

**CHANGE MANAGEMENT AT INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR  
TROPICAL AGRICULTURE, NAIROBI, KENYA**

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**A RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT  
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## DECLARATION

This project is my original work and has not been presented to any university or institution of higher learning and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Date .....

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D61/60207/2011

This research project has been submitted with my approval as the university supervisor.

Signed.....

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## **DEDICATION**

To my parents Mr. and Mrs. Achuti, my beloved husband Paul and daughters Sharleen and Vanessa: I cherish your love and support. Thanks for being there for me.

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

- OST** - Open Systems Theory
- CIAT** - International Center for Tropical Agriculture
- NGO** - Non-Governmental Organizations
- CGIAR** - Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research
- ICRAF** - International Center for Research in Agroforestry
- ICIPE** - International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology

## ABSTRACT

The dynamics in the market have created challenges for both public and private organizations to reorganize the operations of the firm to meet the challenges and opportunities of the day. Change is inherent in contemporary organizations and its management is not only critical to organizational success and survival but is also at the crux of the field of organization development. Change management practices include a variety of organizational interventions that, when executed properly and in consistency with internal and external organizational events, facilitate the enactment of organizational change processes. The objective of the study is to evaluate the Change Management at the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Nairobi, Kenya. The research adopted a case study where five interviewees were selected and interviewed on the change management process in the organization. The findings were that the top management and the respective heads of different departments were the lead persons tasked with the spearheading the change process in the organization. Effective communication process between various departments and staff involved was found to be an important factor in the successful implementation of the change process. Training plays an important role in the change process by empowering employee and early involvement of all the staff is vital in creating ownership of the change process. Challenges that the organization face in its change management process includes resistance to change by supervisors which trickles down to the staff they supervise. The external factors that affect change process in the organization include reduced funding resulting from the influence from competing NGO's who sometimes negatively influence staff in a bid to promote resistance and this result in scaling of funding from the donors. A lack of adequate resources that compete for the core activities of the organization as well the change process is an inhibiting factor to change management. Future research is recommended to use mixed methods research in order to validate the results of this research, and apply a longitudinal study to better capture the relationships between change process and organizational performance. Organizations should focus on the identified gaps on implementing change management process, especially in the applicability of change theories and be more synthetical rather than analytical. Since, the data in the research was collected from middle level managers of the organizations on the basis of their subjective evaluations; objective change indicators in the findings might have elements of subjectivity considering that they are involved in implementation of the change process.



# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the study

To survive and grow, organizations must adapt to changes in their environment since the present day operating environments has become quite unpredictable due to the many changes happening in the technological, cultural, political, social and competitive levels. Hodge and Johnson (2007) point that when the environment changes and the niche originally filled by the organization either becomes unimportant or is superseded, the organization must change or die. According to Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) to be effective, strategic change management should be multi-disciplinary, touching all aspects of the organization. However, it has been recognized by many researchers, that at its core, implementing new procedures, technologies, and overcoming resistance to strategic change are fundamentally human resource management issues and it will be important to estimate what impact a change will likely have on employee behaviour patterns, work processes, technological requirements, and motivation (Lewis et al., 2006).

This study is based on the open systems theory. The open systems theory (OST) refers simply to the concept that organizations are strongly influenced by their environment (Bastedo, 2004). OST is a modern systems-based change management theory designed to create healthy, resilient and innovative organizations and communities in today's environment characterised by a fast changing and unpredictable environments. Pfeffer &

Salancik (2003) point that as organizations and communities conduct their business they influence and change their external environments, while at the same time being influenced by external changes in local and global environments in a two-way influential change known as active adaptive change. The environment consists of other organizations that exert various forces of an economic, political, or social nature. The environment also provides key resources that sustain the organization and lead to change and survival (Scott, 2002). Organizations and communities are open systems; changing and influencing each other over time.

The changes in the environment occasioned by global climate and economy which has affected soil and crop production has necessitated concerted efforts from the government, private sector and the non-governmental organizations in order to combat the challenge before it gets out of hand. The International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT) has been at the forefront in undertaking research in order to reduce hunger and poverty, and improve human health in the tropics through research aimed at increasing the eco-efficiency of agriculture. With globalization come greater challenges that require CIAT to undertake changes in order to achieve their objective. This can only be achieved through change management. .

