



# **Influence of Stakeholder Engagement on Completion of NG-Constituency Development Fund Projects in South Imenti Constituency Meru County, Kenya**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The successful completion of a project can be evaluated based on its timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and overall efficiency. To achieve effectiveness, a project must adhere to the predefined budget and deadlines while delivering results that meet the quality and requirements set by the procuring entity. The South Imenti Constituency has implemented multiple NG-CDF initiatives in an effort to provide its residents with high-quality services. However, the actual development progress indicated in the projected constituency development plan has not materialized as anticipated, mostly because of heightened project management issues that have resulted in a discernible gap. This study's primary goal was to evaluate how stakeholder engagement affects completion of NG-CDF funded projects in South Imenti constituency. The study used stakeholders' theory, and institutional theory as its theoretical framework to carry out the research. For the research technique, a descriptive research design was used. The study used a descriptive study and targeted all project management committee members among the 105 projects in the implementation phase which is 525 respondents. A sample size of 180 respondents from the target population were used to provide primary data in form of likert scale questionnaires. To collect primary data, semi-structured questionnaires would be used as the data collection approach. Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed in the analysis of the questionnaire data in order to derive significant findings. Tables and figures were used to display the result. From the findings respondents generally agreed that adequate communication and engagement efforts are employed, reflecting a positive perception of public awareness initiatives. Correlation analysis shows that stakeholder participation had a weak but significant relationship with project completion.

**Key words:** *stakeholder, project completion, NG-CDF*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

A project is a unique, time-limited effort that involves a series of coordinated tasks with defined start and end dates. It is carried out by an individual or an organization to meet specific goals within a set time frame, budget, and performance criteria (PMBOK, 2021). The term "temporary" suggests that every project has a beginning and an end, even if pinpointing these moments can be challenging; the start may evolve gradually, while the finish could occur over an extended period (Fischer et al., 2020). "Unique," in contrast, means that a product or service has particular characteristics that set it apart from similar offerings (Burke, 2013). To ensure a project's success, it is crucial to have management practices; conduct monitoring and evaluation, and engage the community in the project's activities.

Project management practices are the underlying issues that are inherent in the project, according to Lamprou and Vagiona (2022), and they must be maintained in order for teamwork to be accomplished successfully. They persist for the duration of the project and require daily maintenance. The key to project management success is adherence to project procedures, specifically meeting schedule, budget, and quality targets. It also takes into account how the management process was implemented.

According to Johansen et al. (2019), for a project to be successful and create good expectations for all parties involved, it must be completed by the owner, designer, engineer, contractor, or operator. Nonetheless, these requirements are unique to all parties involved. During the project control process, a wide range of decisions must be taken. Typically, the decisions made earlier in the design process have a bigger impact on the project control exercise. In order to optimize the employer and project's efficiency, the company was able to integrate general organizational control skills through project management activities. According to Kerzner (2019), a company and its industry should acknowledge best practices in project management in order to ensure the possible success of a project.

Project management may appear deceptively simple at first glance, but it entails numerous significant challenges. One of the main hurdles is ensuring that project goals align with the proposed plan while adhering to project constraints, such as scope, cost, time, and quality (Kerzner, 2022). Additionally,

according to Chofreh et al., (2020), optimizing resource allocation and integrating inputs to meet predefined objectives presents another obstacle. These challenges persistently manifest in project management across various industries, hindering the achievement of set goals and desired project outcomes. The study also indicates that many of these challenges can be attributed to human error, including inadequate project planning, ineffective resource allocation, limited management commitment, and a failure to implement proper project management practices.

The concept of project management practices encompasses fundamental issues inherent in projects and involves the practical application of project management tools, techniques, models, and standards (Englund & Graham, 2019). According to Mtolera (2022), project management practices revolve around the comprehensive planning and coordination of a project, from its inception to completion, with the aim of meeting specific criteria while ensuring timely, cost-effective delivery and maintaining the desired quality standards. Additionally, Mtolera (2022) argues that as project management has evolved, these practices have gained importance. They also contend that what may be considered best practices may not be suitable for every organization, as different situations require adaptable approaches to achieve successful outcomes.

The unique push by governments to decentralize various services, including social, political, and financial resources, has resulted in successful projects worldwide. Countries like Pakistan, India, Jamaica, and Papua New Guinea have embraced resource devolution as a key part of their development strategies, achieving significant progress compared to many African nations (World Bank, 2015).

