
Influence of Stakeholders' Participation on Performance of National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Program in Kenya

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Abstract:

Purpose: This study examines the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Program (NARIGP) in Kenya, addressing the challenges faced by county government projects despite their critical role in supporting livelihoods and economic development.

Material/methods: An explanatory research design was employed, targeting 229 respondents, including project managers, sponsors, and community members. Stratified sampling was used to select participants, and structured and semi-structured questionnaires were administered via Google Forms. A pilot study conducted in Kiminini sub-county ensured validity and reliability. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics in SPSS (Version 27.0), while qualitative data underwent thematic analysis. Regression analysis was performed to determine the significance of stakeholder participation in project performance.

Findings: The study revealed that stakeholder participation significantly influences the performance of NARIGP. Key practices, such as involving stakeholders in decision-making, encouraging feedback, and fostering engagement throughout the project lifecycle, were identified as critical to project success.

Conclusion: Effective stakeholder participation improves project performance by enhancing decision-making, fostering collaboration, and strengthening stakeholder relationships. Lack of such practices contributes to the poor outcomes of many county government projects, as evidenced by the high percentage of stalled or abandoned NARIGP initiatives.

Value: The study underscores the importance of stakeholder engagement in project implementation, providing actionable recommendations for project managers to facilitate inclusive and collaborative processes. Structured forums, workshops, and cross-collaboration initiatives are essential for improving project outcomes and ensuring sustainable development impacts in county government projects.

Keywords: Stakeholder, Participation, Performance, NARIGP, Projects

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1. Introduction

The National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) is a Government of Kenya (GoK) project that is implemented through the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock Fisheries and Irrigation (MoALF&I), State Department for Crop Development (SDCD), with funding support from the World Bank. The project was approved by The World Bank board on 23rd August 2016 and was effective on 28th July 2017 and was to run for five years. The Project Development Objective was to increase agricultural productivity and profitability of targeted rural communities in selected Counties, and in the event of an Eligible Crisis or Emergency, to provide an immediate and effective response. The project covers 21 counties, NARIGP is supporting these counties to increase agricultural productivity and profitability of rural communities for the identified priority value chains, the project has four component intervention areas: Support community driven development, strengthening producer organizations and value chain development, Supporting County Community-Led development and Project coordination and management and ICT.

Stakeholder participation involves individuals in an organizational framework by having them discuss and collaborate within multiple interests, institutions, and networks. This strategy fosters civic identity while also involving individuals in decision-making. Stakeholder involvement, according to Magassouba, Tambi, Alkhlaifat, and Abdullah (2019), is crucial for good government. According to Karanja (2014), completing a public assessment is essential for identifying public needs, issues, and distressed groups and how suggested revitalization activities would affect them. A public assessment aids in determining the people's priorities and vision, and an effective revival project should address these objectives and visions. According to Karanja (2014), effective stakeholder participation may give several advantages, such as improving information flow, boosting public awareness of local government initiatives, encouraging public advocacy, fostering collaboration, minimizing disputes, and achieving environmental protection. Stakeholder participation's key goals are to inform, engage, consult, cooperate, and empower the public through different mechanisms, such as elections or society organizations activities, in which community feedback is sought at all strategy phases.

Stakeholder engagement offers decision-making units a variety of policy development choices. It is critical to remember that incorporating stakeholders in decision-making results in diverse stakeholder viewpoints. According to Korne (2020), successful engagement helps connect stakeholder requirements with corporate objectives and is the foundation for effective method development. Finding common ground or shared motives allows a group of stakeholders to make a choice that has a meaningful outcome. According to Martin, Reinhardt, and Gurtner (2021), stakeholder involvement contributes to forming good and successful relationships over time. This collaboration fosters a mutually beneficial relationship and enables stakeholders to spot trends and developing problems that may influence the project now or in the future. According to Ulibarri, Scott, and Perez-Figueroa (2019), including stakeholders entails having the community participate in defining the priorities they want the government to address (2019). Projects implemented without sufficient engagement with community people may be unsustainable or may not serve most of

those using them. According to Mieszkowski and Kardas (2015), increasing stakeholder engagement is the only method to enhance the project's performance, even in the private sector (2015). Increasing strong stakeholder engagement is the most efficient strategy to decrease waste. According to Paloniemi et al. (2015), stakeholder engagement enhances the likelihood of recognizing possible setbacks that may influence the project throughout execution.