### **1.1.1 Change Management**

Johnson and Scholes (2002) define change management as the deliberate and coordinated actions taken to transform an organization to overcome environmental challenges in order to achieve its objectives. Hence organizations are undertaking strategic changes in order to align their business strategies to the environment thereby matching the resources and

activities of an organization to that environment. Hill and Jones (2001) further views change management as a move from a present state to a future state that increases competitiveness advantage. For an organization to sustain the momentum on normal day-to-day pressures to meet customer demands and in order to avoid situations where people will return to the methods and behaviours that they are familiar and comfortable with, it is necessary to provide resources for change. Buchanan and Boddy (1992) noted, an enormous responsibility falls upon the change management team hence the organization should give support to the change agents in order for them to motivate others to deal with change difficulties.

Successful adaptation to change is as crucial within an organization as it is in the natural world. Just like plants and animals, organizations and the individuals in them inevitably encounter changing conditions that they are powerless to control. Adaptation might involve establishing a structured methodology for responding to changes in the business environment (such as a fluctuation in the economy, or a threat from a competitor) or establishing coping mechanisms for responding to changes in the workplace (such as new policies, or technologies) (Kuenzi and Schminke, 2009). Change processes which encompass human resources, information technology adoption and upgrades, tools and techniques, as well as the basic rules and controls within the organization are the mandate of leaders engaged in the management of change (Bainbridge, 1996). It is up to the leaders to make these change initiatives tangible rather than conceptual and to stimulate enthusiasm and ownership of the proposed changes within the corporate environment.

Change management requires tools, processes, skills and principles to be effective. The responsibility for managing change is with the management and executives of the organization; they must manage the change in a way that employees can cope with. The manager has a responsibility to facilitate and enable change by understanding the situation from an objective standpoint, and then to help people understand reasons, aims, and ways of responding positively according to employees' own situations and capabilities (Yazici, 2009).

### **1.1.2 Non-Governmental Organization Sector in Kenya**

A non-governmental organization (N.G.O) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. Task-oriented and driven by people with a common interest, N.G.Os performs a variety of service and humanitarian functions. These include bringing citizen concerns to governments, advocating and monitoring policies and encouraging political participation through provision of information. Some N.G.Os are organized around specific issues, such as human rights, environment or health. They provide analysis and expertise, serve as early warning mechanisms and help monitor and implement international agreements.

Most non-governmental organizations in Kenya are funded by private donors, international agencies and the Kenyan Government initiatives. The operations of the local NGOs has come into focus from both the government and other stakeholders majorly due to what is perceived as their inclination to holding seminars in urban centres without necessarily their activities being felt in the local communities especially those NGOs concerned with poverty elevation and fight of diseases. Considering that most of these

NGOs are health based and aim in the improvement of the livelihood of most Kenyans who live below the poverty line, there is need for their activities to be concentrated in rural areas where majority of the challenges that they deal with. The funding of the NGO sector has also lately been affected especially after the financial crisis the financial sector of western countries as well as the economic depression. With this challenge, it has forced the NGOs to scale down in their activities and also diversify their income sources by some even establishing income generating to supplement their income.

### **1.1.3 International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT)**

CIAT was established in 1970, as one of the four original research centers in the Consultative Group of International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and now works in more than 50 countries worldwide. We focus on scientific solutions to hunger in the tropics. The International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), is working in collaboration with hundreds of partners across the developing world, is dedicated to developing technologies, innovative methods, and new knowledge that better enable farmers, mainly smallholders, to improve their crop production, incomes, and management of natural resources. While aware of the many constraints to farming in the tropics, CIAT's founders saw this vast region as a world of promise, where agriculture, with the aid of modern science, might contribute substantially to reducing hunger and poverty. Since no single organization can address the whole of tropical agriculture, CIAT complements the efforts of other members of the CGIAR Consortium and numerous partners by focusing strategically on selected crops and research areas.

Within CGIAR, CIAT has global responsibility for the improvement of beans, cassava, and tropical forages – crops that have historically been neglected by research despite their vital importance for food and nutrition security. It also conducts research on rice and tropical fruits for Latin America and the Caribbean. All of the Center’s work on agricultural biodiversity – encompassing diverse food groups – employs advanced biotechnology to discover useful knowledge and accelerate crop improvement. Progress in CIAT’s crop improvement research also depends on unique collections of genetic resources (65,000 crop samples in all) which it holds in trust for humanity.