Countries such as Rwanda, Ghana, and Uganda have implemented regional devolution of resources to local levels, similar to Kenya's NG-CDF. The Rwanda Development Board (RDB) noted in 2014 that construction projects significantly contribute to economic development. In the 2014/2015 financial year, Rwanda allocated 784.1 billion Rwandan Francs, representing 44.7 percent of the national budget (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2023). Proponents of resource devolution argue that it is an effective tool for steering development efforts, as it addresses the growing needs of rural communities often overlooked in national development programs (World Bank, 2020).

The NG-CDF board (2021) states that a Parliament statute established the fund in Kenya in 2003. The National Government Constituency Development Fund (NG-CDF) is the new name for this fund as of 2015. On February 19, 2016, it came into force, establishing the division of authorities and responsibilities between local and federal administrations. In order to forward the development goal, the NG-CDF Act Section 4 sub-section (2a) of 2015 mandates that at least two (2.5%) percent of the annual ordinary state revenue be allocated and distributed equally among all constituencies.

The NG-CDF money must be managed and controlled by the Constituency Development money Board (CDFB), which is tasked with ensuring that all constituencies get funding and that transparency, accountability, and openness are upheld in its use. This fund was formed by the Kenyan government on the grounds that local governance systems are more apt to understand community needs (NG-CDF, 2015).

A project is a short-term endeavor that a team undertakes with the goal of producing a special good or service within a given budget and time frame and with measurable results (Kerzner, 2022). According to Engebø et al., (2020), a project is considered completed when it is delivered by the parties involved within the mutually agreed-upon deadline outlined in the contract. Finishing projects on time significantly boosts a company's competitive edge (Enshassi, et al., 2018). This is predicated on the notion that fulfilling goals requires hitting production objectives within the allotted period. Although completing projects on schedule is essential to their success, controlling each one separately is still vital (Khan & Al Maktoumi, 2020). According to Barata (2014), completing a project means carrying it out in accordance with its strategic plan. Langat (2015) reported operationally done projects that included partially finished classrooms, restrooms, and gates. Project completion is determined by Kahiga (2015) using the real duration of accomplishment (days, weeks, months, or years) either prior to or following the scheduled period.

South Imenti constituency is among nine constituencies in Meru County. It is an electoral constituency with six electoral wards; Abogeta East, Abogeta West, Igoji West, Igoji East, Mitungu and Nkuene wards. It is an appropriate focus for the research since it has diverse nature; integrating a mixture of urban and rural environment setting.

Despite the Kenyan authorities' efforts to provide development funding, the number of unfinished projects has notably risen (Adek, 2016). Mangaria (2018) observes that many projects in Kenya fall short of their objectives concerning timelines, quality, and budget. Over 70 percent of these tasks are likely to extend their timelines by up to 50 percent, and more than 50 percent are expected to exceed their budgets by over 20 percent.

In order to achieve project success in terms of scope, quality, and budget, factors like customer satisfaction, project team efficiency, and subcontractor achievement are critical, according to a study by Adelek et al. (2019) on the impact of managing projects preparation on the success of Malaysia's construction industry. But whereas the current study tries to determine the factors affecting the conclusion of NG-CDF projects in South Imenti Constituency, Kenya, this research concentrated on Malaysia's construction industry. The Kenyan government reported a project failure rate of up to 51 percent (GOK, 2020). According to the National Taxpayers Association (NTA), about 40 percent of NG-CDF development projects were unaccounted for in 2021/2022, with 20 percent inadequately completed, and only 5 percent satisfactorily executed. The 2023 Economic Survey indicated that the national average performance of NG-CDF projects in Kenya was 42 percent.

Wanyonyi and James (2019) conducted investigation on the factors power the success of communal development projects in Bungoma County, finding that planning, monitoring and evaluation, communication, and stakeholder participation significantly impact undertaking performance. However, while their study focused broadly on community projects, the current research will specifically examine NG-CDF projects. Ensuring proper and effective project management is largely dependent on the project manager's educational background, communication skills, training of the project team, and involvement of stakeholders (Jerotich & Nyangã, 2023).

Implementation practices and public presentation of CDF construction projects in Kenya, finding significant relationships between project success and variables such as commissioning, procurement, communication, and resource allocation (Mutwiri et al., 2018). However, there is a lack of detailed information on these aspects specifically in South Imenti Constituency. Hence, the current study aimed to address these gaps by examining the factors influencing project management practices and their contribution in the completion of NG-CDF projects in South Imenti Constituency.

