that is held by individuals and is more on a par with a culture – that is, a set of norms creating "logic of appropriateness" for those employed in the public sector (Prachett and Wingfield, 1996,

pp. 642, 651). The bureaucratic nature of public-sector organizations pervades the public-sector ethos and despite the attempts to end bureaucracy it still remains in evidence today, albeit in a hybrid form (Du Gay, 2005). Du Gay argues that these values should be defended as the application of business ideals to the public sector threatens the impartiality of bureaucracy. There is some debate as to whether these values are appreciated by the government. Hoggett (2005) argues that the current government is trying to reshape the ethos and impose more business-focused values – an action, the author claims that fails to appreciate the uniqueness of the public sector.

Thus the concept of public sector ethos and social values may be varied, but there is good evidence to suppose that the public sector ethos may make a positive contribution in terms of employee commitment and focus on customer needs. Despite the benefits of the public sector culture there are, however, difficulties when public-sector organizations face change, which may be perceived to challenge these values and the strong underlying bureaucratic culture.

2.4.3. Resistance to Change in the public sector

Organizational change can be viewed as a process that is a comprehensive, collaborative and planned process of solving problems. The goal is to achieve changes in assumptions and beliefs so that work content, structures and relationships within organizations can be improved (Rusaw, 2007). Resistance to change can exist at the organizational level; indeed it is argued that organizational change is inherently resisted as the organization tries to neutralize the impact of attempts at change (Kavanagh and Ashkanasy, 2006). Resistance at the organizational level can be caused by the organizational culture and reluctance to change “how we do things around here”, particularly in the bureaucratic or mechanistic cultures that predominate in the public sector.

However in addition to organizational resistance to change there is individual resistance. Individual resistance has been attributed to selective perception (that is, we see the world from our own unique perspective), habits, inconvenience or loss of freedom, economic implications (if the change is perceived to impact on pay or other rewards), and security in the past and fear of the unknown (Mullins, 2002). However there is not a uniform

individual response to organizational change. Some people respond more positively through increased job satisfaction as they respond to the chance to grow and learn, while others may react negatively to even the smallest change (Cole et al., 2006). Much of the literature focuses on individual resistance to change. The lack of enthusiasm for change can be related to the concept that any organizational change makes demands on the individual employee in terms of their psychology and physiology (Sverke et al., 2002, Grunberg et al., 2001). Hence it is hardly surprising that individuals may resist organizational change, as it is individuals who then have to meet the demands of meeting these changes. Thus there needs to be a perceived incentive if individuals are to be persuaded of the benefits of change.

Armenakis et al. (1999) and Cole et al. (2006) state that change begins at the individual level and therefore resistance or support of any organizational change is in the end individual decisions and behaviours. Thus it is imperative that there is a more person-centered investigation of organizational change (Armenakis and Bedeian, 1999).

Although all organizations face difficulties when undergoing any process of change, it is argued that change within the public sector is more challenging than change in the private sector. In particular, most models of organizational change are designed for private-sector organizations that focus on profit and enterprise goals and have frameworks that can more easily adapt to external change (Rusaw, 2007). This contrasts greatly with public-sector organizations that have legally based purposes, operate under a bureaucratic culture of rules and regulations and are focused on the customer rather than market interests. Furthermore, public-sector cultures are traditionally risk-averse (Maddock, 2002) and this can hinder change, as any change has a perceived risk. Hence, change within the public sector is arguably more challenging than making changes within the private sector.

The complexity and levels of resistance to change mean that there may be many barriers to change, with the public sector frequently presented as reluctant to change (Rochet, 2007). In the public sector, poor communication, lack of transformational leadership and lack of individual “buy in” of new initiatives have been cited as potential barriers to

change (Maddock, 2002). Resources and training can also undermine attempts to change, particularly in relation to under-staffing and under-resourcing in the areas of training and new technology (Foster and Hoggett,

1999). Similarly, Rusaw (2007) noted that training and development is inconsistent and often limited to certain groups of employees within the public sector. Therefore organizations need to reflect on the resource implications of any organizational change. These barriers are mirrored in the New Deal for Disabled People National Extension (Corden et al., 2003; Goldstone and Douglas, 2003; Beyer et al., 2004) and Building A New Deal: Local Solutions Meeting Individual Needs (Department for Work and Pensions, 2004). These reports also point to poor communication and lack of resources and training acting as barriers to the introduction of new initiatives.