CIAT conducts research on two major issues that cut across tropical crops and production niches:

sustainable management of tropical soils, and decisions and policies that are critical for coping with challenges such as climate change, environmental degradation, gender inequities, and weak links between farmers and markets. Guided by a vision of eco-efficiency, CIAT’s work amply demonstrates how economically and ecologically efficient use of resources can raise agricultural productivity to improve livelihoods while minimizing negative environmental impacts. Reflecting farmers’ centuries-old concern with prudent resource use, the Center’s eco-efficiency approach is especially necessary now in the face of multiple crises centering on the global climate, environment, and economy. These pressures make it increasingly difficult for tropical agriculture to keep pace with the rising demand for its products without continued over-use of agrochemicals and unsustainable mining of natural resources. Reversing this trend requires revised

policies and renewed investments, which make it attractive and feasible for farmers to adopt more eco-efficient crops and production systems.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

It is important for any organization to be able to identify where it needs to be in the future, and how to manage the changes required getting there. An understanding of the human and business issues alongside the change process ensures that organizations are conscious and cautious in handling change not forgetting that their employees are one of their major assets. According to Stoner et al. (2008), when change occurs, employees face a potentially uncomfortable period of adjustment as they settle into a new organizational structure or a redefined job. Bovey & Hede (2001) assert that the process of change management deals with aligning people, business, resources and cultures with a shift in organizational directions. During these transitions, many organizations usually encounter many problems that cause delays and additional costs thus affecting implementation of the desired changes.

CIAT recently went through organizational changes some of which were driven by external forces such as the environment. These changes required a new approach in order to ensure a smooth transition, continuity and sustainability of the organization. According to the consortium's research, recent turmoil in food, energy and financial markets was likely persist in the years to come and climate change was expected to constrain productivity (CGIAR, 2009). In the recent years, CIAT has gone through some internal changes with regard to its organization structure in Africa. The Africa regional office was

set up in January 2012 as part of CIAT's overall strategy to strengthen and consolidate its activities in the African region. This involved moving of its offices from the World Agro- (ICRAF) in Gigiri to the International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (ICIPE) in Kasarani, Nairobi. There have also been some leadership changes affecting the senior management of the organization. The changes made above are aimed at improving the level of efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and hastening the realization of the organizational objectives.

Studies that have been undertaken on change management include Kibisu (2010) study on Management of change at Zain Kenya. The study found out that there was dominantly planned change management approach adopted by Zain Kenya which was successful and the brand continues to be among the leading telecommunication companies in Kenya. Maina (2012) undertook a study on managing change at National Bank of Kenya limited and established that NBK had embraced reliable change management practices in its change process. The study observed that numerous challenges were faced in change management process. Kiarie (2012) undertook a study on critical success factors of change management in non- governmental organizations in Nairobi, Kenya and established that all organizations under study had implemented the change management projects and were successfully completed by the organizations and this was attributed to leadership and governance, networking, communication, stakeholder involvement, finance and technical capacity. There appears to be no study that has been undertaken on change management at International Centre for Tropical Agriculture. How was change managed at International Centre for Tropical Agriculture, Nairobi, Kenya?



### **1.3 Research Objective**

The objective of the study were;

- i. To determine change management process at International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Nairobi, Kenya
- ii. To determine challenges of change management at International Centre for Tropical Agriculture.

### **1.4 Value of the study**

The findings of the study is of value to the three schools of thought that form the basis on which change management theoretical framework as it will enable the study to conceptualize and empirically operationalized change management. Particular attention will be paid to the difference between human and business dimensions influence on change management.

The findings of the study create a better understanding of the implications and importance of the human and business dimension in change management at CIAT. In this way the management will be better informed with regard to revising the existing change management strategies to suit all the stakeholders in the entire change process. The findings of the study would be further of interest to other institutions that want to undertake change as they will have knowledge on the role being played by the human and business dimensions. The study would also help the institutions in formulating a policy on areas that necessitate strategic change management.

This study is relevant to management practice as it would assist the institution in evaluating each individual employee and their role in change management. The study will contribute onto the general knowledge of human issues in change management and how best employees can be involved in the change process. For academicians, this study will form the foundation upon which other related and replicated studies can be based on. Scholars will find it important as the study will increase the body of knowledge in this area.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In this chapter, literature of relevant to the study was reviewed. Key areas of literature that took center stage in this section include the theoretical framework organizational change management, change management models and the change management challenges.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Foundation**

The theoretical perspective in a research reflects the researcher's theoretical orientation, which is crucial to interpreting the data in a qualitative study, irrespective of whether it is explicitly or implicitly stated (Kilbourn, 2006). The debates on organizational change management process can be addressed in light of a number of theories. This study will be based on the open system theory.