### **Objective of the Study**

The study sought to investigate the influence of stakeholder engagement on Completion of NG-CDF Projects in South Imenti Constituency Meru County Kenya.

### **Research Question**

How does stakeholders' engagement influence Completion of NG-CDF Projects in South Imenti Constituency Meru County Kenya?

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## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Stakeholders' Engagement and Project Completion**

Involving and collaborating with people, organizations, or other entities that are affected by or have a stake in a particular project or activity is referred to as "stakeholder engagement." Foltínová et al. (2020) define stakeholders as a broad collection of parties that may include employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, government agencies, and advocacy groups. The goal of involving stakeholders is to ensure that their needs, concerns, and opinions are considered and addressed throughout the project's lifespan. It involves active communication, consultation, and participation to gather feedback, gain support, and build relationships (Bahadorestani et al. 2020). Stakeholders' engagement helps in understanding their expectations, managing potential risks and conflicts, and maximizing project outcomes by incorporating diverse perspectives.

Eskerod and Huemann (2024) aimed to enhance projects sustainably through stakeholder inclusiveness. Their research was based on a longitudinal case study conducted from 2018 to 2022. To examine human behavior in events, they utilized a critical incident approach through observation. The findings from the study revealed that stakeholders who were involved demonstrated positive advancements in their engagement with the organizational process. Additionally, the organization's branding strategy contributed to an improved livelihood for the stakeholders involved in the project. The inclusion of stakeholders effectively minimized the likelihood of encountering unexpected negative experiences or feelings of disappointment.

An evaluation of the impact of stakeholder involvement on the performance of road construction projects in Nigeria was carried out by Nnadi and Oyama (2023). In order to gather data from a target population of 200 project managers, site engineers, design engineers, quantity surveyors, and land surveyors working for registered road construction companies in the Southeast Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, the study used a survey research design and employed questionnaires, direct observation, and oral interviews. The outcome demonstrated that stakeholder participation had a major impact on how well a road construction project performed.

According to the survey, one of the most significant project management knowledge areas that affects road construction is stakeholder involvement. Including stakeholders early on in the project life cycle will help to ensure that it runs well and reduce any additional risks that may arise. The research conducted by Mutheu and Perris (2021) provided support for this study by pointing out that the dimensions of measurement in project performance are chosen during the project conception phase to serve as a direction and guide for all project activities, allowing stakeholders to concentrate on the same goals.

A study by Mambwe et al. (2020) sought to examine the impact of stakeholder participation on construction project performance in Zambia's Lusaka area. The study used a descriptive research design with a quantitative methodology. Both primary and secondary data were gathered using a semi-structured questionnaire, which had an astounding 98% response rate. The study's conclusions showed a strong and favorable correlation between stakeholder participation and both the project schedule and the project requirements. Furthermore, a robust, albeit negative, connection between the involvement of stakeholders and the project cost was found in the results. Unlike the study above conducted in Zambia, the current research will focus on the implementation of growth in the market initiatives in Meru County, Kenya, and stakeholder participation.

Research by Njue et al. (2021) sought to ascertain the interaction between stakeholder engagement and the connection between public project delivery and long-term sustainability in Kenya. The study, which used a conceptual framework, concluded that there is a dualistic connection between stakeholder participation and the relationship between the implementation and sustainability of public projects. One way to think about the relationship between sustainability and public project implementation is via the lens of stakeholder involvement. On the other hand, it is believed that stakeholder involvement regulates or promotes the relationship between sustainability and the completion of public projects in Kenya.

Further Beldinne and Gachengo (2022) conducted a study to investigate the effect of resource management by stakeholders on the performance of road building initiatives in Siaya County, Kenya. Utilizing the explanatory research approach and stakeholder theory, the study was conducted. Participants in the study included contractors, members of the Siaya county government, and officials from the Kenya Urban Roads Authority (KURA). Using a census methodology, the study covered each of the four road development projects in Siaya County. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to evaluate the primary data, which was obtained through the use of a questionnaire. The study's conclusions showed a strong and positive correlation between the way stakeholders manage their resources and how well road building projects turn out. The study's ultimate conclusion was that road construction project success is significantly influenced by the efficiency with which stakeholders handle their resources.

