

Donor Driven Planning Approach and Performance of Non - Governmental Organizations (Ngos) In Kenya

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Abstract: Performance of Non Governmental Organizations NGOs is an area that calls for comprehensive analysis especially in relation to project planning approaches. Project planning approaches can be fragmented into Need based Approach, Right Based Approach, Asset Based Community Development Approach and Donor Driven Approach. Donor Driven Approach remains silent among NGOs planning strategies due to their core mandate of facilitating community/ beneficiary initiatives. This planning approach should be openly discussed just like the other approaches in planning. This study examined Donor Driven Approach (DDA) in NGOs within Kisumu County, Kenya. A total of 123 questionnaires were administered to various managers of NGOs within the County. Some of the Key planning components that were analyzed in DDA Planning approach were; donor pressure on development policies and strategies, strict compliance with donor procedures and donor demand beyond organization capacity. The study established that the DDA allowed donors to exert much influence over the NGOs projects to the extent of controlling their performance substantially. The DDA components donor pressure on development policies and strategies, donor demand beyond organization capacity and strict donor procedures were also found to significantly influence the performance of the NGOs individually. It is, therefore, recommended that NGOs should constantly engage in capacity building in anticipation of donor demands in order to meet their expectations and in terms of performance.

Keywords: Donor Driven Planning, Donor Pressure, Donor Demands, NGOs

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I. INTRODUCTION

Donors or funders are usually international multilateral organizations which justify their assistance to the NGO sector on the basis of promoting accountability, good governance, citizen participation, peace and human rights in developing and transitional countries as part of bilateral and multi-lateral aid spending (Meyers et. al, 2014). The allocation of foreign aid is perceived to be driven by donor interests some perceiving it as bribe and some perceive it as donors' selflessness and even concerns for global justice. Many studies have been done but decisive evidence for either view is still elusive (Neumayer, 2003; Berthe´ lemy and Tichit , 2004; Milner & Tingley, 2010; and van der Veen, 2011). It is also observed that donor nations exert tough influence over the powerful international institutions such as the UN, World Bank and IMF allowing them undue influence in shaping the global policy environment. Therefore decentralization reforms constitute the agenda of new policy that puts special emphasis on markets, good governance and civil society and has been aggressively pursued by the World Bank and the donor community (Campbell, 2008).

According to Jeongwon (2016) development aid has drawn renewed attention from the international community; the attention that has been partly due to the 2015 target deadline for the UN Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that were subsequently adopted, as well as to the increasing number of donors. Echoing the principles of Official Development Assistance (ODA) as a central tenet in the overall practice of supplying international aid by publicly matching donors and recipients, governance by the norms and principles of aid effectiveness drawn up by the twenty-nine official donor governments (including the EU) via the OECD Development Assistance Committee (OECD-DAC), a donors' forum has attracted remarkable attention.

Just as Development Aid has drawn new attention from international community NGOs are expected to plan strategically. Planning in line with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) brings to perspective all the earlier discussed planning approaches: Need based Approach, Right Based Approach, Asset Based Community Development Approach and Donor Driven Approach. Most of the African countries adopted national strategies that corresponded clearly to the eight goals and twenty-one targets outlined in the MDGs' framework (Kate & Jennifer, 2013)

DDA can be discretely discussed under planning aligned to: Donor Pressure on Development policies and strategies, donor demand beyond organization capacity and strict donor procedures. When planning for development programmes in an organization or a country and Donor pressure on policies and strategies are factored in then as Lundsgaarde, Breunig and Prakash (2010) find; countries tend to trade with and give aid to the same partners most likely because they know how to align their goals to the donor requirement. Development policies and strategies are the engine to every successful project and every development partner analyses the implementers' concept to decide whether their agenda fit.

Just like a contractor and a client there must be consideration of both parties interest and over the past three decades, INGOs, and NGOs more generally, have become key subcontractors of aid projects, some- times receiving official governmental aid directly (Ilcan and Lacey 2011; Watkins, Swidler & Hannan, 2012). Alice, Mbabazi and Jaya (2016) study on effective resource planning and project performance note that NGOs crafting of their strategic plan in line with donor development policies and strategies represents an organizational focus and commitment to pursue its vision and mission. Their action could attract like minded development partners and at the same time work well for all other stakeholders especially the direct beneficiaries of their programmes leading to performance.

Essentially NGOs strategic plan which adopts Donor Driven Approaches reflects how the organization intends to develop, build lasting networks and in the end stand out among its peers. In opting for DDA in planning the NGO is candidly saying that among the different approaches available we have decided to lean on DDA in order to move our organization to the intended direction and to boost our performance. This particular stand for an NGO would not be so easy and might turn out to be unpopular among other actors but it is not very harmful to take a very open course of action. In any case the same direction is adopted by many actors save for the silence accorded to it.