##### **2.2.1 Open systems theory**

Open systems theory (OST) refers simply to the concept that organizations are strongly influenced by their environment (Bastedo, 2004). OST is a modern systems-based changed management theory designed to create healthy, innovative and resilient organizations and communities in today's fast changing and unpredictable environments. As organizations and communities conduct their business they influence and change their

external environments, while at the same time being influenced by external changes in local and global environments in a two-way influential change known as active adaptive change (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). The environment consists of other organizations that exert various forces of an economic, political, or social nature. The environment also provides key resources that sustain the organization and lead to change and survival (Scott, 2002). Organizations and communities are open systems; changing and influencing each other over time.

Organizations are open systems and therefore it is composed of a number of interconnected sub-systems. It follows that any change in one sub-system will have an impact on the other parts of the system and consequently on its overall performance. The objective of the open systems approach is to structure the functions of a business in such a manner that through clearly defined lines of coordination and interdependence, the overall business objectives are collectively pursued (Burnes, 2004). There are four major subsystems in organizations as suggested by (Miller, 2003). They consist of the goals and values sub-system (strategic plan, policies and regulations), technical sub-system (inputs and outputs) and the managerial sub-system.

To ensure viability an open system must have an open and active adaptive relationship with its external environment because a healthy viable open system has a direct correlation with respect to changing values and expectations over time with its external environment (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). This means that if the values and expectations of a certain organization or community are out of sync with those that exist in the external environment then that particular organization or community will eventually become

unhealthy and unviable. People too are open systems. Through their actions they influence and change their external environment, and at the same time are constantly being influenced by changes in the external environment (Scott, 2002). From an employee's perspective, the organization itself is their immediate external environment. The aggregated effect of this influential change between people, their organization and/or community and the external environment is known as socio-ecological (people-in-system-in-environment) change. In today's globalised and networked world socio-ecological change is relentless and increasing exponentially (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003).

### **2.3 Organizational Change Management**

Change management is the process of managing the effective implementation of organizational strategies, ensuring that permanent changes in goals, behaviors, relationships, processes and systems are achieved for business advantage. Conceptually, the change process starts with an awareness of the need for change. Analysis of the situation and the factors that have led to a diagnosis of their distinctive characteristics and an indication of the direction in which action needs to be taken. Possible courses of action can then be identified and evaluated and a choice made of the preferred action (Armstrong, 2006). According to Herscovitch and Meyer (2002) to be effective, change management should be multi-disciplinary, touching all aspects of the organization. However, at its core, implementing new procedures, technologies, and overcoming resistance to change are fundamentally human resource management issues. It is also important to estimate what impact a change will likely have on employee behaviour patterns, work processes, technological requirements, and motivation.

While organizational change is a constant experience, knowledge and awareness about many of the critical issues involved in the management of such change is often lacking in those responsible for its progress (Samuel 2013). Clearly, if organizations are ever to experience a greater level of success in their development efforts, managers and executives need to have a better framework for thinking about change and an understanding of the key issues which accompany change management. Change management has been linked to the organization's competitiveness and response to changes in the environment. Ansoff and McDonnell (1990), state that changes arise out of the need for organizations to exploit existing or emerging opportunities and deal with threats in the market. It is crucial that organizations seek to create a competitive advantage and wherever possible innovate to improve their competitive positions. This implies the readiness to change within the organization and the ability to implement the proposed change.

## **2.4 Change Management Models**

Change management models are typically ways of representing and describing through a series of steps, or stages a theoretical understanding of the change process (Rothwell & Sullivan 2005). Various change management models have been developed to explain the different phases that organizations go through in the change process. Different models, methods and tools have been developed to deal with the change process. Such tools and methods are often dependent on the change that is required. Coaching people during the change process and facilitating learning of the skills that are needed to deal successfully

with the new environment is also essential (Paton *et al.*, 2008). In a world of accelerated and constant change, the capacity of an organization to change is viewed as a more critical success factor and is a more important corporate asset than the type of change model adopted by the company.

#### **2.4.1 Kotter's 8 –Step Model**

Kotter's 8 –Step Model as cited in Mullins (2005) built on Lewin's three step model to create a more detailed approach for implementing change. Kotter's (1985) noted that managers failed in implementing change because of the following reasons: inability to create urgency about change, absence of a vision for change and failure to effectively communicate that vision, failure to provide achievable goals and not anchoring the changes into the organizational culture.