The significance of stakeholder engagement has grown in recent years, particularly in terms of public engagement in project management and protection (Ogunde et al., 2017). Because stakeholder engagement methods entail a social process, it is critical to inform the public about how to participate and to underline the importance of the project management process in addressing their needs (Shanmuganathan and Baskar, 2016). Participation is an essential component of a democratic system because it allows individuals to be involved in delivering government services. The county government is the closest to the people and is important in establishing participatory democracy (Rossi, 2012).

However, However, a recent study by the World Bank (2021) indicates that most counties implementing the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Program (NARIGP) have not delivered significant development projects to their communities, with an alarming 57% failure rate attributed to various issues. Overall, project failure in Kenya is reported at 47%. A report by the Mars Group (2019) highlights that projects initiated between 2009 and 2013, totaling over 12 billion, remain incomplete: only 12% of these projects have been completed, 15% are ongoing, 67% have stalled, and 6% have been abandoned. Given the substantial consequences of these failed projects, it is crucial to investigate the causes and factors contributing to the poor performance of county projects. This analysis will facilitate the development of effective recommendations aimed at preventing similar failures in the future.

Effective stakeholder engagement practices are critical to project performance. However, there has been a notable decline in project management practices, characterized by a lack of community participation in project identification, inadequate feedback on service delivery, and a general absence of ownership towards projects. Despite this, many initiatives successfully achieve their goals and receive positive evaluations. Nonetheless, stakeholders often face financial losses, legal issues, negative media coverage from dissatisfied community members, project rejections, and the emergence of non-viable projects—often referred to as "white elephants" (Karanja, 2014). Similarly, Jack, Okeke, Okechukwu, and Akinola (2016) emphasize that the lack of stakeholder participation and involvement in establishing project objectives further exacerbates the challenges faced. Therefore, this study examines the influence of stakeholder participation on the performance of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Program in Kenya.

2. Theoretical and Literature Review

This study was guided by Freeman's (1994) stakeholder theory. According to Freeman (1994), this theory concentrates on organizational management and ethical concerns in business and offers light on organizational culture in management. The idea emphasizes that corporations must incorporate individual and team issues that may impact their actions while making choices and accomplishing their goals (Gibson, 2000). The stakeholder theory investigates how the organization interacts with its micro and

microenvironments and how this affects its actions (Filippone, 2012). According to Bourne (2009), stakeholders can be internal or external to the firm. Clients, suppliers, personnel, NGOs, contractors, government, and the local community are all examples of stakeholders in a specific project. According to Danny (2014), by recognizing and assessing community interests, businesses may make decisions that positively impact the neighborhood or prevent damage from occurring. Following laws and regulations, adhering to legally binding contracts, or responding to grievances and pressure from the public are examples of such decisions. The notion of stakeholders redefines the institution and how it should be perceived. Managers must manage the company for the advantage of its stakeholders, guaranteeing them involvement in decision-making while also serving as the stakeholders' agent to secure the firm's existence and defend each firm's long-term goals (Friedman, 2006). Via stakeholder relationships, this approach stresses a firm's social aspects.

