DETERMINANTS OF SUCCESS IN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION PROJECTS IN KENYA: A STUDY OF PROJECT MANAGERS' PERCEPTIONS

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university

Signed .... Date 25th November 2006

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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as University supervisor

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DEDICATION

To my father Mr. William Khakina

&

My mother Beatrice

For their patience and encouragement during the long period of this research.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BINGOS – Big International NGOs

CAFOD – Catholic Fund for Overseas Development

CBA – Cost-Benefit Analysis

CBOS – Commercial Business Organizations

EC – European Community

HQ – Headquarters

INGOS – International NGOs

JFS – Joint Funding Scheme

LFA – Logical Framework Analysis

NGO – Non-Governmental Organization

NNGOS – Northern NGOs

ODA – Overseas Development Administration

PRA – Participatory Rural Appraisal

SCF – Save the Children Fund

SNGOS – Southern NGOs

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

UNDP – United Nations Development Program

USAID – United States Agency for International Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

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ABSTRACT

The modern business environment characterized by cutthroat competition requires innovative organizations. Modern management theory recognizes the project approach as imperative in dealing with an uncertain environment (Charlie and Christie, 1992).

The number of NGOs operating in Kenya continues to increase during the 1980s and 1990s. Likewise, the role NGOs are playing in development has also continued to increase during the same period. At the same time, donors have shifted their funding channels with funding to NGOs increasing while that of state has been declining. It is against this background that this study set out to establish determinants of success in NGO projects in Kenya.

The objective of this study was to establish factors that are critical to the success of NGO projects in Kenya, establish key tools used at both the planning and implementation stages of the projects and establish risks inherent in the management of these projects.

The population of this study comprised of all the NGOs registered and having their headquarters in Nairobi. This is because Nairobi is the social, economic and political center of Kenya and majority of these NGOs have their headquarters there. This was according to the NGO Co-ordination Board Directory (2003). The factors being studied did not vary substantially by region across the country (Mahururu, 2003).

To constitute the population were 470 NGOs with headquarters in Nairobi. The NGO Co-ordination Board directory provided details of these NGOs' names, registration number,

postal and physical address, telephone numbers, contact persons, sector(s) and area of operation.

The study found out that projects were central in delivering NGO aims, but still projects failed in Kenyan NGOs. Evaluation of the NGOs was present and highly valued but there was need to involve all the stakeholders in designing of the evaluation criteria to make it comfortable to all levels of management and staff. Bottom Up planning is to be encouraged in order to reduce the risks inherent in projects and encourage participation

The factors critical to success of NGO projects in Kenya were: need for project management skills; need for participatory evaluation and beneficiary participation; Political aspects especially strengthening of civil society, policy advocacy and compatibility between political and operational aspects of projects and concern for project risks at the planning stage.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The modern business environment characterized by cutthroat competition requires innovative organizations. Modern management theory recognizes the project approach as imperative in dealing with an uncertain environment (Charlie and Christie, 1992). Large projects at national and local level are used to deliver services to the local population. Project management skills are thus used to marshal resources to a desired objective by the stated time (Charlton and May, 1995). From a financial and strategic perspective, projects are very important since they involve large capital outlays. Capital expenditure decisions are thus the largest and most important ones taken by organizations (Chandra, 1995).

Riddell and Roger (1996) put it that in recent years the majority of NGOs have moved to tighten up their project management procedures, to make them more rigorous and formal. The majority of those surveyed now uses a log frame analysis approach (LFA), or has a set of guidelines that follow a similar format and set of questions as LFA. Other evaluation tools used include the Cost Benefit Analysis, Participatory Approach and the Project Risk Analysis.

In many third world countries, Non Governmental Organizations through projects are playing a big role in development in addition to the government, thus indicating the importance of project management skills (Kilbride, 1996). Mabururu (2003) concluded that the number of NGOs operating in Kenya continued to increase during the 1980s and 1990s. The role NGOs were playing in development had also continued to increase during the same period. At the same time, donors had shifted their funding channels with funding to NGOs increasing while that of state had been declining.

Wallace (1997) observed that there had been a significant increase in aid channeled through UK NGOs by official donors over the decade. According to its report in 1992 and 1995, the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the British government spent £33,630,000 on NGOs in 1987/8; by 1994/5 this had increased to £161,773,000. Over 50 per cent of these budgets were spent on emergencies rather than development, but funding for development work has increased from around £14 million to almost £77 million in the same period.

Currently it is fashionable to dismiss NGO project work as quantitatively rather than qualitatively significant; a view based on the assumption that the sector's overall impact on the development of Africa to date has been significantly less than the sum of its parts-- although these 'parts' are, it must be emphasized, are of considerable importance in themselves (Schon and Donald, 1991).

Estimates for the mid-1990s according to Chambers and Robert (1993), suggested the existence at that time of 12 000 separate NGO projects in Africa and 30 000 in Asia, with beneficiary estimates for roughly this period involving 25 million in Latin America, 12 million in Africa and 60 million in Asia, based on the assumption that 10,000 can benefit from one project in Latin America, thousands in Africa and hundreds of thousands in Asia, because of different population densities.

Although Fisher (2004) rightly points out that such estimates of beneficiary numbers are possibly even more arbitrary than estimates of the numbers of NGOs operating in the Third World, more detailed figures for individual countries suggest that available overall estimates are not wildly inaccurate. For example, he cites a study of 261 Guatemalan NGOs that revealed they were delivering or involved with a total of 1200 regional programmes, and that these organizations were claiming that the numbers of beneficiaries reached by their projects ranged from 200 upwards but averaged 38000. In turn, these figures suggest that Guatemala's roughly 400 NGOs provide services to over 5 million people, out of a total population of just fewer than 10 million people. Extrapolating directly from these figures, without allowing for variable population densities across the regions of the Third World, he suggested that 30 000 African NGOs are providing services to 375 million people.

In Kenya, the numbers of NGOs have grown steadily since the 1970s. By late 1970s, there were about 120 NGOs in the country registered with the Kenya National Council of Social services, the department that was responsible for registration of voluntary development organizations at the time. By 1988, the number had grown to about 288 NGOs. Estimates for the early 1990s stood at about 400 NGOs (Fowler, 1994). The NGO Co-ordination Board directory of 1996 had a total of 672 registered. In 2003 there were 750 according to the same records.

Networks, coalitions and umbrella organizations notwithstanding, are some of the greatest practical problems facing NGOs today. There are hundreds of look-alike organizations spawned more by ego than goodwill, and maintained more by charity than by clarity of purpose. "Fragmentation is the amateur's friend, a haven for wheel inventors; it is the enemy of learning " (Smillie, 1995: 240).

Evaluation is widely acknowledged to be a weak area for NGOs: very few NGOs, big or small, have a portfolio of representative evaluations of past projects, which they place in the public domain (ODA, 1995). It is becoming increasingly important for NGOs as donors start to question whether they are as effective in reaching the poor, keeping costs down, promoting participation, and achieving results as they have claimed in the past (Maburuту, 2003). Proving their worth becomes critical in a competitive funding market so this approach to evaluation is closely associated with the need to show donors and others how money has been used, to demonstrate what has been achieved. In an attempt to meet these demands for proof of effectiveness there has been a push to increase the level of evaluation.

1.1.1 Definitions

Project

The fundamental distinguishing feature of projects is that they have a definite start and end. A project is a one, short, time limited; goal directed major undertaking requiring the commitment of varied skills and resources. Basically it is a scheme of something to be done or an undertaking. (Chandra, 1995). Within organizations projects come in many forms e.g. creative projects, rulebook projects, team projects, and task projects, which require different management and leadership skills. (Fowler, 1988)

A project is further defined as the control of resources, then project management may be defined as the control of resources, both human and non-human in a temporary arrangement to achieve project objectives (Rondanelli, 1993).

Projectisation is the direction of aid to developing countries towards a specific project without regard to wider issues or needs. (Chambers Concise Dictionary, 1993).

Non-Governmental Organization

Moyo (2000) defines Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) as organizations that receive funds from donors to implement projects and do not make profit or pay dividends. This definition exclude other not for profit organizations such as religious organizations, hospitals and schools among others.

Ng'ethe (1991) defines NGOs as those organizations that do not provide goods and services in exchange for profit. These organizations range from community based organizations to other not for profit organizations and have varied missions.

An NGO can be therefore defined in this paper as a Not for profit organization that marshals its resources from donors to achieve specific goals.