2.4.4 Political influence

The constant shift in political leadership in the country has a significant impact on the amount and frequency of changes that employees face in the public sector. As political leaders attempt to meet changing political goals the achievement of sustained programmes is difficult (Rusaw, 2007), and this results in a constant introduction of new initiatives in order to support these goals. Furthermore, these ever-changing policies and work programmes can prove a barrier to change. This has been demonstrated in the Goldstone and Douglas (2003) report, which highlighted how constant change provoked uncertainty, especially when there is high labour turnover.

In response to the voting public, those in political power are reluctant to invest in initiatives that are not perceived to produce clear, short-term returns on investments (Rusaw, 2007). Maddock (2002) argues that the political desire for social change results in policy makers having an idea, designing an instant remedy “which must work like magic within a period just long enough to remember it”. This constant switch of priorities can undermine attempts to introduce new initiatives particularly when the achievement of goals are long term and do not provide an “early win” outcome (Maddock, 2002). Hence the political context within which public sector organizations operate is severely

impacted by the demands of the changing political goals. This political context places further demands upon the public sector organizations and employees to adapt quickly and easily to change. This drive for change can paradoxically result in the failure of change as too many initiatives are to be introduced too quickly and unrealistic timeframes are given to achieve the change initiative results. Thus there are many different issues that can prevent the successful implementation of any change, especially in the public sector.

2.4.5. Inadequate Resources

Strategy implementation is operational in nature and relies on a series of daily activities performed by employees at all organizational levels (Hrebiniak and Joyce, 1984; Webster, 1997). The area of human capital is the greatest constraint to any strategy implementation (Giles, 1991; Piercy, 1997a, b).

Kotler (1991, p. 71) asserts that “a department’s effectiveness depends . . . on how well its personnel are selected, trained, directed, motivated, and evaluated”. Research broaching the barriers for which implementation is wanting consistently identifies human-related factors such as inadequate training (e.g. Alexander, 1985) and low motivation (e.g. Eisenstat, 1993). Glassman and McAfee (1992, p. 52) advanced a strong argument for the study of this dyad stating that: “the major issue facing business today is how to utilize financial and personnel resources more effectively . . . as they can no longer exist as separate entities”.

Along similar lines, Piercy (1997a, p. 97) has questioned the logic of one department managing employee issues of recruitment, training and so forth (HR) while another set of people independently collect customer feedback and oversee aspects of marketing strategies concerning customer service and customer satisfaction (marketing) when an obvious and interactive link exists between these issues. He speculates tremendous benefits to be realized in synergizing the two departmental efforts.

Adverse impact has been documented regarding the inefficient allocation of financial resources by public administration and in general the many government failures in public financial management. Against this background, at least two thoughts deserve mentioning. The first is that we may be heading towards the time when the sources of

many local public revenues will be depleted. This is tied to the increased mobility of investment capital and skilled labour that has resulted from globalization. Both have the potential to relocate in search of low tax-rate jurisdictions. For years, international corporations have been known to practise this rather aggressively. Tax competition, tax evasion and tax havens have increasingly become part of our lives. If one takes this trend to its extreme, one can see a world in which too often only the immobile factors of production remain for the local tax collector (Public Administration Select Committee, 2002)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This was a case study aimed at investigating the challenges facing the implementation of Rapid Results Initiative strategy in Kenya. According to Cooper and Schindler (2003), a study concerned with finding out who, what, when, where and how of a phenomenon is a descriptive study, which is the concern of the proposed study.

3.2. Data Collection Procedure

Data was obtained from senior managers (Director General, directors and deputy directors) at National Environmental Management Authority (NEMA) because they had taken part in RRI strategy implementation within the organization and therefore they had adequate and reliable information. Further, this group formed the top management of NEMA that played a key role in the development of the Authority's five year strategic plan (2005 -2010). It is the same group that negotiates and develops NEMA's annual performance Contract that was signed between the Board of Management and the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Environment and Mineral Resources. (NEMA Human Resources Department, August 2010). The target respondents therefore provided information on how the Authority linked its strategic plan with the RRI.