Danny (2014) states that firms may make decisions that help the environment. According to Harrison, Bosse, and colleagues (2007), an organization produces value when it meets the demands of its key stakeholders in a mutually advantageous manner while considering the needs of all stakeholders, not just shareholders. According to Sloan an organization is a group of stakeholders who trade information, services, and resources. Stakeholders are categorized into two broad groups: primary and secondary stakeholders. Individuals or groups touched favorably or negatively by the organization's goals, such as shareholders, vendors, workers, and consumers, are considered primary stakeholders. Secondary stakeholders are groups indirectly impacted by an organization's actions, such as non- governmental organizations, funding agencies, and the general public (Sloan 2009). Stakeholders' theory emphasizes the relationship between monitoring and the performance of projects and how they relate to the project based on the project objectives, the process of achieving these goals, and how to keep the team motivated to achieve them (Njogu 2018). Successful project teams are composed of individuals who share common goals and act in the same manner (Obare 2016). Sambasivan and Soon (2010) state that project monitoring and performance of agricultural based projects is a global phenomenon affecting the overall economy of countries. Therefore, the stakeholder theory helps demonstrate stakeholder participation in the performance of Kenya's National agricultural and rural inclusive growth program.

2.1. Empirical Review

Kipkoech (2022) looked at how the project's performance at Ngara Park was influenced by the stakeholder's participation process of identifying, planning, monitoring, evaluating, and implementing a project. A descriptive survey research approach was utilized in the study, which comprised 250 participants, including beneficiaries, community members, project contractors, and project managers. The sample size for the study was 154 people, and it was conducted using a cluster sampling approach. Semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedules were employed. Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 22) examined quantitative data comprising descriptive and inferential analytic techniques. Subject matter and discourse analysis were used to assess qualitative data from interview sessions. The study found that

programs with stakeholder involvement during project identification performed better. According to the report's results, for stakeholder participation to result in better project performance, adequate time must be allowed for proper resource and cost planning.

King'ori (2022) researched to investigate how stakeholders' participation during the project life cycle influenced the success of the Managed Equipment Services project in Nairobi County. The investigation utilized a descriptive research methodology and stratified random selection to recruit 60 respondents from a target group of 150 departmental heads and management at senior levels from Kenyatta National Hospital, Mbagathi Hospital, Mama Lucy Kibaki Hospital, and Mathare Hospital. The study obtained primary data using a self-administered questionnaire method and analyzed the data using the method of multiple regression analysis. The findings indicated that stakeholders had little participation in project identification and planning. The study also discovered that stakeholder participation substantially influenced project performance.

In Ghana, the Savelugu-Nanton Municipality Assembly, Sulemana (2018), undertook a case study to analyze stakeholders' engagement in monitoring and analyzing district assembly initiatives and activities. The study used a mix of qualitative and quantitative approaches to collect data from 196 individuals, including semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. The interview participants were chosen purposefully, but the quantitative research method utilized simple random selection. The use of inferential as well as descriptive statistics was required for data analysis. According to the study's findings, stakeholder participation throughout the planning process was deemed suitable.

Orimba, Mungai, and Awiti (2018) researched the influence of stakeholder involvement in the project life cycle on the success of the Stop Child Marriage project in Homabay County, Kenya. Using Sekeran's sample size formulae, the study randomly sampled 113 respondents from representing 51 community-based and civil society. The study sampled respondents using random sampling. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with SPSS software assisting. According to the study's findings, stakeholders did not participate in the planning workshop to implement the activities. Additionally, the analysis discovered a substantial relationship between stakeholder participation in project implementation and performance outcomes, indicating inadequate stakeholder engagement in the execution of the Stop Child Marriage initiative in Homabay County.

Wamugu and Ogollah (2017) investigated how the successful implementation of CDF projects in Mathira East constituency in Kenya was affected by stakeholder participation. The descriptive research approach was used, and the target population was the Constituency Development Fund committee members. A sample of 85 participants was chosen using proportionate random sampling, while respondents were selected using simple random sampling. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics, with SPSS and MS Excel software assisting in the process. The study found that including stakeholders during the start stage was beneficial and substantially influenced CDF projects in Mathira East Constituency.

Research to assess the influence of stakeholder involvement on the execution of road projects in (KeNHA). The study collected quantitative and qualitative data, such as

surveys and interview schedules. A stratified random sample approach was used to choose 251 respondents from Prequalified Contractors, KeNHA Top management (Job Group 7-10), and Prequalified Consultants. According to the findings, project communication, feasibility studies, and organizing seminars and conferences all impacted road project performance (Nyandika, and Ngugi, 2014).