1.2 Problem Statement.

There are many NGOs in Kenya, ranging from small ones in slums to large nationwide NGOs. We also have a wide presence of International NGOs with operations in the country (Mabururu, 2003). The precise figure on NGO resources in Kenya are difficult to obtain because of inadequate records and generally unsystematised knowledge of NGO activities. Mabururu (2003) estimated that the NGOs in Kenya contribute between US$ 150 million and US$ 200 million annually.

Despite all the resources they control, Riddell and Roger (1996) reported that 40% of all NGO projects fail in East Africa (Kenya Included). According to Matta and Ashkenas (2003), these projects, whether major installations, post merger integrations or new growth strategies, fail at an increasing rate of 5%. These efforts consume tremendous resources over months or even years. Yet as study after study (ODI, 1996) has shown, they frequently deliver disappointing returns. And the toll they take is not just financial. These failures demoralize employees who have labored diligently to complete their share of the work. In recent years, as more money has been pumped through the NGO sector, more questions have been asked by donors, the Treasury, and trustees in many agencies about how this money has been used. Has the money achieved its purpose?

There has been a scarcity empirical studies on project management with a focus on NGOs in Kenya. Most researchers on project management have focused on projects in both the private and public sectors. Chybire (1974), did a study on problems of estimating the cost and benefits of a road project while Odock (2003) focused on an investigation of social cost benefit analysis practice in the appraisal of public development projects in Kenya. Business failure studies were studied in the1990s. Keige (1991) researched on business failure prediction using discriminate analysis, while Garashi (1999) worked on the determination of factors influencing project delays in the ministry of water projects. More recent studies have been on strategic management of NGOs with Bwibo (2000) focusing on a survey of strategic change management practices within NGOs in Kenya. Mabururu (2003) studied factors influencing the formation and operation of NGOs in Kenya. It is from this information gap that the research seeks to answer the questions.

When a promising NGO project doesn't deliver, is the problem really the idea or how it was carried out? Ultimately, by seeking the perceptions of project managers, the question this research seeks to answer is whether there is a way to design NGO projects that guard against unnecessary failure?

1.3 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

(i) To establish factors that are critical to the success of projects undertaken by Non Governmental Organizations in Kenya.

(ii) To establish the key tools, used in the planning and implementation of NGO projects in Kenya.

(iii) To establish risks inherent in the management of NGO projects in Kenya.

1.4 Importance of Study

NGOs have played a significant role in the development of Kenya and Africa as a whole. The results of this study will inform a number of stakeholders including:

(i) Donors and NGOs to enlighten them on what factors are important for the success of projects in Kenya. They will also develop a better understanding of the environment within which they are providing funding to NGOs. To chart the way forward for development of the sector in relation to changing donor support, the Government will also be aided in policy formulation.

(ii) Managers of Non Governmental Organizations will use the finding of the study to develop effective strategies for their organizations.

(iii) To researchers, the results of this study will add to the literature on NGOs in the area of project management in Kenya available.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Emergence of NGOs in East Africa

The number of NGOs worldwide has been growing rapidly in recent years. At the international level, the number has risen from just over 1000 in the late 1950s to 29000 in the early 1990s (Thomas & Allen, 2000).

According to Rondanelli (1993), most aid agencies are the children of disasters. Unbearable images of suffering and death made someone say: something must be done! And they collected money and rushed off to help; blankets, food, bandages, whatever. Afterwards many used the funds and commitment to rebuild the lives of the victims, and to try to make sure disaster did not strike again. Thus were born Oxfam and Save the Children, Care, Christian Aid, Medecins sans Frontieres and some thousands of other organizations. Human disasters remain the main sales aid of NGOs: a logo glimpsed on television in a disaster zone is worth thousands in donations. From the Ethiopian famine of 1984 through Cambodia, Mozambique, Armenia, Somalia, the Kurds, Haiti and Bosnia, aid agencies grew rapidly until the genocide and then mass exodus from Rwanda a few years ago. Since then, there has been no well-televised disaster, and aid agencies are feeling the pinch. Some are cutting back their work by 10% or more and laying off staff.

In Kenya, the numbers of NGOs have grown steadily since the 1970s. By late 170s, there were about 120 NGOs in the country registered with the Kenya National Council of Social services, the department that was responsible for registration of voluntary development organizations at the time. By 1988, the number had grown to about 288 NGOs. Estimates for the early 1990s stood at about 400 NGOs (Fowler, 1994). The NGO Co-ordination Board directory of 1996 had a total of 672 registered.

The precise figure on NGO resources in Kenya are difficult to obtain because of inadequate records and generally unsystematised knowledge of NGO activities. Mahururu (2003) estimated that, the NGOs contribute between US$ 150 million and US$ 200 million annually. Fowler (1989) shows that, budgetary figures for about 100 NGOs operating in Kenya were close to US$ 72 million or above US$ 228 million for the entire 400 NGOs operating in the country, assuming the same size and activity. From the returns made by NGOs to the NGO co-ordinating bureau, the volume of NGO financial contributions is estimated at about Kshs 250 billion for the period1990 and 2000.

2.1.1 The Problem of Shifting Responsibilities

Wallace (1997) points out that, In Somalia, Rwanda and Liberia there was little sign that government would be restored. Even where there had been no disaster, NGOs were being sucked into responsibilities that they were not designed for. They were used to run local development projects. National programs--dam building, agricultural schemes, health and education projects which were formerly done by governments, with aid from other governments. He further comments that, when national governments began to fail, or realized they could not deliver many of the services they promised, aid agencies were drawn into the vacuum.

Most NGOs are now shrinking and deciding where they go next: some want to return to basic development projects, others are happy to fulfill a more imperial role, managing the rule-less zones. All wait (though, of course, do not hope) for another disaster. If none comes, the smaller, specialist agencies may survive. But, as among companies, mergers, or even liquidation, may be on the cards. (Moyo, Makumbe and Raftopoulos, 2000)

2.2 Changes in NGO Project Management

Riddell and Roger (1996) put it that, in recent years the majority of NGOs have moved to tighten up their project management procedures, to make them more rigorous and formal. The majority of those surveyed now uses a logframe analysis approach (LFA), or has a set of guidelines that follow a similar format and set of questions as LFA. Many have introduced these new frameworks within the past three to five years. When the Joint Funding Scheme (JFS) of the ODA first ran a seminar on LFA in 1989 most of the participants, including the social development advisors to the JFS did not know what this was or did not know how to use it. Today almost all NGO project and program planners and fund raisers are familiar with logframes, or the principles and key elements of LFA. Their use when applying for funds from certain parts of ODA or EC is obligatory.

2.2.1 LFA and Project Monitoring

The logical framework to which these initials apply is with reference to Chandra (1995), a method which relates 'objectively verifiable indicators' of achievement, means of verification and underlying assumptions to certain major components of a project - its goal, its purpose, its inputs and outputs in a neat tabular form (see Figure 1 below) in which no statement is longer than a short paragraph. It claims to allow complex projects to be summarized on one or two sheets of paper. Clear links to the preceding strategic plan may be shown; the framework for subsequent monitoring and evaluation is mapped out.

Figure 1: Log-frame Analysis

I LOG FRAME			
PROJECT TITLE DURATION FROM TO	DATE PREPARED		
NARRATIVE SUMMARY	OBJECTIVELY VERIFIABLE INDICATORS	MEANS OF VARIATION	IMPORTANT ASSUMPTIONS
Overall Goal			
Project Purpose			
Outputs			
Activities			

Source: Borton, J, Recent trends in the international relief system, chapter 17, page 192.

A different motivation for evaluation work, with reference to Charlie and Christie (1992) is related to the perceived need for those working on development projects to learn from experience in order to change ongoing or future work. This approach comes from an understanding of development as a largely unknown area, difficult and risky, where monitoring and evaluation are essential tools for understanding and learning, for extending and promoting participation, for making changes, and for drawing out lessons. They talk within this paradigm, of the strategic value of acknowledging failure and learning from mistakes, not hiding or ignoring them.

Some agencies have focused at least some of their monitoring and evaluation work on a learning approach based in the field, defining the beneficiaries as the most important interest group in the evaluation. Here the staff and beneficiaries working on the project in the field develop questions; participatory methods are often used. Many staff within agencies feels that ongoing monitoring by the staff, partners and beneficiaries may be more useful and important in the development of the project, than external evaluations at the end. (Rondanelli, 1993)

2.2.2 Project Planning Tools in Action

Four of the agencies which used this approach in the 1980s, according to Borton (1993) used it in a 'blueprint' way and recently they have moved to modify this to a more process approach in order to incorporate more local participation, accommodate regional variation and difference within their project planning documents. However, three of these agencies, Plan International, Actionaid, and World Vision continue to operate within a culture of management information systems, quantitative indicators and the use of clearly defined aims, objectives, inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact. World Vision (UK) say that, because many of their offices in the south relate to organizations such as USAID and European agencies where 'blueprint planning' and 'off the shelf' projects are the norm, their staff find being asked to implement a more process approach problematic.