Data was collected through personal interview. An interview guide (see appendix) was used to collect data from the respective management team members. With an interview guide, the respondent's feedback gave an insight to his/her feelings, background, interests and decisions and gave as much information as possible without holding back.

3.4. Data Analysis

Data was checked for completeness, accuracy, errors in responses, omissions and other inconsistencies. The data was analyzed using content analysis since this study sought to solicit for data that is qualitative in nature. A comparison of data collected with theoretical approaches and documentaries cited in the literature review was done. Further, data obtained from various managers was compared against each other in order to get more relevant on the issues under study.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and the analysis of data collected using the interview guides that were distributed to the senior managers (Director General, directors and deputy directors). The senior managers were drawn from various departments at NEMA that included: finance and administration, compliance and enforcement, environmental education information and awareness, directorate, environmental planning and research coordination as well as legal services.

4.2 Demographic Information

The researcher sought to investigate the demographic information of the respondents based on gender, ages and the departments.

4.2.1. Respondents' Gender and Ages

Data on gender of the respondents revealed that majority of the senior managers who have been in the implementation of RRI at NEMA are male while a few are female. This clearly shows that there is imbalance in the gender distribution in management positions at NEMA. The findings also revealed that majority of staff at NEMA involved in strategy implementation are aged between 46-50 years and between 36-40, while a few are between the ages of 31 and 35 years. This implies that the researcher targeted respondents with several years of experience in strategic management and who are well versed with issues pertaining to the implementation initiatives, thus they provided the right information on RRI implementation at NEMA.

4.3 Strategy Implementation at NEMA

The researcher sought to find out whether the departments at NEMA have documented strategic plans. The findings revealed that four out of six departments at NEMA have documented strategic plans, while two have no documented strategic plan. This clearly indicates that most departments at NEMA have documented strategic plans which are clearly aligned with NEMA's five year strategic plan (2005- 2010). To achieve the documented strategic plans, the departments have put in place implementation strategies

that include: compliance based research activities, dissemination of information to various departmental managers' performance appraisal system, performance contracting and carrying out inspections. The departments have also put in place various action plans so as to implement the overall strategies for NEMA, these include: entrenching the strategic activities in their performance contracts and therefore captured in the annual work plans; carrying out inspections to ensure compliance, sensitizing the staff on the strategies in order to ensure rapid implementation and annual budget votes for strategic initiatives.

The findings revealed that the main reason that made NEMA adopt RRI as an implementation strategy was due to a requirement by the GoK through the PSR & DS to identify key results areas for fast trucking. It was a requirement of all public sector organizations to ensure delivery of service to the Kenyan people in the shortest time possible using the available resources. In the same vein, NEMA enthusiastically took up this Government's initiative as a result of delayed activities from the previous quarters. The organization also aimed to ensure efficient delivery of services in order to achieve its performance contract targets and improve overall organizational performance. In regard to communication of RRI as an implementation strategy to all staff, the findings reveal that NEMA organized a three days' workshop to sensitize its senior staff on the concept of RRI and the 'Results for Kenyans programme'. Further, an official launch of the RRI goals was done where key stakeholders in the RRI process were involved. The included; the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources and his Permanent Secretary, senior officials from the PSR & DS, the NEMA Board of management, members of staff and development partners of NEMA such as the Royal Danish Embassy and the European Union. From this finding, it is clear that senior managers were well trained on RRI before implementation and there was sufficient communication to all staff members on the strategy.

The researcher sought to find out whether the senior management of NEMA was fully involved in the formulation and implementation of RRI. The findings revealed that they were fully involved and therefore they were fully equipped for its implementation. The strong buy-in that was felt towards this initiative ensured that, at an individual level, it

had their full commitment as they felt that this strategy at least was worthwhile and could improve service delivery at NEMA, and this would benefit the society as whole. However, even with a high value placed on the initiative; this change was not seen as a priority as there were too many other change initiatives in place concurrently. Some of these other change initiatives included; introduction of results based management which involved the implementation of the revised staff performance appraisal tool popularly known as GP 2006 and Training of staff on performance Contracting; formulation of various committees to enhance efficiency namely, the tender Committee, Procurement Committee, the HIV/AIDS control units as well as corruption prevention and awareness committee.