In Isiolo North Constituency, Kenya, research was done by Adan (2012) to analyze the influence of stakeholder involvement on the performance of projects supported by the Constituency Development Fund. The descriptive study approach was utilized, and the target population consisted of persons involved in the execution of 155 CDF projects in the constituency. Semi-structured questionnaires and interview schedules were used to gather data, and descriptive and inferential analyses were used. The study discovered that the responsibilities of project leaders and public officials significantly impacted improving the project's performance (Adan, 2012).

In Nairobi County, Kenya, research was conducted by Njogu (2016) on the influence of stakeholder engagement on project success in the Nema Vehicle Emission Control Project. The descriptive survey research approach was utilized, and the study population included 181 respondents, including managers, project managers, operations managers, supervisors, and quality control officers. The sample was chosen using stratified sampling. Primary data was acquired via a questionnaire. The research found that including stakeholders in the project, monitoring has a favorable and significant impact on the success of the Vehicle Emission Control Project (Njogu, 2016).

3. Material and methods

The study's conceptual foundation is based on the Positivist philosophy, which is seen to help understand the problems that impact project success in Kenya. This study used an explanatory analysis design to demonstrate the causal effect link rather than just describing the events under investigation (Gratton and Jones, 2010).

3.1 Target Population and sampling

The study focused on a target population of 229 respondents, comprising various accounting officers involved in the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP) in Kenya. This group included County Project Coordinators, agricultural component leaders, community-driven leaders, line project managers, finance officers, project donors, the National Project Coordinator, and Directors of Supply Chain Management. These individuals are directly benefiting from 20 ongoing micro-projects across 21 counties in sectors such as agriculture, livestock, fisheries, irrigation, cooperative development, crop development, water and environment, land and physical planning, and public works (Kothari, 2011). From this target population, a sample size of 146 was determined, using a simple random sampling method to select respondents.

3.2 Data Collection instruments and Procedure

The study used structured questionnaires to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The questionnaires were administered to the sampled respondents concerning their responsibilities in the agriculture sector. A Likert scale in the questionnaire was employed where most questions were structured on an agreement continuum using a 5-point Likert-type scale. The mixed questionnaires are presented on a Likert scale, with a score of 1-5, tabulated as follows: 1= Strongly Disagree; 2= Disagree; 3= Somewhat Agree; 4= Agree; 5=Strongly Agree. A pilot study was conducted to check the accuracy and appropriateness of the research design and instruments. The aim is to make sure that the questionnaire is consistent, clear, and can be understood. The questionnaire was piloted using 15 respondents drawn from the target population. Mugenda (2003) asserts that 10% of the sample population is adequate for piloting. The validity and reliability of the research tool were also determined. Face validity was applied in the early phases of designing the questionnaire. Face validity was attained by supervisors critiquing the questionnaire. Experts examining the items give their opinions, and necessary adjustments were made to fit their purpose. According to Middleton (2020), face validity reflects how appropriate the content of a test is on the surface or face of it if the content of the test appears to be suitable to its stated aims. The study was evaluated for content validity using the Content Validity Index (CVI). According to Polit and Beck (2011), a content validity index with at least six experts should give a maximum CVI of 0.8. Further, construct validity was used to validate the instruments. Construct validity is when a tool or test can measure what it is intended to measure. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated to determine the correlation between different items under study.

3.3 Data Analysis and Model specification

The primary raw data was obtained from the questionnaires and checked for omissions, legibility, and consistency before being coded for analysis. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27 was used to analyze quantitative and inferential statistics. The inferential analysis was used in examining the association between stakeholder participation and the performance of NARIGIP in Kenya. The regression model adopted was;

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \varepsilon + Z$$

Where: Y = performance of NARIGIP, X_1 = Stakeholders Participation, β_0 is a constant (in which the value of the dependent variable is; Y when all the independent variables are 0), β_1 is the regression coefficients or change induced by independent. ε : The error term.