Hulme and Edwards (1995) observed that, SOS Sahel introduced Action Research in the field in 1990, as an antidote to the blueprint approach; and they are certainly moving away from their technical approach to planning large scale environmental projects into a 'learning approach' with a stress on participation and developing the project over time, devolving major decisions about the project to the staff on the ground. "Birdlife" has also moved from a highly technical approach to conservation to a much more people and process led one, with a clear preference at least for a substantial learning process before any project is formulated. The difficulty they both say they are encountering is to get funding for the initial learning period.

Riddel and Roger (1996) wrote that, there were some other exceptions to the widespread adoption of logframes or related planning tools in the older, more established, and larger agencies, which work through partners, and some small agencies, which have no established planning and management tools. Among the older agencies working through local NGOs and CBOs, the Catholic Fund for Overseas Development (CAFOD) is a good example: all project material is provided by southern partners to CAFOD staff in the way they find most appropriate. CAFOD project staff then present it to Committees under a set of compulsory headings such as aims and objectives, project description, report on progress and budgets.

2.3 Project Risk Measurement and Failures

According to Mata and Ashkenas (2003), traditional approach to project management shifts the projects teams' focus away from the end result toward developing recommendations, new technologies and partial solutions. The intent of course is to piece these together into a blueprint that will achieve the ultimate goal, but when a project involves many people working over an extended period of time, it is very hard for managers planning it to predict all the activities and work streams that will be needed. Unless the end product is very well understood, as it is in highly technical engineering projects, such as building an airplane, it's almost inevitable that some things will be left off the plan. And even if all the right activities have been anticipated, they may turn out to be difficult or even impossible, to knit together once they are completed.

They further observe that managers use project plans, time lines and budgets to reduce what we call "execution risk" – the risk that designated activities wont be carried out properly – but they inevitably neglect those two other critical risks – the white "space risk" that some required activities wont be identified in advance leaving gaps in the project plan, and the "integration risk" that the disparate activities wont come together at the end. So project teams can execute their tasks flawlessly, on time and under budget and yet the overall project may still fail to deliver the intended results.

2.3.1 Rapid Results Teams

By designing complex projects differently, Matta and Ashkenas (2003) stated that, managers could reduce the likelihood that the critical activities will be left off the plan and increase the odds that all the pieces can be properly integrated at the end. The key is to inject into the overall plan a series of miniprojects – what we call rapid results initiatives – each staffed with a team responsible for a version of the hoped for overall result in miniature and each designed to deliver its results quickly. These teams differ from traditional implementation teams in three fundamental ways. Rather than being partial, horizontal, and long term, they were results oriented, vertical and fast.

They further observed that the results orientation is important for three reasons. First, it allows project planners to test whether the activities in the overall plan will add up to the intended result and to alter the plans if need be. Second it produces real benefits in the short term. And finally being able to deliver results in more rewarding and energizing for teams than plodding along through partial solutions. The focus on results also distinguishes rapid results initiatives from pilot projects, which are used in traditionally managed initiatives only to reduce execution risk. Pilots are typically designed to test a preconceived solution and to work out implementation details before rollout. Rapid results initiatives are, by contrast are aimed squarely at reducing white space and integration risk.

2.3.2 Organizational Aspects of Rapid Results

Vivian's (1994) eminently suggested that, if NGOs were expected to experiment--and at times to fail--rather than to solve problems with simple "magic bullets", they would be much more effective, and could contribute much further to an understanding of development problems and their solutions. In this way, the claims to firmer donor support for NGO project experiments that Vivian (1994) advances can be provided with an additional justification, as long as these 'experiments', including the 'failures', are truly 'honest' ones, and, therefore, serve further to confirm mass perceptions of the growing probity of policy implementation processes. From this perspective it should not seem quite so curious that the Zimbabwean NGO invited by an external donor to submit a funding proposal . . .to "strengthen civil society" was asked to propose a project to do so . . . For, in reconsidering our attitudes toward projects, it is worth recalling Pretty et al's (1994) aphorism that people know both what they are doing, and why they are doing it, but that they do not know what they do does.

2.4 The Push for Increased Evaluation Within NGOs

Evaluation is widely acknowledged to be a weak area for NGOs: very few NGOs, big or small, have a portfolio of representative evaluations of past projects, which they place in the public domain (ODA, 1995). Smillie (1995) documented many reasons for the past weaknesses in evaluation in NGOs, first in order to raise money, especially from the public, they have to promise too much. Development is far more complex than the slogans they use so they build too high expectations of what they can really achieve. Thus they are reluctant to share their actual experiences. Second, the project system, with its clear aims and objectives, does not necessarily reflect realities or yield good results in terms of social development, which is long term and not easily packaged into projects. NGOs are asked to evaluate their projects, yet evaluating a project is like evaluating a patch of water in the ocean (Carlie & Christie, 1992). An area identified further by the two is rooted in the voluntary culture, which he sees as often biased against learning and more focused on doing, and getting things done.

There appear to be two different motivations and purposes for the current increase in work in this area. One is certainly the demand for accountability from the donors. This is becoming increasingly important for NGOs as donors start to question whether they are as effective in reaching the poor, keeping costs down, promoting participation, and achieving results as they have claimed in the past (Mabururu, 2003). Proving their worth becomes critical in a competitive funding market so this approach to evaluation is closely associated with the need to show donors and others how money has been used, to demonstrate what has been achieved. In an attempt to meet these demands for proof of effectiveness there has been a push to increase the level of evaluation.

2.4.2 Problems of Evaluation Requirement

Murphy, Craig and Augelli (1994) reported that, the methods used are primarily designed to see how far the project has achieved its stated aims and objectives. The project is the framework, and it becomes essential to find tangible benefits or changes to assess. The time allowed for these evaluations (which are costly) is often short so there is pressure to focus on the more obvious aspects of the project. He further reports that, these evaluations often ignore the key elements in the development process such as who has been excluded, who was able to participate and why, who is benefiting and how. The focus is more on numbers, measurables or 'results' - often as predetermined in the logframe analysis - than sequences and processes, which are often hard to detect, long term and difficult to capture. While some of these evaluations attempt to foster participation it is clear that they are primarily for the purposes of accountability and the key stakeholder is the donor or the trustee body. They are often experienced by those undergoing them as forms of policing and control.

Fowler (1988) suggests that, specific problems, occur when small indigenous NGOs, previously characterized by rather informal managerial monitoring and accountability practices based largely on trust, expand rapidly and are forced by external funders to professionalise and formally introduce systematic monitoring, accounting and auditing procedures. The funding agencies are bureaucratic organizations and they expect the NGOs to adhere to bureaucratic procedures.

2.4.3 The Learning Approach Vs Evaluation for Donors

Hulme and Edwards (1995) state that, there are potential conflicts between the reasons for undertaking more monitoring and evaluation. When the focus is on accountability to donors the need to put the best gloss on experience is clear; there is a concern to conceal failure, reduce risk, and to conform to donor paradigms and expectations. If a genuinely learning approach is taken then failure becomes openly discussed and analyzed, problems are aired and not hidden. Also the methods are likely to be quite different; evaluations for donors tend to be done by outside consultants, the parameters are often set by the logframe analysis against which results are measured, they are carried out in a short time, with reports written primarily for the funders. For those focusing more on learning the process may be long term, more participatory, designed by staff, partners and beneficiaries, with results being primarily for those involved in the project/ program. The process may look far wider than the parameters of the project, taking into account myriad other factors affecting the progress of social change; reporting may be through role play, village meetings, video, workshops with far less reliance on written reports.

2.5 New NGO Development Agenda

In his research, Wallace (1997) observed that, as national treasuries in Europe become more demanding about accounting for money and proving effectiveness and performance pressure grows on aid donors to show that their work is clear, that they are having an impact and that they are providing value for money. These pressures are being passed on to NGOs in the form of growing demands for using logical frameworks, for evaluating work and measuring performance against these frameworks, for demonstrating impact.

With reference to Hulme and Edwards (1995), the desire to grow has led many UK NGOs in to taking increasing numbers of contracts and grants from institutional donors as the private donation market remains static or even starts to shrink (in relation to, for example, charity shop incomes) and thus they have increased their dependence on institutional donors and so made themselves more vulnerable to donor led demands.