The researcher sought to investigate whether the RRI goal was achieved by various departments at NEMA within the stipulated 100 days. Each department had at least one RRI goal also known as thematic area. In total, there were seven key RRI goals for various departments namely; enhanced inspection of projects; enhanced environmental awareness; enhanced financial processes; rehabilitation of degraded sites; improved office accommodation; disposal of idle assets and improved registry records management. Seventeen out of twenty respondents indicated that their departments managed to achieve the RRI goal within the stipulated 100 days with the remaining three respondents indicating that their departments were unable to achieve RRI goal within the stipulated period. Some five respondents attributed the inability to achieve the set goals in time to; poor communication within the organization, poor planning and lack of support from the management. Twelve respondents cited inadequate finances and lack of adequate staff and lengthy procurement procedures; while three blamed this to lack of adequate training and understanding of the RRI thematic areas. The findings further revealed that that NEMA was able to deliver on four out of seven RRI goals within the stipulated 100 days, namely; enhanced inspection of projects; enhanced environmental awareness; rehabilitation of degraded sites and improved registry records management. Three RRI goals were achieved though not within the stipulated 100 days. These were; enhanced financial processes; improved office accommodation and disposal of idle assets.

4.4. Challenges of strategy implementation at NEMA

Tools of strategy implementation often face a wide range of challenges which if not identified and addressed in good time, could result in poor or low delivery of targeted achievements. The major objective of this study was to investigate the challenges facing the implementation of RRI strategy at NEMA. From the findings, a number of challenges faced the implementation of the RRI strategy namely; Management control system, resistance to change, political influence, public sector culture as well as inadequate resources. The challenges are discussed in detail below.

4.4.1. Management control System

Management control systems focus on the implementation of the strategies and attainment of goals of an organization. The findings of the study revealed that NEMA has not put in place proper management control systems in key areas such as output (results), action (behavioral) and clan (personnel/cultural) to ensure the effective implementation of RRI. This has made the goals and objectives of this initiative appear ambiguous to some of the staff involved in its implementation. Lack of management control system within the organization has contributed to lack of accountability, efficiency and transparency. For instance, the Authority does not have a monitoring and evaluation mechanism that would put RRI on the path of continuous improvement neither does it have an enforcement mechanism that would ensure compliance with RRI work plans. Output controls involve evaluating and rewarding individuals (and sometimes groups of individuals) for generating good results, or punishing them for poor results. Action controls try to ascertain that employees perform (or do not perform) specific actions known to be beneficial (or harmful) to the organization.

4.4.2. Resistance to change

Most of the interviewees indicated that the staff have frequently faced change in their working environment as a result of the implementation of RRI. The changing environment at NEMA as a result of RRI implementation is something that the staff have accepted as a part of their working life. However, the pace of change presently is considerably faster. While there is acceptance that change is inevitable there are differences in attitudes towards it. This indicates that change is positive and is 'embraced'. However, other staff members held a more negative response. Thus if change is properly managed at NEMA, it can be perceived as a positive development. Perhaps more importantly it needs to be seen as having benefits and driving the organization in an appropriate direction. If it is believed that change is for the betterment of all and given time to establish itself it is less likely to be resisted. This study revealed no strong evidence that the employees are resistant to this initiative per se. However, there is evidence that they have undergone so much change that is perceived to be unsuccessful and to suit political aims that they have become more passively resistant. Hence they do not reject the change but are reluctant to offer their full investment in terms of participating in this change initiative.

4.4.3. Political influence

The importance of the political context was also emphasized as employees felt that the change as a result of RRI implementation is unnecessary and is merely in response to a political fad. Some of the staff felt that they are merely pawns in a political game, a negative attitude towards this change was thus noted. The political posturing as it is perceived by these staff has resulted in feelings of scepticism as they see the new initiative as a temporary introduction and this will be replaced by the new improved version later. Thus the staff feel that there are strong political influences behind the nature of change (often in the form of an initiative) and the speed with which change is supposed to be enacted and completed. Crucially the political drivers that push the constant introduction of new programmes undermine new initiatives when they are introduced, even when they have the support of those who are involved in the

implementation. Furthermore, as this initiative was politically driven this also meant that the programme was designed at the periphery of the organization, at a senior level. A lack of involvement at the outset of junior members of the organization makes it more difficult for the change to succeed.