For effective implementation of change, Kotter (1985) suggested eight steps which are: establishing a sense of urgency by creating a compelling reason for why change is needed, forming a coalition with enough to lead the change, creating a new vision to direct the change and strategies for achieving the vision, communicating the vision throughout the organization, empowering others to act on the vision by removing barriers to change and encouraging risk taking and creative problem solving, planning for, creating and rewarding short term "wins" that move the organization towards the new vision, consolidating improvements, reassess change and make necessary adjustments in the new programmes and reinforcing the change by demonstrating the relations between new behaviors and organizational success.

### **2.4.2 Lewin's 3 step model of change**

Lewin's 3 step model of change describes the change process of an organizational system as a series of transitions between different states of unfreezing, transition state and re-freezing (Burnes, 2004). The unfreezing state is the initial state of the system which reflects a condition of relative stability. When a disruptive force affects the status quo, people are motivated to discontinue some aspects of the behaviour. Unfreezing is seen as the most difficult and important state in the change process. The transition state represents a phase of the change process when people are no longer acting as they used to, but are set in a new behaviour pattern. The need to reduce anxiety promotes a powerful desire for seeking out, processing and utilizing information to create a new state of stability or revert to the old state. One of the consistent findings about the change process is that there is initially a decrease in an organization's performance as change is implemented into the ongoing activities of the organization (Fullan, 2001).

Herold, *et al.*, (2002) posits that refreezing state occurs once employees have achieved a new set of conditions and attitudes have begun to express these in new daily behaviour. For new behaviors to last, they must fit into the personality of the individual and the culture of the organization that is being changed. Otherwise the behaviour will be only a temporary adaptation to the pressure of the change situation and will erode once the change agent has ceased to disconfirm the old behaviour. When the unfreezing and the transition states are well planned and managed, the result of the refreezing process is the desired state. If the first states are however not handled well, the people and the organization will refreeze but not necessarily to the desired state.



### **2.4.3 Congruence Model of Organization Behaviour**

Nadler and Tushman (1979) came up with the congruence model of organization behaviour. The main point of this model is that all elements need to be in alignment in order to work. The main inputs into the system of this model are the environment, the resources available, the strategy and history of the organization. In considering the use of this model, a comprehensive evaluation of the drivers of change in the environment should be part of the initial analysis. Employees who will be affected by the change should be involved at the onset in the identification of the drivers of change in the environment. Training should be provided to improve employees' skills but also needs to be supported in terms of coaching, monitoring customer feedback and recruiting new staff into the organization with real expertise in the area of focus. Garvin and Roberto (2000) found that successful change management programmes were based on the manager doing significant work in advance to ensure staff will consider new ways of working, a critical ingredient of success in all change programmes.

The transformational process is made up of four key components. These include the work to be done by the organization, the individual who do the job, the formal structures and processes in place to motivate performance and the informal arrangements such as communication and influence, which characterize how the organization functions. A reward system should be set up and monitored to ensure the right behaviors are being encouraged. Targets need to be agreed on in advance of the change so that the success of the transformation process can be assessed as the project progresses. Outputs include how goals of the organization are achieved, how resources are achieved, how resources are

used, how people adapt to the change process, and overall, how successful change initiative has been. Performance goals are an essential elements of successful change initiatives and according to Walsh (2000), these goals need to be an integral part of the design of a change initiative.

## **2.5 Change Management Challenges**

Change usually involves the introduction of new procedures, people or ways of working that have a direct impact on the various stakeholders within an organization. This leads to a number of challenges that manifest themselves under different names or other guises. Each of these challenges is unique, yet they are simultaneously independent and interrelated. Overcoming any one independently is insufficient for realizing sustainable change. For change to be successful in the knowledge economy, an organization has to overcome all the challenges. According to Dalziel & Schoonover (2008), failure to recognize barriers that arise from cultural or organizational conditions can severely impede implementation and acceptance of a change. Some challenges to strategic change management as pointed out by Dalziel & Schoonover (2008), are: incompatibility with the new organizational structure i.e. outdated technical, operational and physical environment, and formal and informal company traditions.