2.6 Current Debates in NGO Management and Participation

According to Fowler (1992) the late 20th century is witnessing many revolutions in ideas (or paradigm shifts). In the post-cold war era conventional ideas about development have come under challenge principally from the economic agenda of the new right, advocating free trade and the demise of state-led development. The strongest part of this agenda lies in its adamancy that market values conceptualized in the main centers of world capitalism are universal and unchallengeable. Its components are firstly the enhanced role for the private sector, both national and international; and second the reduced and changed role of the state, which becomes an enabler and regulator rather than a provider and producer. All major donor agencies have been caught up in these ideas to a greater or lesser degree.

The 1980s and 1990s had seen donor agencies acting with increased confidence vis-à-vis aid-recipient countries, imposing conditions and negotiating policies in a way, which would generally have been unthinkable in the 1960s and 1970s. The field of development thought has been dominated by the ideas of the new right since the mid-1980s (Edwards and Hulme, 1995).

While many NGOs have reacted and lobbied against the implications of these policies, the new thinking has opened up further opportunities for NGOs precisely because they are not part of the public sector; they are seen to represent 'civil society' which is understood to be an important ingredient of the political pluralism which donors are now promoting in order to create or support liberal democracies in Africa (Murphy and Augelli, 1993).

The enhanced role for the private sector in national and international scenarios has generated its own modus operandi and language of development. 'Contract' is the modus operandi, with a focus on 'deliverables', measurable performance indicators and the achievement of targets against which people can potentially be called to account. The assumption is usually that the process is at least partly under control. Financiers look for value defined in financial terms and in terms of efficiency. The perspective is often short term. Rational and deductive project models and quantitative planning tools fit best in this sort of framework: logical framework analysis (LFA) and cost-benefit analysis (CBA) are increasingly common (Riddell and Roger, 1996).

There is another tradition of development thought with which NGOs have been more closely identified historically. This highlights the need for a quality of economic growth, which alleviates poverty and provides the basis for achieving other objectives in relation to social development, environmental improvement and human rights. Here development has not been defined exclusively as economic growth, which political and institutional development should serve; but has been seen as having a range of meanings including dignity, peace, mutual respect and tolerance, spiritual freedom, and health of the human being and planet. Development is increasingly understood to be complex, not amenable to general solutions but requiring analysis, understanding and the participation of the poor, including women. This is a vision of development expressed in different forms by ODA (1992) and more recently by environmental writers, organizational specialists like Kiara (1994), Chambers (1983).

The language of learning is associated with this approach to development: the concept of the reflective practitioner who is able and open to learn from mistakes is crucially important to those wanting to work in this way (Schon and Donald, 1991). This approach requires openness to the environment, an ability to encourage participation throughout the process and to relinquish power as the peoples' capacity is built and they are increasingly able to set the agenda and plan their own projects. Within this paradigm accountability to ordinary people is central, accepting the need for a long-term perspective in working towards an uncertain future.

The approach to development has led to the rise of participatory methods, attention to decentralization of decision-making, bottom up strategic planning and other related strategies aimed at involving and empowering people previously seen as beneficiaries within projects (Fowler, 1994).

The rural development 'new paradigm' popularized by Chambers and Roberts (1983), including participatory rural appraisal (PRA) methods, has significantly brought people-centered approaches in to the mainstream of development. The UN, ODA, World Bank and government ministries have now adopted much of the language of participation and PRA (ODA, 1995). The methods visual, enjoyable, accessible and manageable - seek to build an equal dialogue between parties. Skills of technical specialists are judged in relation to local knowledge and realities, emphasizing that 'new' professionals need to work with humility in their relationships with local people (Chambers and Roberts, 1983).

2.7 Development NGO Projects and Politics

"Although the 'discovery' of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), by the experts and institutions that collectively comprise the global 'development community', occurred only in the late 1980s, these organizations had been developmentally active in relatively significant numbers for years and, in some cases for decades. However, what was genuinely novel was the rapid and sustained expansion of the non-governmental sector's involvements in an increasingly wide variety of developmental work across most of Africa during that decade; an expansion that has been sustained into the 1990s. With those based in Europe, known variously as Northern or as International NGOS (NNGOS or INGOs), and sometimes as BINGOS (big international NGOs--there is no standardization of acronyms), now greatly outnumbered by their southern counterparts (SNGOS)" (Charlton and May, 1995).

Borton (1993) argues that, what these development NGOs actually do is very varied. The counterpart of expansion has been role diversification, with the sector's original specialism in relief and emergency work now counterbalanced by involvement in an increasingly wide range of development activities. These range from political advocacy and education (in both North and South), through support for people's movements, to direct and indirect participation in a bewildering variety of project work, extending from the search for sustainable developmental solutions, through community development and service delivery, to income generating and entrepreneurial activities, as well as the continuing provision of the crisis and emergency assistance, frequently war-related, that had been such a depressing characteristic of the 1990s.

Accordingly, despite the growing organizational heterogeneity of an expanding sector, and despite much dissatisfaction with this situation among the BINGOs--particularly some of the Anglophone ones such as OXFAM and the Save the Children--it is important to emphasize that contemporary development NGOs, particularly the SNGOS, still largely 'get funding on a project basis Most retain an organizational structure that revolves around project implementation (Vivian, 1994).

2.8 Strategic Planning in Non Governmental Organizations

According to Murphy Craig and Augelli (1993), strategic planning is a relatively new tool in the arsenal of NGOs. It is a tool for planning at a programmed and global level, moving away from focusing on projects alone; strategic planning can provide a framework within which decisions about projects can be made in a wider context. All of the larger NGOs, and many middle size ones, have been undertaking strategic planning during the past four or five years, either at the field or headquarter level, or both.

2.8.1 Why strategic planning?

Strategic planning was introduced in many NGOs for a number of reasons, according to Borton (1993), these includes:

(i) Growth in NGOs: Many NGOs grew dramatically in the mid-1980s and continued to expand over the next decade (Oxfam grew by 7% p.a. and SCF 11% p.a. over this period), some grew as much as 20% p.a. and more. This resulted in a rapid growth of staff turnover, new people being brought in for new functions such as professional fund-raising, marketing, advocacy. Restructuring became common and in this context strategic planning was seen to be a vehicle for providing a unifying framework for managing rapid change.

(ii) A crisis of 'developmentalism': In the context of the apparently inexorable rise of conflict, growing poverty and misery in many of the countries where they have worked, strategic planning was adopted by many NGOs to try and reaffirm or rediscover their mandate. Stakeholder analysis was used to try and root the NGOs within a wider context and to establish where their support and legitimacy came from.

(iii) The search for a niche and 'profile' in development: NGOs have been concerned to identify their particular strengths and create a niche for their work. Strategic planning has been about situating some NGOs within what they increasingly perceive as 'their market place', with the public and with institutional donors. It is a response to an acknowledged problem of competition between NGOs for funding.

(iv) The role of external consultants: Many NGOs brought in external management and organization consultants to assist with their restructuring and planning processes. Some worked with several NGOs and promoted similar ideas to each of them.

2.9 Different Approaches to strategic Planning in NGOs

Referring to Murphy, Craig & Augelli (1993), strategic planning can be undertaken in a number of ways: as a way of directing the organization from the top; in a consultative way with the final decision resting with senior managers; in a more participatory way as part of a wider approach to strategic management and strategic thinking; or as a method where field offices and sometimes project partners in Africa can either plan for themselves without a set of directives from headquarters or play a role in shaping the corporate plan as a whole.

It can also be used in different ways. While in theory a strategic plan can be more about setting broad directions and providing a flexible tool which enables staff on the ground to make decisions and change direction on the basis of experience, while working within the broad mandate and priorities set by the organization, this is not how they are used in practice in most NGOs. In practice the written plan often appears to become more important in allocating budgets and measuring progress than the process; what has been put on paper can become more important than promoting the ability of staff to think and work strategically.

2.9.1 Problems Encountered

NGOs have used different approaches. For many organizations, Robinson (1995) concludes that, where the plan has been developed at headquarters or by senior staff with minimal consultation, staff experiences these plans as top-down and often as an imposition on them. They can cause resentment, and may not serve the purpose of pulling the organization together. For those organizations using participatory techniques, many have found that strategic planning is time consuming, demanding and complex for staff. It is an expensive process, where staff need a lot of support, guidance, training, outside information and assistance as they reflect on their past practice, the work of those around them, and their future role. Specialist staff and trainers, external consultants and facilitators have all been employed to enable offices to undertake strategic planning. It is a process that absorbs significant amounts of staff time and resources in many agencies.