The findings suggest that while the respondents do support RRI, this can be somewhat undermined as it is one of many, and so they found it difficult to dedicate themselves to it completely. Crucially the political drivers that push the constant introduction of new programmes undermine new initiatives when they are introduced, even when they have the support of those who are involved in the implementation.

4.4.4. Public Sector Culture

Public sector culture is characterized by rational rules and procedures, structured hierarchies and formalized decision making. The findings of this study revealed that the public sector culture is a major challenge for effective implementation of strategies within NEMA. The public sector culture has a major impact when an organization is facing change especially during the implementation of a new strategy such as RRI for the case of NEMA. The social values held by public-sector workers are a further particular feature of public-sector organizations. These “social values” were found to be more important to the staff public sector organizations such as NEMA than they are to those employed in the private sector. It is due to these values that public-sector workers continue to demonstrate high levels of commitment to strategic initiatives such as RRI.

The particular values held by staff in public-sector organizations are frequently referred to as a public-sector ethos. The public-sector ethos has been described as “a principled framework for action, something that describes the general character of an organization, but which, and more importantly should also motivate those who belong to it”. The findings of this study reveal that the ethos is not something that is held by individuals and is more on a par with a culture – that is, a set of norms creating a “logic of appropriateness” for those employed in the public sector. NEMA seems to be a victim of the bureaucratic nature of public-sector organizations which pervades the public-sector

ethos and despite the attempts to end bureaucracy it still remains in evidence today, albeit in a hybrid form. For instance, the disposal of idle assets was not done within the stipulated 100 days mainly due to the lengthy procedures that involved the office of the Director General, the Permanent Secretary of the parent ministry, the ministry of public works as well as the ministry of finance. In light of these findings, values should be defended as the application of bureaucratic business practices in the public sector threatens efficiency, accountability and service delivery. In addition, though there are benefits of the public sector culture, there are difficulties when public-sector organizations face change, which may be perceived to challenge these values and the strong underlying bureaucratic culture. The study found the same challenge very well applicable to NEMA.

4.4.5. Inadequate Resources

The researcher sought to establish the adequacy of the resources committed towards the implementation of RRI strategy at NEMA. Resources such as financial as well as human are a critical impetus to the success of any strategy implementation. The findings established that NEMA did not put in place adequate resources to enable the departments meet their strategic RRI goals. This is attributed to inadequate funds allocated for the implementation of the RRI by the organization and this has hindered the effective implementation of the strategy. Further, the same staff that were involved in the implementation of RRI were the same ones undertaking day to day administrative and technical functions of their departments. This meant that the few staff available were overstretched and therefore, unable to deliver some of the goals in time. Some eighteen respondents felt that not enough resources were committed towards RRI strategy implementation.

4.5 Suggestions by the respondents on solutions to strategy implementation challenges at NEMA

The researcher sought to find out from the respondents the solutions to address the problems of strategy implementation at NEMA and from the findings of the study, the respondents suggested the following as appropriate solutions: Provision of enough resources and finances, employment of adequate staff and creating a democratic kind of leadership within the organization to ensure equality among the staff. The challenge facing strategy implementation within NEMA the inability of departments to redefine and redevelop the competencies which because of public ownership confer an advantage either in terms of efficiency or effectiveness over the private sector. The departments have not ditched those activities and skills which, while important in the past, do not confer an advantage in the future or which while still valuable and valued do not require public ownership (but perhaps public subsidies) for the achievement of this advantage; so too is the acquisition or renewal of skills and knowledge needed for the core that remains after redefinition of the scope and nature of strategies.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

5.1. Summary of findings

The objective of the study was to determine the challenges facing the implementation of Rapid Results Initiatives at NEMA. The study employed a descriptive research design. The target consisted of 20 directors (Director General, directors and deputy directors) at NEMA. The researcher employed self administered interview guide to gather data and information for the study. Findings and observations revealed that;

Various departments at NEMA have documented strategic plans which are aligned with the overall strategic plans for NEMA and to achieve the documented objectives the organization conducts compliance based research activities; dissemination of information to respective departments; and mainstreaming research findings among the government led offices. The action plans put in place by departments at NEMA to implement the overall strategies for NEMA include: entrenching the strategic activities in their performance contracts and therefore captured in the annual work plans; carrying out inspections to ensure compliance, sensitizing the staff on the strategies in order to ensure rapid implementation and annual budget votes for strategic initiatives.