4. Findings and Discussion

The main aim of the study was the determination of the influence of project management practices on the performance of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Program in Kenya. 125 of the 146 surveys that were distributed were completed and returned, accounting for 85.61% of the responses.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The analysis of stakeholder participation reveals a generally positive perception across various dimensions, with mean scores indicating moderate to positive engagement. Findings showed that stakeholders feel a strong sense of collaboration with the project team, which is critical for fostering a supportive environment and ensuring project success (Mean = 3.94, Std. Dev = 1.20). Another strong area of perception relates to stakeholder ownership and commitment, with findings indicating that stakeholders feel a genuine sense of investment in the project, which can greatly enhance their participation and support throughout its lifecycle (Mean = 3.89, Std. Dev = 1.40). Additionally, stakeholders perceive that their contributions are acknowledged and valued by the project team (Mean = 3.81, Std. Dev = 1.15). Findings showed that many stakeholders feel inadequately equipped with the information and resources necessary for effective participation (Mean = 2.77, Std. Dev = 1.39). Ensuring access to relevant data and tools is vital for empowering stakeholders to engage meaningfully in project activities.

Moreover, stakeholders reported a moderate level of communication regarding project updates (Mean = 3.10, Std. Dev = 1.49). This score highlights a critical area for enhancement, as consistent and transparent communication is essential for maintaining trust and engagement among stakeholders. There was an opportunity for stakeholders to provide feedback and suggestions (Mean = 3.39, Std. Dev = 1.28), indicating that while some avenues exist for input, there may be room for improvement in the mechanisms facilitating this engagement. The overall score reflecting showed a moderate perception of stakeholder involvement (Mean = 3.08, Std. Dev = 0.79). This indicates that while there are strengths in certain aspects of participation, significant improvements are needed to ensure that stakeholder voices are integrated throughout the project lifecycle.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Stakeholders Participation

	Mean	Std. Dev
Stakeholders are actively involved in the decision-making process of the project.	3.15	1.26
Stakeholders have ample opportunities to provide feedback and suggestions for the project.	2.81	1.10
Stakeholders are regularly updated on the progress and milestones of the project.	3.00	1.06
Stakeholders are provided with the necessary information and resources to participate effectively in the project.	3.15	0.95
Stakeholders' perspectives and concerns are considered and integrated into the project planning and execution.	2.87	1.28
Stakeholders' contributions and inputs are acknowledged and valued by the project team.	2.74	0.93
The project team actively seeks and encourage stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle.	2.86	1.11

Stakeholders have a sense of ownership and commitment to the project's success.	2.49	0.80
The project team collaborates with stakeholders address any issues or challenges that arise during the project.	2.34	0.67
Stakeholders have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the project.	2.22	0.65
Stakeholders' participation	3.08	0.79

The descriptive statistics summarized in Table 2 provide valuable insights into the performance of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP). Each performance indicator reveals different facets of project execution, reflecting the respondents' sentiments regarding its success. The findings indicate that respondents perceive the project as having somewhat met its intended aims (Mean = 2.94, Std. Dev = 1.32), stayed within budget (Mean = 2.85, Std. Dev = 1.41), and delivered quality outputs (Mean = 2.86, Std. Dev = 1.44). The significant standard deviations imply that experiences related to these aspects varied markedly among stakeholders, suggesting that some may have encountered severe budget constraints or quality issues, while others had a more satisfactory experience.