In spite of many problems encountered around the process, some agencies according to Smile (1995) say that, over time staff in the field have built better teams as a result of strategic planning, they have become more focused, and in some cases the focus of country programs has changed radically and new programs have opened and old ones closed. However, the conflicts generated by strategic planning, by the different perceptions among staff about the overall priorities and best methods for development, have not proved easy to resolve. Ultimately the senior management do make the final decisions, and many of those whose views conflict with those in the final plan may feel aggrieved; field staff are said to feel that their views and plans are marginalized or receive less attention than headquarter views when the final corporate plans are drawn up.

2.10 Concerns About NGO Strategic Planning Process

Schon and Donald (1991) observed several implications arising from the introduction of strategic planning by different NGOs. While some strategic planning tools are flexible and can be adapted to be of value to staff in the field, they are still tools that have been drawn from a European context, using concepts and thinking taken initially from the US corporate world of planning. While the tools were developed by business to cope with change and turbulence, situations certainly facing NGOs at home and abroad, they were also designed to enable businesses to survive and grow in increasingly competitive and unpredictable markets, and to promote competitiveness between businesses. Strategic planning was intended to help businesses clarify their distinctive position and to promote the uniqueness of their products.

Whether the use of strategic planning is also promoting this degree of competition between NGOs needs assessing, as does the likely impact of increased competition on development work. This is a critical issue in the light of the proliferation of NGOs and given the scale of the problems they are attempting to address. While competition for fund-raising is seen by all NGOs to be critical to their survival and strategic planning is used to help them position themselves in relation to donors (private and public), what is the impact of this competition between NNGOs on development in the south? Writers such as Charlie and Christie (1992) would suggest such competition could be very detrimental to development work.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This chapter seeks to explain the population of interest, the type of data used, the sources of data, and the data analysis. Primarily, the study aimed at determining the factors critical to the success of NGO projects in Kenya. The study used exploratory survey to study the influence the factors underlying the issues identified in the problem statement.

3.2 Populations and Sampling Frame

The population of this study comprised of all the NGOs registered and having their headquarters in Nairobi. This is because Nairobi is the social, economic and political center of Kenya and majority of these NGOs have their headquarters there. This was according to the NGO Co-ordination Board Directory (2003). The factors being studied did not vary substantially by region across the country (Mahururu, 2003).

To constitute the population were 470 NGOs with headquarters in Nairobi. The NGO Co-ordination Board directory provided details of these NGOs' names, registration number, postal and physical address, telephone numbers, contact persons, sector(s) and area of operation.

3.3 Sampling

Simple random sampling method was used to select organizations that comprised the study sample. This method gave equal chance to all NGOs comprising the sampling frame to be selected. The 470 NGOs identified above were assigned numbers. 70 numbers were then picked at random using the table of random numbers. This constituted about 15% of the sampling population. The sample consisted of 70 individual NGOs to ensure enough confidence was attached to the results of the study. This was also the average size of the samples used in similar credible studies (Bwibo, 2000; Mabururu, 2003). Also to be considered in determining the sample size was the cost and the fact that there is a fairly low variability between the sampling units (Mabururu, 2003). The sample represented the perceptions of the NGO managers based in Nairobi and allowed for generalizations of findings for NGOs in Kenya.

3.4 Data Collection

The primary data collection instrument used was the questionnaire. This is because the information required in the study and how to measure the variables of interest was known.
The "drop and pick later" method was adopted for this study. This method was appropriate for the study because it enabled respondents to dedicate enough time convenient to themselves to fill the questionnaire. The NGO manager, or equivalent of each organization was contacted and requested to fill the questionnaire. The senior NGO leaders were targeted because they had knowledge of all aspects affecting their organizations. The researcher then picked the completed questionnaires at the agreed time.

The questionnaire was structured in such a way that the respondents could fill it without the assistance of the interviewer. The respondent was expected to respond to all the 16 questions that aided in meeting the research objectives. The structure of the questions allowed for information verification across questions in the analysis stage.

3.5 Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were edited for completeness, consistency and coherence. The data collected, was further tabulated and classified into sub categories based on the aspects explored. This aided the analysis of the responses of the NGO project managers. The analysis involved the computation of frequency distribution, Percentages and cross tabulation of the responses.

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of data collected in frequencies, percentages, cross tabulations and factor analysis. 70 NGOs, with their main offices in Nairobi were randomly sampled for this study from a population of 470 NGOs. Questionnaires were distributed to the 70 NGOs. Of the survey, 13NGOs partially filled the questionnaires while 17 NGOs did not fill the questionnaires. Some of these NGOs claimed that their Chief Executive Officers were not available to fill the questionnaires. 40 questionnaires were received and used for data analysis. This represents a response rate of 57%, which was considered adequate for statistical analysis. The data collected is analyzed and presented under the headings: Profile of NGOs, Factors critical to the success of projects undertaken by NGOS in Kenya, Key tools used in planning and implementation of NGO projects in Kenya and Risks inherent in the management of NGO projects in Kenya.

4.2 Profile of NGOs

The profile of the NGOs from which data was collected under this study is categorized on the basis of ownership of the NGOs and sectors in which the NGOs operated. The description of the above categories is considered important because it would indicate variations of the influence of various factors affecting operation of NGOs across the categories outlined.

Table 4.1: Profile of NGOs by Ownership

Ownership of NGO	Frequency	Percentage
Local	24	60%
Foreign	16	40%

Source: Research data

The table above indicates that more than half of the NGOs sampled (60%) are locally owned while 40% are foreign owned. This is consistent with the findings of Keige (1991), which indicated that foreign owned NGOs tend to be half the number of the locally owned NGOs.

Respondents were also asked to indicate the sectors in which their NGO operates. The analysis of the responses indicates that 24 NGOs in the sample offer development services while 6 NGOS offer relief services. The table below presents the analysis of the responses

Table 4.2: Profile of NGOs by sector

Sector	Frequency	Percentage
Relief	6	15%
Development	24	60%
Politics	10	25%

Source: Research data

4.3 Critical Success factors

Respondents were asked whether they use projects in delivering their services. 95% of the responding NGOs indicated the do use projects in their operations. The table below shows the responses to this question. For those who did not use projects at all indicated that this was due to the nature of their activities.

Table 4.3: Use of Projects in service delivery

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	38	95%
No	2	5%

Source: Research data

Respondents were further asked to rate the extent of use of projects. 80% of the responses indicated that NGOs used projects to large extend in delivering their objectives. Most

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NGOs used Projects in delivery; the weighted average on this question was 7.65. Table 4.4 below shows this analysis.

Table 4.4: Extent of use of Projects

	Least Used									Most Used
Use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	1	0	0	2	3	2	8	8	10	6
%	2.5%	0%	0%	5%	7.5%	5%	20%	20%	25%	15%

Source: Research data

An analysis of the rating of projects in terms of success and failure was done. The ratings by respondents showed that projects were averagely rated in terms of success and failure. The weighted average was 5.85. Table 4.5 below supports this.

Table 4.5: Success-Failure ratings

	Success									Failure
Use	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	3	4	3	5	7	2	2	1	5	8
%	7.5%	10%	7.5%	12.5%	17.5%	5%	5%	2.5%	12.5%	20%

Source: Research data

The level of resistance by the government on NGO projects was sought from the respondents. Respondents were asked to indicate whether there was resistance to their projects by the government

Table 4.6: Government Resistance

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	12	30%
No	28	70%

Source: Research data

The table above indicates that there is little resistance from the government on projects by NGOs. This is in agreement with the profile, which showed that most NGOs were involved in development project.

Table 4.7: Political Agenda Pursued by NGOs

Agenda	Frequency	Percentage
Promoting Democracy	5	12.5%
Policy Advocacy	10	25%
Education	10	25%
Lobbying	5	12.5%

Source: Research data

Table 4.8: Value of politics in relation to success of projects

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
Frequency	7	10	8	5	5
Percentage	17.5%	25%	20%	12.5%	12.5%

Source: Research data

Table 4.9: Politics-Operation Compatibility

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	18	45%
No	22	55%

Source: Research data

Respondents were asked to respond to questions about politics and NGOs. Most NGOs were involved in policy advocacy and education as shown in Table 4.7 above. More than 60% considered this to be important as revealed by Table 4.8. The NGOs were divided on whether there was incompatibility between political and operational aspects of their projects as shown in Table 4.9.