NEMA adopted RRI as an implementation strategy for its key targets for year 2007/2008 as a result of delayed activities from the previous quarters and to improve service delivery as well as achieve the set targets. However, as a state corporation, NEMA had no option but to embrace RRI since it was a directive from the government. Therefore, the main reason for NEMA's adoption of RRI was to implement a government initiative. There was adequate communication of RRI as a strategy to all staff in departments that form NEMA. This was done through a series of sensitization of NEMA senior staff were conducted by officials from PSR&DC and during the official launch of the RRI by the Chairperson of the Board of Management, which brought together, all members of staff. The senior management staff of NEMA were fully involved in the adoption and implementation of RRI. Indeed strategic leaders for various RRI goals were heads of

departments, the director, finance and administration was the results leader, the Director general was the sponsor while the chairperson of the board of management was the RRI political leader.

The challenges the departments faced when implementing RRI goals included: resistance to change which led to lack of cooperation from staff since they were used to the old system; inadequate funds to support the strategy; poor strategic planning; inadequate staff and resources and poor coordination between the departments. Overall, staff at NEMA feel that RRI goals were achieved and the strategy was exciting. Indeed, most of them attribute the rehabilitation of kwangesu sand harvesting site in makueni district as a product of RRI. Also, majority of staff at NEMA enjoy more spacious prefabricated offices and modern furniture thanks to the accomplishment of enhanced office accommodation which was an RRI goal.

5.2. Conclusion

The findings demonstrate how public sector employees in this study frequently face change and this is now a part of their organizational culture and an expected feature of their working life. Despite this broad acceptance of change, there are suggestions that currently the pace of change is too rapid and the lack of stability adds further difficulty when a new initiative like RRI is implemented. It is important that those who are implementing a new initiative view the change as positive and “buy-in” to the proposed change. In this case study the interviewees believed that it should help those who require their support and felt that it was important to them personally, demonstrating a strong empathy with the public-sector ethos.

There is at times a sense of resentment that the policy makers who are constantly time, effort and resources that are required to meet these changes. Any change involves an increase in both psychological and physiological effort on the part of the individual, and this is strongly reflected in this study. Therefore it is necessary that where any change is evident steps need to be taken to evaluate the extra workload this may create. The interviewees suggest that the policy makers are unaware or unconcerned of these efforts

and expect any new scheme to be implemented quickly and easily. This of course is not the experience of those on the ground who interface with the new initiatives.

Furthermore, as this initiative was politically driven this also meant that the programme was designed at the periphery of the organization, at a senior level. A lack of involvement at the outset of junior members of the organization makes it more difficult for a strategy to succeed. The unintended consequence of frequent switching of initiatives hindering attempts to introduce further new initiatives. Cynicism is exacerbated when public sector employees await the “bigger, better, new and improved version” which they believe will quickly replace the one with which they are currently involved. The drive to have numerous, changing initiatives can be related to the changing political goals of those in power. To support these goals there is a constant introduction of new initiatives, and it is this political agenda that encourages the pervading cynicism. The politicized agendas in evidence are having an impact on the reshaping of public services generally.

Previous experience of strategy implementation may act as a barrier, and in the experience of employees initiatives are here today and gone tomorrow, so even when they do believe in something it is difficult to become too invested. Employees believe initiatives will soon be cancelled for the never-ending cycle of new and improved versions. Although much research indicates that often there is resistance to change, this study has found no strong evidence that the employees are resistant to this initiative per se. However, there is evidence that they have undergone so much change that is perceived to be unsuccessful and/or to suit political aims that they have become more passively resistant. Hence they do not reject the change but are reluctant to offer their full investment in terms of participating in this change initiative. This supports the notion that for change to occur the individual is at the centre: if they do not actively make the decisions and behaviours necessary to initiate change then it will not be successful. In this case although the employees were supportive of the initiative and its goal, they felt that they were unable and/or unwilling to invest their time and effort into an initiative that is politically based and temporal in nature.