In terms of stakeholder expectations, the findings show that the project outcomes have largely failed to meet the anticipations of those involved (Mean = 2.82, Std. Dev = 1.37). This reinforces a sense of disappointment among respondents, and the variability in responses indicates that specific groups may feel particularly let down by the project's results. On a more positive note, the project received a higher mean score (Mean = 3.46, Std. Dev = 1.39) for its effectiveness in addressing identified risks and issues, suggesting that risk management is perceived as a relative success. However, the high standard deviation indicates that while some stakeholders recognize effective risk management, others may have had negative experiences or perceptions. The indicator reflecting the project's ability to generate positive impacts has the highest mean (Mean = 3.59, Std. Dev = 1.40), suggesting that respondents generally see value in the benefits provided to both the organization and the wider community. Nevertheless, similar to other indicators, the high standard deviation indicates that this perception is not uniform across all stakeholders. Lastly, the overall performance score (Mean = 3.07, Std. Dev = 0.75), which sits just above the midpoint, suggests a mixed but generally positive perception of NARIGP's effectiveness. The lower standard deviation compared to individual metrics suggests greater consensus among respondents regarding overall performance, even as specific areas show considerable variation in satisfaction. In conclusion, while NARIGP demonstrates strengths in risk management and perceived positive impacts, significant challenges remain regarding goal achievement, budget adherence, and stakeholder satisfaction.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for NARIGP performance

	Mean	Std. Dev
The project has achieved its intended goals and objectives.	2.94	1.32
The project was completed within the allocated time frame.	3.07	1.43
The project was completed within the allocated budget.	2.85	1.41
The project deliverables meet the desired quality standards.	2.86	1.44

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The project outcomes have met or exceeded stakeholders' expectations.	2.82	1.37
The project has effectively addressed identified risks and issues.	3.46	1.39
The project has generated positive impacts or benefits for the organization or community.	3.53	1.40
NARIGP performance	3.07	0.75

4.2 Correlation Analysis

The results of the Pearson correlation analysis shown in Table 3 illuminate the relationship between NARIGP performance and stakeholder participation. The analysis reveals a strong positive correlation between the two variables ($r = 0.724$, $p = 0.000$). This significant correlation at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) suggests that higher levels of stakeholder participation are linked to improved performance outcomes for the NARIGP. This finding establishes a solid foundation for conducting further regression analysis, as it supports the hypothesis that increases in stakeholder involvement may lead to enhanced project performance

Table 3 Pearson correlation analysis

		NARIGP Performanc e	Stakeholders' Participation
NARIGP performance	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	125	
Stakeholders' participation	Pearson Correlation	.724**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	125	125

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

4.3 Regression analysis

The regression analysis results presented in Table 3 reveal critical insights into the relationship between stakeholder participation and NARIGP performance. The R squared value of 0.524 indicates that approximately 52.4% of the variance in project performance can be attributed to stakeholder involvement, suggesting a moderately strong explanatory power for the model. Additionally, the ANOVA results, showcasing an F-value of 135.511 with a significance level of 0.000, confirm that the model significantly predicts NARIGP performance, indicating that stakeholder engagement plays a vital role in project outcomes. The unstandardized coefficient for stakeholder participation is 0.691, implying that for every one-unit increase in stakeholder involvement, there is a corresponding increase of 0.691 units in NARIGP performance. The standardized coefficient (Beta) of 0.724 further highlights the strength of this relationship, while the p-value of 0.000 affirms the statistical significance of the findings. These results indicate that actively involving stakeholders is not merely

beneficial but essential for enhancing the effectiveness of the project. The results align with the conclusions of multiple studies. For instance, Kipkoech (2022) found that programs with strong stakeholder involvement during project identification performed better. This reinforces the notion that thorough stakeholder engagement from the outset is crucial for successful project outcomes. Furthermore, Kipkoech emphasized that allowing adequate time for proper resource and cost planning is essential for stakeholder participation to translate into improved performance. Similarly, King'ori (2022) reported that limited stakeholder participation in project identification and planning negatively impacted project performance, underscoring the need for increased involvement in these critical early stages. Savelugu-Nanton Municipality Assembly, Sulemana (2018) also noted that stakeholder participation throughout the planning process was vital for success, reinforcing the idea that early engagement is crucial. Conversely, Orimba, Mungai, and Awiti (2018) highlighted that inadequate participation in planning workshops detracted from performance outcomes, suggesting a direct link between involvement in project implementation and overall success. Wamugu and Ogollah (2017) further supported the findings by demonstrating that early-stage stakeholder inclusion significantly benefited project outcomes in the Constituency Development Fund (CDF) context. Consistent with this, Nyandika and Ngugi (2014) noted that effective project communication, feasibility studies, and stakeholder involvement in organizing seminars and conferences played significant roles in enhancing road project performance. Lastly, Njogu (2016) and Adan (2012) contended that active stakeholder involvement in project monitoring positively influences project success, a sentiment that resonates with the findings of the current analysis.