Further, the respondents were asked to rate on a scale, the extent of beneficiary participation ranging from active to passive. The analysis indicated overwhelmingly, active participation of

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Further, the respondents were asked to rate on a scale, the extent of beneficiary participation ranging from active to passive. The analysis indicated overwhelmingly, active participation of beneficiaries in both planning and implementation of projects as revealed in Table 4.10 (a) and (b) below. 72.5% responses showed absolute active participation in planning while we had 90% active in implementation. It is also important to note that comparatively, the beneficiary participation is found to be more in implementation than planning of the projects.

Table 4.10. Beneficiary Participation

4.10 (a) Planning

	Active									Passive
Freq	29	7	1	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	72.5%	17.5%	2.5%	7.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Research data

4.10 (b) Implementation

	Active									Passive
Freq	36	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
%	90%	5%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Research data

4.4 Key tools

Respondents were asked to state whether they perform evaluation of their projects to determine extent of success. Most of the responses were affirmative, with 92.5% respondents saying they performed evaluation. The analysis is shown in Table 4.11 below. The 7.5% that did not evaluate did not give any reason for not doing so or the alternative to evaluation.

Table 4.11: Project Evaluation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	37	92.5%
No	3	7.5%

Source: Research data

In addition to this they were asked to state the evaluation tools they used. Most of the respondents showed a wide use of Participatory appraisal as compared to cost benefit analysis and the logical framework. 80% of respondents indicated they used the participatory appraisal as compared to 50% for cost benefit analysis and 20% in the logical framework. Table 4.12 below shows these results. No other tool was revealed here.

Table 4.12 Evaluation Tools

Tool	Frequency	Percentage
Logical Framework	8	20%
Cost Benefit Analysis	20	50%
Participatory Appraisal	32	80%
Other	0	0%

Source: Research data

Table 4.13 Importance of Strategic Planning

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	75%
No	10	25%

Source: Research data

Respondents were asked to state whether they considered strategic planning important for their success. 75% of the respondents indicated the considered it important while only 25% did not consider it important. These results are shown in Table 4.13 above. Further reasons were sought on why projects were planned strategically. The respondents were asked to state whether they agreed or disagreed with suggested reasons for planning strategically. That results in table 4.14 showed most of the respondents agreed that it was done to manage rapid growth of the NGO while most disagreed with the suggestion the it was done as a result of advice from consultants. There were no further explanations by respondents on the issue.

Table 4.14 Reasons for Strategic Planning

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Manage rapid growth of the NGO	28	8	4	0	0
Reform and rediscover mandate	1	3	20	12	4
Search for a niche in development	12	2	4	12	10
Advice from Consultants	0	10	10	6	14

Source: Research data

Respondents were asked to indicate the strategic planning method used for their projects. 90% of the respondents as shown in Table 4.15 used bottom-up strategic planning. This is consistent with the results in Table 4.14 that showed a wide use of participatory appraisal as a tool.

Table 4.15 Strategic Planning Methods

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Top-Down	36	90%
Bottom-Up	4	10%
Other	0	0%

Source: Research data

The existence and level of competition for donor funding was sought from respondents. It was further required of the respondents to indicate whether they perceived this competition to be healthy or not.

Table 4.16 Competition for funding

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	70%
No	12	30%

Source: Research data

70 percent of respondents indicated they indeed competed for funding from donors. 60% of the respondents agreed that, this competition was healthy while 40% disagreed as analyzed in Table 4.17 below

Table 4.17 Health of Competition

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	60%
No	16	40%

Source: Research data

Respondents pointed out that competition challenges the organization to look for funding from elsewhere. There is also transparency to encourage the next funding from the same source. No explanation was given for lack of competition.

Information was sought on whether there was a requirement by donors to evaluate projects in a specific way. Results showed 62.5% of the respondents had donors requiring them to evaluate their projects in a specific way. This analysis is shown in table 4.18 below.

Table 4.18 Evaluation Requirement

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	27	62.5%%
No	13	37.5%

Source: Research data

Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they contributed to evaluation design. The analysis found that, the average rating was 3.05. This indicated average contribution as seen in Table 4.19 below

Table 4.19 Design of Evaluation

	Low Contribution				Most Contribution
Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Frequency	1	5	25	9	0

Source: Research data

The comfort of stakeholders with the existing evaluation criteria was sought. The analysis showed both the field staff and the senior managers were not comfortable. On a scale of 8 senior managers scored an average of 6.225 strength of uncomfortability while the field staff scored 4.45. This showed that the senior managers were more uncomfortable with the existing evaluation criteria. These results are shown in Table 4.20 below.

Table 4.20 Comfort with current evaluation criteria

	Very Comfortable							Very Uncomfortable
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Senior Managers	1	0	0	4	2	15	12	6
Field Staff	3	4	5	1	17	8	1	1

Source: Research data

Respondents were asked to rate the value of participation in learning and improvement of their projects. The analysis revealed that, both were highly valued but there was more value attached to improvement than learning. Improvement had a weighted average of 95% while learning had 87.75% in regard to High value. This is shown in Table 4.21 (a) and 4.21 (b) above.

Table 4.21 Value of Participation

4.21 (a) Learning

	Low Valued								Highly Valued	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	0	0	0	2	2	2	4	1	5	24
%	0%	0%	0%	5%	5%	5%	10%	2.5%	12.5%	60%

Source: Research data

4.21 (b) Improvement

	Low Valued								Highly Valued	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	6	2	30
%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	15%	5%	75%

Source: Research data

4.5 Risks in the management of NGO projects in Kenya

In an effort to test the risks inherent in projects, respondents were asked to indicate certainty of aspects of projects they planned and executed. The analysis found the certainty levels to be low, with 61% weighted certainty that planned individual activities would be carried out properly as realized in Table 4.22(a). There was 51.75% weighted certainty that all the required activities will be identified as indicated in Table 4.22(b). The weighted certainty that the planned separate activities will come together at the end was 35.5% as shown in Table 4.22(c)

Table 4.22 Project Risks

4.22 (a) Execution Risk

	Uncertain									Certain
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	0	0	0	2	15	14	2	1	5	1
%	0%	0%	0%	5%	37.5%	35%	5%	2.5%	12.5%	2.5%

Source: Research data

4.22 (b) White Space Risk

	Uncertain									Certain
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	0	0	12	6	5	7	2	6	2	0
%	0%	0%	30%	15%	12.5%	17.5%	5%	15%	5%	0%

Source: Research data

4.22 (c) Integration Risk

	Uncertain									Certain
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Freq	6	4	10	12	2	2	4	0	0	0
%	15%	10%	25%	30%	5%	5%	10%	0%	0%	0%

Source: Research data

Further, the respondents' view was sought on whether they viewed NGOs like any other business. 72.5% of the respondents were of the view that an NGO was like any other business. This is illustrated in the analysis in table 4.23 below. Those who supported the view said with competition for funds and survival justified this view. Those who opposed said NGOs like other businesses were not in for profit making and they acted to the benefit of the entire community.

Table 4.23 NGO as a Business

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	29	72.5%%
No	11	27.5%

Source: Research data

A blanket analysis of the factors determining success of NGO projects in Kenya was carried out to verify the responses given as shown in Table 4.25. The analysis resulted in a ranking of the factors considered, in order of importance as follows in Table 4.24

Table 4.24:Factors Determining Success of NGO Projects in Kenya

	Factor	Weight
1	Need for participatory evaluation	4.675
2	Need for project management skills	4.175
3	Policy Advocacy	3.925
4	Promoting Democracy	3.900
5	Compatibility between political and economic aspects of projects	3.775
6	Beneficiary participation	3.725
7	Civil Education	3.700
8	Strengthening the civil society	3.625
9	Lobbying	3.375
10	Risk of gaps in project plans	3.350
11	Risk of failure of individual project activities	3.300
12	Effect of the government policies	3.125
13	Use of standard tools in evaluating projects	3.000
14	Bottom – Up Planning	2.925
15	Risk of integration of the whole project	2.700
16	Need for strategic planning on NGOs	1.950
17	Pursuit of parallel political agenda	1.525
18	Competition with other NGOs for funding	1.600
19	To-Down planning	1.25

The rankings revealed that among the most highly ranked factors as important were political factors followed by the need for participation and risks. Most strategic aspects were ranked as not important.