Once NGOs realize that donors demand beyond organization capacity it is also prudent for them to plan for capacity building. This planning should be anchored with some arguments of capability approach. Alexandre, Aspan and Boni (2013) discuss that capability approach basically began as a reaction against mainstream positions in welfare economics and in political philosophy and ethics, that gave priority as evaluative criterion to one or more of: resource holdings; income; preference fulfilment; measured or imputed felt satisfaction. Capability approach presented an alternative priority criterion, capability: the access to functionings that we have (good) reason to value ('opportunity freedom'). As it grew into a conception of human development, it elaborated its picture of functioning as a human person, to emphasise the importance of 'process freedom', the ability to participate in the decision-making that influences this structure of opportunities. NGOs should enjoy the process freedom since they are facilitators and just like other stakeholders and beneficiaries; the principles of basic needs, sustainability and human rights are core to their planning towards capacity building.

Project planning, management and evaluation present a central and complex domain within which to operationalize the capability approach, where actors involved in human development work require constructive suggestions. The constructive suggestions can only be realized when the actors have sufficient capacity. Yet the capability approach has not, to date, said very much about NGOs save for few mentions from; Oosterlaken and vdHoeven, 2012 with an emphasis on design; Frediani, 2007, Schischka et al., 2008 and Biggeri, Ballet and Comim, 2011 with an emphasis on monitoring and evaluation; and Alkire, 2002, Frediani, 2010, and Kleine, 2013 with an emphasis on the framing of development projects).

Just like researches on participation in development NGO capacity building should be a heartbeat term for NGOs. Researchers should examine both the participatory and Capacity building claims of NGOs or of NGO projects (Botchway 2001; Mosse 2005a; Porter, Allen, and Thompson 1991).

DDA can also be defined in terms of planning in line with strict donor procedures. Strict donor procedures has been one of the most glaring argument and in Uganda the concept of decentralization and reforms are necessary when bound to achieve democratic objectives of empowering the people to effectively govern themselves in an efficient and effective way and the reason that leads to this is the converging external and domestic interests, donor-driven decentralization reforms have not performed as expected. However, it is argued that for these reforms to succeed, the specific conditions must be considered with the honesty and political will of national leaders to genuinely transform power relations (Muhumuza, 2008). It is also noted that over the years the weaknesses by African states have contributed to successful pursuit of donor interests and lack of clear original ideas and vision, negligence of state responsibility and lack of strategic think tanks by African leaders have increasingly opened up Africa to real donor influence and dominance. It is also observed that donor nations exert tough influence over the powerful international institutions such as the UN, World Bank and IMF allowing them to undue influence in shaping the global policy environment. Therefore decentralization reforms constitute the agenda of new policy that puts special emphasis on markets, good governance and civil society and has been aggressively pursued by the World Bank and the donor community (Campbell, 2008).

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Group, Data Collection and Piloting

The study group comprised 123 managers of projects of the NGOs within Kisumu County. The organizations were broadly clustered by category as either foreign or local sponsored or both. Various managers of the NGOs were involved since they were expected to be best placed to articulate issues in the study as they have the conceptual view of the organizations of concern. This study adopted a descriptive research design and the target population for this study was 123 managers in the study area who were all included in the study based on census sampling. The study employed structured questionnaire which was designed in parts. The Donor Driven Approach had Ten key elements to consider in project planning namely; Donor pressure on development policies and strategies(DDA1), Pre-designed donor aid management systems(DDA2), Difficulties in complying with donor procedures (DDA3), Uncoordinated requirements of different donors(DDA4), Unclear processes for managing donor concerns(DDA5), Projects depending on donor funding trends(DDA6), Donor-partner parallel management systems (DDA7), Fitting into donors framework(DDA8), Strict donor procedures(DDA9) and Donor demand beyond organizational capacity(DDA10). This article concentrates on DDA1, DDA9 and DDA10.

Data Analysis Techniques

Quantitative analysis technique employed begun by editing, coding, cleaning and transforming data. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics of arithmetic means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics was used to analyze data from the likert scale. Each hypothesis was analyzed: Pearson correlation coefficient was used to test the relationship of hypothesis. These hypotheses were tested at 95% confidence level, implying that 95 times out of 100 we can be sure that there is a significant correlation between two variables, and there would be a 5% chance that the relationship does not exist. This error margin of 5% was used to test the null hypothesis. For the variables whose calculated p-value was less than 0.05, the null hypothesis that corresponded to it was accepted, otherwise rejected. Multiple regression model was used to establish the combined influence of all the predictors and organization planning policy on the dependent variable of this study. The Multiple regression model was $Y_j = \beta_0 + \beta_i X_i + \beta_{mi} X_{mi} + \epsilon_i$

Where:

Y_j = The dependent variable

β_0 = Population's regression constant

X_i = The potential predictors

β_i (i = 1, 2...n) are the population's regression ((need based, right based, asset based, donor driven approaches)

β_{mi} = Regression coefficient of the moderating variable

X_{mi} = Moderating variable

ϵ = Is the Model error variable.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section presents results arising from the analysis of data collected using questionnaires.

Donor pressure on development policies and strategies of NGOs in Kisumu County

The study first sought to examine the effect of Donor pressure on development policies and strategies of NGOs in Kisumu County. The results are summarized in Table 1 and discussed.