In Meru County, Kenya, Mwirabua and Mohinder (2020) carried out a study to look into the variables affecting the completion of construction projects in public secondary schools. A random sample of 28 public secondary schools in Meru County was chosen from among the 192 registered schools that were the focus of the study. A random selection of one member of the Board of Management (BOM) and one member of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) was made from among these designated schools, yielding a sample size of 84 responders. In this descriptive research methodology, questionnaires were used to collect data, and both primary and secondary data were used.

The findings of the study revealed that 31.7% of the respondents believed that stakeholders were extensively involved in project buildings, 26.7% perceived high levels of stakeholder involvement, 15.7% indicated moderately high involvement, 13.3% reported low involvement, and only 8.3% observed very low involvement. The study suggested that the initial stages of a project tend to involve more stakeholders due to challenges and obstacles, but as the project progresses and falls into place, stakeholder involvement decreases. As a recommendation, the study proposed that the government should develop policies governing project construction in educational institutions that facilitate the active engagement of key stakeholders, proper procurement processes, financing strategies, and collaboration with construction professionals. These measures aim to enhance the successful completion of projects in public learning institutions, among other suggestions.

## **Theoretical Review**

### **Stakeholders' Theory**

Freeman (1998) proposed a theory regarding the management of a firm and its ethical considerations, which outlines the necessary values and principles for effective firm management. Oakley (2011) defines the stakeholder theory as a valuable framework for comprehending the relationship between a firm and its external environment. This theory emphasizes that managers should not solely prioritize profit maximization, but also acknowledge the interests of stakeholders and non-stockholding groups. Bondy and Matten (2011) argue that the stakeholder theory elucidates the moral and ethical aspects of managing parastatals, asserting the importance of considering the community and customers as stakeholders. Muchelule (2018) notes that communities expect parastatals to contribute significantly to charitable causes, while capital investors seek low risk and high returns, and customers desire affordability, quality, and good service. Consequently, the decisions made by parastatals must strike a balance between these conflicting and diverse demands (Johnson, Scholes & Whiting, 2008). Therefore, managers must align the interests of key stakeholder groups with the objectives of the parastatal.

In contrast to the conventional wisdom, the theory of stakeholders contends that parastatals have an obligation to give equal weight to the interests of all relevant parties, not only the owners or shareholders. Customers, workers, suppliers, financiers, communities, political parties, governmental entities, trade unions, associations, and rival businesses are all considered parties. Project managers of public projects can recognize every individual who makes a contribution to the project's success by implementing the stakeholder theory. However, the theory does not provide clear guidelines for comprehending and applying it, which has led to the development of substitute methods (Adan, 2012). Opponents contend that the theory's classification approach misleads some people and their respective categories since it concentrates too much on distinctions between categories rather than within them (Wolfe & Putler, 2012).

Fassin (2008) pointed out a weakness in the theory, stating that individuals can belong to multiple stakeholder groups simultaneously. This occurs when a person holds various roles within subgroups or across all of them. As a result, these individuals exert different influences on the project based on their varying roles and responsibilities (Kobusingye et al., 2017). The theory's weakness lies in its reliance on categorization, which is considered subjective. This subjectivity stems from the influence of stakeholders' backgrounds, local environments, and individuals with vested interests in the process (Morrow, 2016). Furthermore, stakeholders' interests, influence, and power fluctuate across different stages, making it challenging to generalize information about stakeholders.

According to Olander (2007), Stanford's definition of the theory is deemed narrow, while Freeman's definition is regarded as overly broad. Freeman's definition encompasses almost everyone (Lu et al., 2013). Clarkson (1994) further refines the definition to include individuals who are at risk due to the firm's investments or activities. In this study, the theory was employed to identify the various stakeholders engaged in the NG-CDF projects.

### **Institutional Theory**

The concept of institutional theory, introduced by Scott in 1991, emphasizes the role of institutions in shaping organizational design and performance assessment. According to Scott, organizations are localized manifestations of larger institutions, and conforming to institutionalized criteria enhances legitimacy, reduces confusion, and improves the understanding of an organization's actions and activities. This theory looks at how organizational climate and hierarchical culture affect the efficacy of project management, as noted by Brammer and Walker (2012). In the context of public sector sustainable service programs, it is especially pertinent. Understanding the pressures for institutions to become more homogeneous which may result in a reduction in institutional diversity is made easier by institutional theory. Companies make an effort to follow recognizable and well acknowledged industry standards, which helps to increase their credibility.