Table 4.25: Factor Analysis

	Proj Mgt Skills		Strategic Planning		Execution Risk		White Space Risk	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
5 Extremely Important	23	57.50	1	2.50	8	20	7	17.50
4 Very Important	8	20.00	9	22.50	10	25	14	35.00
3 Important	5	12.50	2	5.00	12	30	8	20.00
2 Slightly Important	1	2.50	3	7.50	6	15	8	20.00
1 Not Important	3	7.50	25	62.50	4	10	3	7.50
	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100	40	100.00
Weighted Average	**4.175**		**1.95**		**3.3**		**3.35**	

	Integration Risk		Top-Down Planning		Bottom Up Planning		Beneficiary Partc	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
5 Extremely Important	13	32.50	6	15.00	26	65	36	90.00
4 Very Important	9	22.50	3	7.50	2	5	1	2.50
3 Important	11	27.50	7	17.50	3	7.5	1	2.50
2 Slightly Important	7	17.50	3	7.50	1	2.5	0	0.00
1 Not Important	0	0.00	21	52.50	8	20	2	5.00
Total	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100	40	100.00
Weighted Average	**2.7**		**1.25**		**2.925**		**3.725**	

	Govt Policies		Politcal Agenda		Compatibility		Civil Soc Strength	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
5 Extremely Important	2	5.00	1	2.50	17	42.5	11	27.50
4 Very Important	15	37.50	2	5.00	9	22.5	12	30.00
3 Important	13	32.50	5	12.50	6	15	9	22.50
2 Slightly Important	6	15.00	1	2.50	4	10	7	17.50
1 Not Important	4	10.00	31	77.50	4	10	1	2.50
Total	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100	40	100.00
Weighted Average	**3.125**		**1.525**		**3.775**		**3.625**	

	Prom Democracy		Policy Advocacy		Civil Education		Lobbying	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
5 Extremely Important	19	47.50	21	52.50	13	32.5	11	27.50
4 Very Important	5	12.50	8	20.00	9	22.5	7	17.50
3 Important	10	25.00	4	10.00	14	35	11	27.50
2 Slightly Important	5	12.50	1	2.50	1	2.5	8	20.00
1 Not Important	1	2.50	6	15.00	3	7.5	3	7.50
Total	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100	40	100.00
Weighted Average	**3.9**		**3.925**		**3.7**		**3.375**	

	Use of Tools		Competition		Participatory Eval	
	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
5 Extremely Important	15	37.50	2	5.00	34	85
4 Very Important	3	7.50	1	2.50	1	2.5
3 Important	1	2.50	4	10.00	3	7.5
2 Slightly Important	9	22.50	5	12.50	2	5
1 Not Important	12	30.00	28	70.00	0	0
Total	40	100.00	40	100.00	40	100
Weighted Average	**3**		**1.6**		**4.675**	

CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of the study and conclusions. It also presents the limitations of the study and suggests related areas of further study. The objective of this study was to establish factors determining success of NGO projects in Kenya. To achieve this objective, respondents who were Chief Executive officers of NGOs based in Nairobi, were asked to fill a questionnaire designed for the study. The questionnaire focused on various factors and issues related to the NGO sector. 40 questionnaires were collected and analyzed using frequencies and cross tabulations. The analysis was presented in the previous chapter.

5.2 Summary

This study found out that most NGOs in Kenya were locally owned and engaged in development activities. The NGOs used projects to a large extent in delivering their aims. 95% of the respondents agreed that they used projects in delivering their aims. The respondents were engaged in rating their projects in terms of success and failure. The ratings revealed that the projects' ratings in terms of success and failure were equal. The projects were averagely rated with a little inclination toward failure as shown by the weighted average of 5.75.

Since most of the projects are involved in development activities, there was little resistance by the government in their activities. A quarter of the respondents said they were involved in policy advocacy and a majority of the respondents rated as important, the value of politics in meeting their objectives. This was true even though the averagely considered politics to be compatible to the operational aspects of their goals.

The study also found out that there was a wide incident of beneficiary participation at both the planning and implementation of projects. The study further revealed that there was more participation at the implementation than the planning of the projects.

The respondents were asked whether they perform evaluation of their projects. Majority (92.5%) indicated they did perform evaluation and the dominant method was participatory evaluation which had an 80% mention among the respondents. 62.5% of the respondents agreed they had evaluation requirement in place though they were moderately involved in the design of the criteria. The field staff was found to be less uncomfortable with the evaluation as compared to the management staff. This was clear with 6.225 strength of uncomfortability for management as compared to 4.45 for the field staff. Respondents were asked to rate the value of participation in learning and improvement of their projects. The analysis revealed that both were highly valued but there was more value attached to improvement than learning. Improvement had a weighted average of 95% while learning had 87.75% in regard to High value.

Strategic planning was found to be important among the NGOs. This was according to respondents important in managing rapid growth of the NGOs. Top –Down planning was found to be the preferred method of strategic planning as opposed to bottom-up method. A risk analysis revealed that most NGOs projects were concerned with the execution risk more than the integration and white space risk planning of their projects.

Competition for funding was found to be present in 70% of the respondents and 60% of the respondents found the competition to be healthy. Most of the respondents found the NGOs to be in competition just like any other business.

A blanket analysis of the factors determining success of NGO projects in Kenya was carried out to verify the responses given as shown in Table 4.24. The analysis revealed that the most important factors with consensus were:

1. Need for project management skills
2. Need for participatory evaluation and beneficiary participation
3. Political aspects especially strengthening of civil society, policy advocacy and compatibility between political and operational aspects of projects.
4. Concern for project risks at the planning stage.

5.3 Conclusions

The study found out that projects were central in delivering NGO aims, but still projects failed in Kenyan NGOs.

Most NGOs were involved in development activities and there was a wide participation of the beneficiaries at the implementation stages of projects though this was not seen at the planning stage.

Evaluation of the NGOs was present and highly valued but there was need to involve all the stakeholders in designing of the evaluation criteria to make it comfortable to all levels of management and staff. Bottom Up planning is to be encouraged in order to reduce the risks inherent in projects and encourage participation

The factors critical to success of NGO projects in Kenya were: need for project management skills; need for participatory evaluation and beneficiary participation;
Political aspects especially strengthening of civil society, policy advocacy and compatibility between political and operational aspects of projects and concern for project risks at the planning stage.

5.4 Recommendations

It is from the above conclusions that it is recommended that, beneficiary participation in NGO projects in Kenya should be encouraged at both the planning and implementation stages of the projects. It is further recommended that evaluation of the projects should involve all stakeholders and that it should be carried out at all levels of management.

It is recommended that in the process of managing NGO projects, four factors need to be taken into consideration as they determine the success of NGO projects in Kenya. These factors are:

1. Need for project management skills
2. Need for participatory evaluation and beneficiary participation
3. Political aspects especially strengthening of civil society, policy advocacy and compatibility between political and operational aspects of projects.
4. Concern for project risks at the planning stage.

5.5 Limitations of the study

This study was constrained by various factors. First, the research was constrained by lack of time and resources to personally visit the NGOs and request CEOs to fill the questionnaire. It was difficult to have the Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of the NGOs to fill the questionnaire. Some CEOs had very busy schedules and thus delayed filling the questionnaire for several weeks. However the 40 questionnaires filled were representative of the NGOs based in Nairobi. Therefore the value of this study was not compromised.

5.6 Suggestions for further research

This study was mainly exploratory. Therefore it only gives a general view of the factors determining success of NGO projects in Kenya. However a more targeted study, preferably taking a case study approach in order to focus on a detailed analysis of the factors identified in this study is recommended.

In regard to factors determining success of NGO projects, only those NGOs that are still in operation were interviewed. A study focusing on NGOs that have ceased operation would bring out factors leading to failure of their projects and thus complement the view of those still in operation.

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Appendix 1 Letter of Introduction

Kevin Wekhomba Khakina
P.O BOX 67881, 00200
Nairobi.

23 April 2006

To
The Respondent

Dear sir/Madam

Re: Request for Your Participation in My Research Work

I am a postgraduate student of the University of Nairobi pursuing a Master of Business Administration. In order to fulfill the degree requirements, I am currently undertaking a research study entitled: "Success factors in Non-Governmental Organization Projects in Kenya: A study of Project Managers' Perceptions" The study focuses on Key factors affecting success/failure of NGOs in Kenya

I would highly appreciate if you spare some time to kindly complete the attached questionnaire.

The information you will provide is strictly for academic purposes and will be treated confidentially.

Yours sincerely,

Kevin Wekhomba Khakina

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

This questionnaire has been prepared in relation to the objectives of this study. All questions relate to non-governmental organizations. Please answer all the questions. Any issue that requires clarification will be discussed when the researcher calls to pick the completed questionnaire.