Table 1: Feedback on DDA (Donor pressure on development policies and strategies)

Response	Frequency	Valid percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Strongly Agree	59	50.4		
Agree	37	31.6		
Neutral	3	2.6		
Disagree	15	12.8		
Strongly Disagree	0	0.0		
Total	117	100	4.45	0.655

The results in Table 1 suggest that most (82%) of the respondents agreed with a mean of 4.45 and standard deviation of 0.655 that planning with Donor pressure on development policies and strategies influenced the performance of NGOs activities. These findings concur with Mhagama (2015) findings that most organizations based their performance on planning for Donor pressure on development policies and strategies..

Strict donor procedures

The study also sought to examine the effect of strict donor procedures on development policies and strategies of NGOs in Kisumu County. The results are summarized in Table 2 and discussed.

Table 2: Feedback on Donor Driven approach (Strict donor procedures)

Response	Frequency	Valid percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Strongly Agree	43	36.8		
Agree	38	32.5		
Neutral	19	16.2		
Disagree	11	9.4		
Strongly Disagree	6	5.1		
Total	117	100	3.86	1.166

Looking at Table 2, it is evident that majority (69.3%) of the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.86 and standard deviation of 1.166 that strict donor procedures influenced the performance of NGOs activities. These findings show that most organizations based their performance on planning for strict donor procedures.

Donor demand beyond organizational capacity

Finally, the study examined the effect of donor demand beyond organizational capacity on development policies and strategies of NGOs in Kisumu County. The results are summarized in Table 3 and discussed.

Table 3: Feedback on DDA (Donor demand beyond organizational capacity)

Response	Frequency	Valid percent	Mean	Standard deviation
Strongly Agree	25	21.4		
Agree	36	30.8		
Neutral	13	11.1		
Disagree	19	16.2		
Strongly Disagree	24	20.5		
Total	117	100	3.16	1.462

The findings in Table 3 suggest that most (52.2%) of the respondents agreed with a mean of 3.16 and standard deviation of 1.462 that donor demands beyond organizational capacity influenced the performance of NGOs activities. These findings show that most organizations based their performance on planning for donor demand beyond organizational capacity.

Regression Results

A simple linear regression analysis was performed to investigated the relationship between need based approach and NGOs performance. The results are as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Inferential statistics on the Influence of donor driven approach

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.530	0.281	0.216	0.809
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
		B	Std. Error	Beta
1	(Constant)	0.809	2.695	
	Donor Driven Approach	0.277	.135	.239

The regression analysis summary in Table 4 provides the value of R and R² for the model that has been derived. For these data, R has a value of .530 representing the simple correlation between donor driven approach and performance of NGOs activities. The value of R² is .281, which tells us that donor driven approach can account for 28.1% of the variation in NGOs performance. This means that 71.9% of the variation in performance of NGOs activities cannot be explained by donor driven approach alone. Therefore, there must be other variables that have an influence also. For these data, F is 4.299, which is significant at P = 0.001 < 0.05. Therefore, we conclude that our regression model results in significantly better prediction of performance of NGOs activities and, hence, reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between donor driven approach and performance of activities among NGOs in Kisumu County, Kenya. The results further indicates that β₀ = 0.809 and this implies that without any donor driven approach the model predicts that the performance of NGOs activities will be estimated at a constant of 0.809 units of other predictors not given in the model. The value of β₁ = 0.277 also implies that if our predictor variable is increased by one unit, then our model predicts that .249 of the NGOs performance in its activities. The regression model with need based approach alone is, therefore;

$$Y=0.809 + 0.277 \text{ Donor Driven Approach}$$

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The results indicated that majority of the respondents felt that donor pressure on development policies and strategies influence performance of NGOs activities. This result concurred with the views of Lundsgaarde et al., (2010) who explained that development policies and strategies are the engine to every successful project and every development partner analyses the implementers' concept to decide whether their agenda fit. These findings show also revealed that most organizations based their performance on planning for strict donor procedures. This finding was consistent with Muhumuza (2008) who observed that donor strictness results from the often weak policy environment in Africa that has permeated organizations leading to laxity in their performance. Therefore, donor nations have resorted to exerting tough influence over the powerful international institutions such as the UN, World Bank and IMF who in turn influence the shaping of the global policy environment. The findings further indicated that the donor agencies sometimes tended to push the NGOs to deliver beyond their normal capacity. This approach disagreed with Alexandre et al., (2013) who opined that NGOs should enjoy the process freedom since they are facilitators and just like other stakeholders and beneficiaries, the principles of basic needs, sustainability and human rights are core to their planning towards capacity building. Therefore, it was evident that donors exerted much influence over the NGOs projects to the extent of controlling their performance substantially.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The study sought to find the influence of donor driven approach on the performance of NGOs activities in Kisumu County. The finding revealed that planning for Donor pressure on development policies and strategies, Strict donor procedures and Donor demand beyond organizational capacity highly increases performance of NGOs activities while unclear processes for managing donor concerns tend to impede the NGOs performance generally. Thus, it was concluded that there is need to fully consider donor pressure on development policies and strategies during planning in order to enhance performance of NGOs activities. Consequently, it is imperative that the NGOs engage in capacity building exercises so as to improve their state of readiness for donor pressure on their project performance.

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