The focus on early-win, quick fix solutions to complex problems was found to be evident in this study. Here the interviewees suggested that there is too much focus on quick results and this, they argue, is not achievable, particularly when dealing with a complex strategy. They state that achieving change is a long and arduous process and results are achieved in the long term and therefore any change needs to allow time for these outcomes and any fixes are certainly not “quick”. This conflicts with the political context in which they operate, whereby those in political power want initiatives to produce clear, short-term outcomes which can be demonstrated to the voting public as producing a positive return on investment. Hence the political focus on short-term outcomes and quick fixes is incompatible with initiatives that need considerable time and investment to produce positive outcomes.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that NEMA successfully implemented the Rapid Results Initiatives despite the various challenges. Service organizations such as NEMA are facing new competitive and environmental realities. While the organization responded to these changes by implementing result based initiatives, this is not the case for most organizations. For public sector organizations that have implemented the strategic initiatives, the extent of effectiveness tend to vary in relation to both the management of the organizations and the type of initiative implemented. However, operational and strategic outcomes due to the implementation of these initiatives in general, always vary across different public organizations. The willingness of public organizations to implement initiatives aimed at improving service quality is critical toward improved service delivery, in an increasingly competitive service operational environment.

5.3 Recommendations

RRI creates temporary governing structures for the implementation of identified thematic areas within a period of 100 days. The tendency has been for the institutions to work towards achieving desired results after which they relax. This negates the subsequent requirement for momentum building and scaling up. The PSR & PC should ensure that

the government institutions form management units and reform units to adopt and institutionalize RRI for sustained service delivery to the public.

The government agencies such as NEMA should consider constituting RRI units to steer reforms in their operations instead of the temporary governing structures which stand dissolved at the expiry of 100 days. The officers assigned this work should be exempted from other demanding duties within the organization. These same units should be facilitated to cascade RRI programs to the field offices where applicable so that they also become part of the whole process.

The study recommends that the Government should enact laws to provide legal and institutional frame work for PSR & PC to play a supervisory role over the government agencies implementing RRI programs to ensure that RBM guidelines are followed. NEMA should be strengthened and capacity built to effectively monitor and evaluate its RRI programs. This will be a departure from the current system where they train a few officers from various departments and expect them to champion the implementation process of RRI.

5.4. Recommendations for future Research

Future research aimed at understanding the effective implementation of strategic initiatives in different service operational settings should be done. With the specific environmental, strategic and operational realities and challenges faced by public sector organizations' managers during the implementation strategies, a study that specifically attempts to shed some light on the role of effective implementation of strategic initiatives in addressing the operational, environmental and strategic challenges faced by the managers of these organization should also be done..

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APENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview Guide

Introduction

This questionnaire is designed to gather information on challenges facing Rapid Results Initiative strategy implementation for an academic research work. Your response will be accorded strict confidentiality. Please respond to the questions honestly by ticking the most appropriate responses. For structured questions, use the spaces provided.

SECTION A: Demographic information.

1. Gender:

☐ Male ☐ Female

2. Age:

☐ 18-24 ☐ 25-30

☐ 31-35 ☐ 36-40

☐ 41-45 ☐ 46-50

☐ 50 and above

3. Department

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Section

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SECTION B: Strategy Implementation and Challenges

1. Do you have a documented strategic plan for your department?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. To achieve the documented objective, what implementation strategies have you put in place?

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3. As a department, what specific action plans do you put in place so as to implement the overall strategies for NEMA?

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4. Why did NEMA adopt RRI as an implementation strategy of its key targets for year 2007/200?

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5. Was there adequate communication of RRI as a strategy to all staff in your department?

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6. As a department, what challenges did you face when implementing RRI goals?

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7. Was the senior management of NEMA fully involved in the formulation and implementation of RRI goals?

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8. Do you find the resource allocated to your department adequate to deliver on the RRI goals?

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9. In your opinion, did your team achieve the RRI goal within the stipulated 100 days

☐ Yes ☐ No (Please Explain)

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10. How do you think the problems associated with strategy implementation at NEMA can be addressed? (Please explain)

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Thank you for your co-operation.