Furthermore, the theory emphasizes the importance of effective policies throughout all stages of a project, including performance evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation can indicate changes and pressures that necessitate government adaptation. The regular re-evaluation helps determine the effects of proposed changes on the project team's response to environmental factors and leadership support. This hypothesis is crucial for implementing viable projects in organizations that serve the general public. Project feasibility is also interconnected with this theory, as it requires considering all internal and external factors. Risk and opportunities need to be assessed based on how the organization perceives its environment. Project feasibility determine how the organizational structure will align with project implementation (Brammer & Walker, 2012).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Response Rate

The researcher distributed 180 questionnaires to the NG-CDF Project Management Committee Members within Imenti South constituency comprising; education, security and emergency construction projects.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Valid</b>	Response	152	84.4
	Non - Response	28	15.6
	<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Out of 180 distributed questionnaires, only 152 were returned, resulting in a response rate of 84.4 percent. This response rate is considered satisfactory and suggests that the findings can be generalized. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2018), a response rate above 70 percent is acceptable in research.

### stakeholder participation and project completion

The objective of the study sought to Investigate the influence of stakeholder engagement on Completion of NG-CDF Projects in South Imenti Constituency Meru County Kenya. Respondents were presented with questions and statements in order to seek answers to the first research question; how does stakeholders' engagement influence Completion of NG-CDF Projects in South Imenti Constituency Meru County Kenya? The findings of the study are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Stakeholder Participation**

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
<b>Information about NG-CDF projects is shared with stakeholders through public awareness and engagement initiatives</b>	152	1.00	5.00	3.70	1.081
<b>Beneficiaries of the project are involved in its planning.</b>	152	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.001
<b>Involvement allows project beneficiaries to accept some responsibility during both the planning and implementation phases.</b>	152	1.00	5.00	3.57	1.098
<b>The project progresses, beneficiaries are accountable for the successful completion of specific tasks crucial to the execution process</b>	152	1.00	5.00	3.53	1.045
<b>Valid N (listwise)</b>	152				

The findings from Table 2 provide valuable insights into the perceptions surrounding stakeholder engagement in NG-CDF projects. Respondents agreed on the statement regarding the sharing of information about NG-CDF projects with stakeholders through public awareness and engagement initiatives as supported by a mean of 3.70 and a standard deviation of 1.081. This suggests that respondents generally agree that adequate communication and engagement efforts are employed. The standard deviation of 1.081 indicates a moderate level of variability in responses, signifying that while many respondents endorse the positive engagement, some may perceive shortcomings in the effectiveness of these initiatives.

On beneficiary involvement in planning, respondents were neutral on the aspect with a mean of 3.43 and a standard deviation of 1.001. This indicates that while there is recognition of some level of inclusivity, the lower mean score compared to information sharing points to potential gaps in beneficiary engagement during the initial project stages. The standard deviation of 1.001 suggests that opinions on this matter are relatively uniform among respondents, indicating a consensus on the need for more thorough involvement.

Respondents agreed on the statement regarding the notion that involvement allows beneficiaries to accept responsibility during both planning and implementation phases (Mean=3.57, Std Deviation=1.098). This high lightens that respondents generally view beneficiary participation as beneficial for fostering accountability in project execution. However, the standard deviation of 1.098 indicates some diversity in opinions, which may warrant further examination of different respondent experiences.

Further respondents were in agreement on the role of beneficiary accountability in the successful completion of specific tasks (Mean= 3.53, STD deviation=1.045). Respondents appear to recognize the important role beneficiaries play in the project's execution process. The standard deviation of 1.045 again reflects a range of responses, implying that while many recognize this accountability, others may still question the extent to which beneficiaries are held responsible.

These findings concur to those of study by Oisanga (2023) whose findings revealed that when beneficiaries are actively involved in both planning and implementation, they are more likely to accept responsibility and ensure successful completion of projects in Public Secondary Schools in North Mugirango Constituency in Nyamira County. Muturi and Owino (2016) indicated that effective information sharing through public forums and community engagement enhanced project transparency and encouraged greater participation from stakeholders.

Nanono (2022) argued that beneficiary involvement is positively related to NGO project success in Tanzania. A participatory approach helps NGOs get appropriate field-level information and share knowledge and skills, which is essential in undertaking joint projects that address complex community issues. Similarly, beneficiary involvement creates a monitoring mechanism such that those responsible for the project receive feedback from end users throughout project implementation, which allows them to take necessary actions, making the project more responsive, valuable, and successful (Bandé, Ika, & Ouédraogo, 2024).