1. (i) What is the name of your Non Governmental Organization?

....

   (ii) When was the NGO established?...

2. Where is the NGO based?
   - (i) Foreign Based
   - (ii) Local Based

3. Please state your NGOs vision

....

4. What kind of work (task) do you carry out in your organization?
   - (i) Relief
   - (ii) Development
   - (iii) Politics
   - (iv) Other (Please specify)...

5. a) Do you use projects as a means of delivering your aims or objectives? (Tick as appropriate)

   Yes

   No

b) (i) If yes, to what extend do you use them?

Least Used									Most used
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(Rate as appropriate)

(ii) How do you rate your projects In terms of success and failure?

SUCCESS									FAILURE
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(Rate as appropriate)

c) If no why don't you use them?

(i) Nature of our activities

(ii) Donor Policy

(iii) Lack of expertise

(iv) Others (Please specify)……………………………………………

6. In your operations, have you met government resistance to your ambitions or achievement of your aims?

Yes ☐

No

7. a) In addition to your aims, which of the following political agendas do you pursue?

(i) Promoting Democracy

(ii) Policy Advocacy

(iii) Education

(iv) Lobbying

(v) Other (Please specify)……………………………………………………

(vi) None

b) How do you value them in relation to success of your projects?

Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

c) Are there any tensions or incompatibilities between political and operational aspects of your activities?

Yes ☐

No

8. To what extent do we have the beneficiaries participating in the delivery of your objectives as far as planning and implementation is concerned?

A) PLANNING

Active Passive

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

B) IMPLEMENTATION

Active Passive

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

(Tick on the scale)

9. a) Do you perform an evaluation on your projects to determine the extent of success?

Yes ☐

No ☐

b) If yes which of the following evaluation tools do you use?

(i) LFA - Logical Framework Analysis

(ii) CBA - Cost-Benefit Analysis

(iii) PRA - Participatory Appraisal

(iv) Other (Please specify)………………………………………………

(v) None

c) If no, how do you determine success of the projects?

………………………………………………………………………………

10. a) In your projects do you consider strategic planning important to their success?

Yes ☐

No

b) (i) If, yes we plan strategically for the following reasons.

	SA	A	N	D	SD
Manage rapid growth of the NGO	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Reform and rediscover our mandate/purpose	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Search for a niche in development	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Advice from consultants	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Other (Please explain)………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

………………………………………………………………………………

KEY: SA-Strongly Agree; A-Agree; N-Neutral; D-Disagree; SD-Strongly Disagree

(ii) Which of the following methods do you use in strategic planning?

(i) Top-down (Plans flowing from senior management)

(ii) Bottom -up (Participatory input from field officers)

(iii) Other (Please specify)..

c) If no why don't you find strategic planning important?

....

11. a) Do you as an organization compete with other NGOs for funding from donors for similar programmes?

Yes ☐

No ☐

b) If ye do you think this competition is healthy (Good)?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Why?...

....

....

....

c) If no, why don't you compete for funding?

....

12. a) Is there a requirement by donors to evaluate the impact of your projects in a specific way?

Yes ☐

No ☐

b) To what extend do you as an organization contribute to the design of these evaluations? (Where 1 is least contribution and 5 is most contribution)

Low Contribution   Most Contribution

1   2   3   4   5

(Tick as appropriate)

c) How comfortable are the following group of persons comfortable with the existing evaluation criteria?

	Very Comfortable							Very Uncomfortable
Senior Managers	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_
Field Staff	_	_	_	_	_	_	_	_

(Fit in the scale as appropriate)

13. How much value does participatory evaluation, add to your activities in terms of learning and improvement? (Where 10 is Highly valued and 1 is Low valued)

A) LEARNING

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B) IMPROVEMENT

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Please tick as appropriate)

13. a) In your project plans, how certain are you that the planned individual activities will be carried out properly? (Where 10 is certain and 1 is Uncertain)

Uncertain									Certain
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Tick as appropriate)

b) In the project plans, how certain are you that all the required activities will be identified? (Where 10 is certain and 1 is Uncertain)

Uncertain									Certain
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Tick as appropriate)

c) In the project plans how certain are you that that the planned disparate (separate) activities will come together at the end? (Where 10 is certain and 1 is Uncertain)

Uncertain									Certain
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

(Tick as appropriate)

15. Do you view an NGO like any other business?

Yes ☐

No ☐

Why... ... ...

16. Please rate the following aspects of success/failure based on your experience with NGO projects in Kenya.

Rate on scale of 1 to 5 whereby 5 – Extremely important and 1 – Not important

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Important	Slightly Important	Not Important
Need for project management skills	5	4	3	2	1
Need for strategic planning in NGOs	5	4	3	2	1
Risk of failure of individual project activities	5	4	3	2	1
Risk of gaps in project plans	5	4	3	2	1
Risk of integration of the whole project activities	5	4	3	2	1
Top – down planning	5	4	3	2	1
Bottom – up planning	5	4	3	2	1
Beneficiary participation	5	4	3	2	1
Effect of the government policies	5	4	3	2	1
NGOs should pursue parallel political agendas	5	4	3	2	1
Compatibility between political and economic aspects of projects	5	4	3	2	1
Strengthening the civil society	5	4	3	2	1
Promoting democracy	5	4	3	2	1
Policy advocacy	5	4	3	2	1
Civil education	5	4	3	2	1
Lobbying	5	4	3	2	1
Use of standard tools or methods in evaluation of projects	5	4	3	2	1
Competition with other NGOs for funding	5	4	3	2	1
Need for participatory evaluation	5	4	3	2	1

Thank you very much for taking your time to complete this questionnaire

Appendix 3: List of NGOs Sampled

1 ACHIEVE (African Center of Hope and Initiative Everywhere)... Jabavu Road... 2726408
2 African Community Development Organization... Vanga Rd off Gatanga Rd... 601815
3 African Children Education Fund... Ngong Road.... 884793
4 African Economic Research Consortium.... Valley Road.... 2734157
5 African Institute of Disaster Management and Development Ltd..New Rehema House... 4451073
6 African Partnership Aid for Rehabilitation and Development (APARD)... Kirichwa Rd... 3875991
7 Agency for Development Education and Communication (ADEC)... .Ufungamano Hse.. 2727958
8 Care International in Kenya.... Mucai Rd... .2710069
9 Centre for African Family Studies.... Pamstech Hse... .4448618
10 Centre for Corporate Governance.... Waiyaki Way... 4443220
11 Centre for the study of Adolescence Ltd... Chiromo Lane... 3862901
12 Childrens Relief Fund (CRF)... Quran Hse... .240882
13 Church Ecumunical Action Sudan... Emerald Court... 3873043
14 Community Aid for Development... KICC Bldng.... 211280
15 Consumer Information Network... KCB Bldng... 555784
16 Danish Association For International Co-operation... .Mucai Drive... 2725831
17 Disabled Child Monitor... Komarock... 788471
18 East African Wild Life Society... EAWLS Bldng... 3874145
19 Education Centre for Women in Democracy.... 3875539
20 Education for Life Programme (EMSA)... Catholic Youth Centre Kasarani... 8560804
21 Environment Liaison Centre International... Muriga Rd... 3876114
22 Family Health International.... Chancery Bldg.... 2713913
23 Heifer Project International... Kabarnet Rd... 3871692
24 Homeless Children International... Ruara road... 3873013
25 Institute of Cultural Affairs -Kenya... .Ngong Road... ... 2720666

26 Institute of Economic Affairs.... Bishops Road... 2717402

27 International Council of African Museums.... Museum Hill Rd... 3748668

28 International Islamic Relief Organization... .Jabavu Road... .2715305

29 Kangemi Women Empowerment Centre... .Kangemi Shopping Centre... ... 631904

30 Kibera Human Development Project... .Kibera... ..3869290

31 Mercy International Kenya... .Peponi Road... .310370

32 Music Copyright Society of Kenya... .Chiromo Road... ..4440970

33 National Organization of Peer Educators (NOPE)... Riverside drv.... 4451201

34 Regional Logistics Initiative... ACK Garden House... 2729191

35 Rural Development Solutins for Africa.... Crossway Road.... 3754592

36 Share International Kenya... Karen.... 883010

37 Sudan Medical Care... Breaside School Lane... 3877529

38 Swedish Coooperative Centre.... Lower Kabete Road... 4180201

39 Undugu Society of Kenya... Jogoo Rd.... 559023

40 Women Fighting Aids in Kenya... Ngong Rd... 2730952