

Abstract

This study examined in detail factors that affect the performance of Constituency Development Fund (CDF) projects in Kenya. There have been numerous reports by scholars, professionals, the media and civil rights organizations that the whole CDF ideology is being used as a tool for embezzlement of public funds as opposed to it being a devolved development vehicle; part of the cited malpractice area is in the entire procurement process of the projects' materials, goods and services. The public rants that procurement is highly unsatisfactory with numerous cases of corrupt activities including collusion of some CDF Committee members being suppliers, which raises the question of conflict of interest. There is also the aspect of poor entrepreneurial attitude by the Small and Medium Enterprises (SME) who are supposed to be promoted by supplying to the CDF projects but majority lack the ethics to pay taxes or even be registered in order for Constituency Development Fund Committee (CDFC) to contract them within law. The public has also raised questions about governance and political interference of the fund; some members of the CDFC are ill informed about project management and therefore put in doubt their ability to manage and govern the CDF funded projects effectively. Scenarios of some ghost projects has also become rampant and the question is if real time monitoring and evaluation is done to make sure that projects being implemented are on schedule without misappropriation of public funds. Finally, the very Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) that are supposed to be promoted by them supplying to the CDF funded projects most of the time lack the capacity to make the supplies which makes one wonder if CDF should stick to promoting SMEs. This results to majority (over sixty percent, 60 %) of CDF projects delay, stalling or abort since the procurement process is not justifiable; one wonders whether there is a policy about CDF projects procurement process is supposed to be done, governance and composition of the CDFC to be free of arm twisting by politicians, training exists for SMEs on best practice entrepreneurial activities, monitoring and evaluation criterion is highly questionable as well as initiatives to help the SMEs improve on their capacity The study therefore sought to identify factors that affect the performance of CDF projects in Kenya. The researcher found out that: procurement process of CDF projects is not effectively done, SMEs totally lack entrepreneurial practices/attitude, governance of CDF projects is marred with political interference, monitoring and evaluation is uncoordinated, ineffective and does not promote superior performance of CDF funded projects and finally SMEs lack the capacity to undertake CDF funded projects to enhance performance of CDF funded projects in Kenya.

These five factors-procurement, entrepreneurial attitude, governance and political interference, monitoring and evaluation and capacity constraints directly affect CDF project performance which in turn has resulted into CDF projects in Kikuyu Constituency being rated by the public (as the evaluators) as being behind schedule (88 % percent of projects), with a paltry 12 % of projects being on schedule and no project was rated as being ahead of schedule (0 %).