Respondents were also required to give their own recommendations towards enhancing stakeholders' involvement in NG-CDF funded Development projects, respondents cited early and inclusive engagement, awareness and transparency campaigns, establishment of clear communication channels and strengthening of community representation as the most effects aspects of enhancing stakeholders' involvement.

### Correlation Analysis

A correlation coefficient is a coefficient that illustrates a quantitative measure of some correlation and dependence, meaning statistical relationships between two or more random variables or observed data values (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2009). Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficients were used to test for linearity in the relationships between the variables.

**Table 3: Correlation**

		Stakeholder's participation	Project completion
<b>Stakeholder's participation</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	152	
<b>Project completion</b>	Pearson Correlation	0.131**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	
	N	152	152

The study revealed a positive and significant association between independent factors (Stakeholder's participation) and the completion of projects funded by NG-Constituency Development Fund in South Imenti Constituency, Meru County. the study in table 3 shows that stakeholder's participation ( $r=0.131$ ,  $p=0.002$ ) has a weak and significant relationship with project completion.

### Regression Analysis

The study aimed at finding out the overall effect of Stakeholder's engagement on completion of projects funded by NG-Constituency Development Fund in South Imenti Constituency, Meru County, Kenya.

**Table 4: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.768 <sup>a</sup>	0.688	0.634	0.20956

a. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder's participation

From the findings in Table 4 Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is called the coefficient of determination which completion of NG-CDF projects in Imenti South Constituency varies with Stakeholder's participation. The value of adjusted R<sup>2</sup> is 0.634. This implied that, there was a variation of 63.4% of completion of NG-CDF projects in Imenti South Constituency is a result of variation of Stakeholder's participation, while the other 36.6% variation in completion of project is caused by the variables not included in this study hence need for further research.

**Table 5: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	0.469	4	0.117	23.451	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	16.098	147	0.260		
Total	16.567	151			

a. Dependent Variable: project completion

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder's participation

Table 5 gives an F-test to determine whether the model fits the data well. The F-Test (F=23.451, P=0.000) indicated that the model formed between the Completion of NG- CDF projects in the Imenti South constituency and project management practices had data with significant goodness of fit.

**Table 6: Coefficient of Determination**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.243	0.552		2.253	0.002
Stakeholder's Participation,	0.494	0.070	0.030	0.235	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: project completion

Source: Researcher (2024)

The general form of the linear regression equation to predict  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1$  is predicted as

$$Y = 1.243 + 0.494 X_1$$

Where;

$X_1$  is Stakeholder's engagement

The findings from the regression analysis highlight the significant factors influencing the completion of Ng-CDF funded projects in the Imenti South constituency. stakeholder engagement emerges as a critical element, contributing a substantial positive effect of 0.494 on project completion rates. This underscores the importance of involving stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle, enhancing cooperation and resource mobilization.

## Conclusion

The study concludes that stakeholder engagement has a positive but limited role in NG-CDF project completion in South Imenti Constituency. Communication and public awareness efforts are generally effective, though there is room for more consistent strategies. Beneficiary involvement in the planning phase is seen as lacking, indicating a need for improvement to enhance project ownership and success. While beneficiary participation during project execution fosters accountability, opinions on its effectiveness vary. The study finds a weak but significant correlation between stakeholder participation and project completion, suggesting that other factors also play important roles. Improving communication, early-stage involvement, and accountability could strengthen project outcomes.

## Recommendation

Based on the findings, the study found out that stakeholder engagement, project feasibility, project management skills training and monitoring and evaluation were the significant factors that mainly influence project management practices on the Completion of NG-CDF projects in Imenti South Constituency and suggested the following recommendations:

To improve beneficiary involvement in project planning, it is important to implement structured engagement strategies, such as workshops and focus groups. This inclusive approach can increase stakeholder investment, satisfaction, and alignment with community needs. Although current communication efforts are recognized, there is potential for enhancement. Regular feedback loops like surveys and community forums should be established to monitor public perceptions and awareness. Additionally, keeping beneficiaries informed about their roles can boost accountability and contribute to more successful project outcomes.

To enhance stakeholder engagement, it is crucial to implement targeted strategies such as regular consultations, progress updates, and soliciting feedback to solidify relationships with both public and private sector stakeholders. Additionally, addressing concerns about technical feasibility and risk management is vital. This can be achieved through further assessments, additional training for staff, clear communication of risk mitigation plans, and regular reviews of technical approaches to ensure stakeholders are informed and involved in decision-making.

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