Table 3 Regression analysis

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	0.942	0.189		4.985	0.000
Stakeholders' participation	0.691	0.059	0.724	11.641	0.000
Model Summary Statistics					
R	0.724				
R Square	0.524				
Adjusted R Square	0.520				
ANOVA for goodness of fit)					
F	135.511				
Sig.	.000				

a Dependent Variable: NARIGP performance

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study demonstrates that stakeholder participation—such as actively involving stakeholders in the decision-making process, providing ample opportunities for feedback and suggestions, acknowledging and valuing their contributions, and encouraging engagement throughout the project lifecycle—enhances the performance of the NARIGP. Increased stakeholder involvement is directly linked to improved project outcomes, highlighting the critical role that engagement plays in

achieving success. These findings underscore the necessity for project managers to prioritize and facilitate stakeholder engagement at every phase of the project lifecycle. Insights from existing literature further strengthen the argument that proactive stakeholder involvement not only improves performance but also fosters better planning and execution of projects, ultimately leading to more successful outcomes. Increasing collaboration with the project team encourages stakeholders to feel a strong sense of ownership and commitment to the project's goals, which can further enhance NARIGP performance. However, there are areas in need of improvement, particularly in providing stakeholders with the necessary information and resources for effective participation. While strengths in stakeholder engagement exist, additional efforts are required to ensure that stakeholders are fully integrated and actively involved throughout the project lifecycle.

6.0 Recommendations

To enhance stakeholder participation and improve the performance of the National Agricultural and Rural Inclusive Growth Project (NARIGP), several key recommendations should be implemented. First, project managers should facilitate structured opportunities for stakeholders to be actively involved in the decision-making process by creating forums, workshops, or meetings that allow for input and influence on project directions and strategies. Improving feedback mechanisms is essential, and this can be achieved through regular surveys, suggestion boxes, or dedicated feedback sessions that cultivate open dialogue and constructive criticism. Additionally, it is crucial to acknowledge stakeholder contributions by implementing recognition programs that value their inputs, thereby fostering a sense of appreciation and encouraging ongoing engagement. To maintain interest and participation, establishing clear and consistent communication channels is vital, including regular updates through newsletters, emails, or community meetings informing stakeholders of project developments, challenges, and achievements. Encouraging stakeholders to take ownership of specific project components by aligning responsibilities with their interests can further enhance their investment in the project's success. Furthermore, providing necessary resources and training will empower stakeholders to participate effectively, ensuring access to relevant information and tools that facilitate meaningful contributions to project activities. Involving stakeholders early in the project planning phase is also recommended to gather their insights and perspectives, shaping objectives and strategies that align with their needs and expectations. Lastly, promoting cross-collaboration among stakeholders and between the project team can strengthen relationships and enhance cooperation throughout the lifecycle. By implementing these recommendations, project managers can significantly enhance stakeholder participation, ultimately leading to improved project performance and greater satisfaction among all parties involved.

7.0 Further Studies

Despite the study's contributions to understanding stakeholder participation and performance improvement within NARIGP, it is important to acknowledge that this research was limited to the NARIGP context; further studies should consider replicating this analysis in other development projects to validate findings across different settings. Additionally, the study primarily employed a quantitative approach, so future research utilizing a mixed-methods design could provide a more comprehensive understanding of stakeholder engagement, allowing for deeper insights into the qualitative aspects of

participation that may influence project outcomes

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