The much needed change can stall because of inwardly focused cultures, paralyzing bureaucracy, parochial politics and low levels of trust. Lack of team work, arrogant attitudes, lack of leadership in middle management and the general fear of the unknown can also be a serious challenge in change implementation. Other challenges include

resistance to change, low stability, and high levels of stress, misdirected energy, conflict and loss of momentum. There is need to do everything possible to anticipate reactions and likely impediments to the introduction of change (Armstrong, 2006). Ineffective change management sponsorship from senior leaders has also been identified as the primary challenges of strategic change management. An absent, invisible or unengaged sponsor sends just as strong of a message to employees about the importance of a change as an engaged and active sponsor. Another challenge is lack of resources and funding available to conduct the necessary planning and implementation of strategic change management (Green & Cameron, 2009). McMillan (2008) posits that when there is change management resources dedicated to a change initiative, the project is more successful. Without a dedicated change management resource, change management activities slip and there is not a single point of contact focused on the people side of change.

Resistance to strategic change is often considered to be the major source of resistance within organizations and the key reasons why change initiatives fail and persists to haunt even in future. Well thought out acceptance within employers and employees is based on an approach that integrates everyone involved in a way that promotes commitment and desire to change (Schein, 1993). As organizations continue to experience changes even the slightest, management must ensure that employees see that the change process has priority, is beneficial, and is permanently present and that key information is not lost within the chain. Therefore the key levers of attention management include effective branding, in depth, personal, top management communication and demonstrative, regular

monitoring (Paton *et al.*, 2008). Pringle *et al.*, (2006) observes that although each company's circumstances account for some of the problems, widespread problems have one common root; the managers and subordinates view strategic change differently. Both groups know that vision and leadership drive successful strategic change, but few leaders recognize ways in which individuals commit to change to bring it about.

Employees resist change most often because they lack awareness of the need for change and they fear the impacts of the change. Poor communication is also another challenge. Poor communications tend to share in-depth details about the project such as status updates and development rather than the rationale for the change, and are often delivered by someone other than the preferred senders such as a project leader or communication specialist (Dalziel & Schoonover, 2008). Equally getting senior executives and project teams to buy in to the need for change management and realize the financial benefits of change management is a another challenge. Without full support or understanding around the necessity for change management, change management is often either brought on to a project too late, under tasked only with communications and training activities, or not utilized on the project at all (Galavan *et al.*, 2008).

Armstrong (2006) contends that employees in the lower levels in organizations are eager to make changes but encounter resistance from their senior managers due to the skewed assumptions. In many cases, when the planned changes in organizations do not go as planned, managers seek to make changes in employees while the real problem could be in the system (systemic problem). Many managers do not differentiate between challenges brought by individuals and those brought by the systems. To succeed, one must differentiate the two and address them accordingly. Another key mistake committed by

managers and change agents in trying to bring about changes is attempts to replicate strategies and change management practices that were successfully use elsewhere to their organizations without taking cognizance of the context of change. A strategy successfully used to manage change in one organization may fail in another due to differences in some variables. For instance, organizations have unique organizational culture which consists of different employee's values, beliefs, morals, rituals and power systems (Dalziel & Schoonover, 2008).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology that was used to carry out the study. The chapter describes the proposed research design, data collection instruments and how data was analyzed.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is a plan or blueprint of how a person intends to conduct his/her research (Babbie and Mouton, 2004). The research design was a case study. A case study is an in-depth investigation of an individual, institution or phenomenon. Case study research design attempts to describe or define a subject, often by creating a profile of a group of problems, people, or events, through the collection of data and tabulation of the frequencies on research variables or their interaction (Schindler, 2003).

Case studies are particularly popular in organizational research and are well suited to capturing the social world of people in understanding a real life situation (Babbie and Mouton, 2004). The research design was used to identify change management at international centre for tropical agriculture (CIAT), Nairobi, Kenya. The reason for this choice is based on the knowledge that case studies are the most appropriate for examining

the processes by which events unfold, as well as exploring causal relationships and also they provide a holistic understanding of the phenomena.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

Kothari, (2004) refers to data collection as those which are collected afresh and for the first time and thus original in character. The study used primary data which was collected using an interview guide. Five respondents were interviewed and they include Research Area Director, Regional Coordinator for Africa, Chief of Operations-Corporate Services, Financial Coordinator-Africa and the Human Resource and Administration Coordinator. These are considered to be key informants for the study. Key informants are also a source of information that can assist in understanding the context of an organization, or clarifying particular issues or problems.

The method used in this study was that of a semi-structured interview, in which the interviewer has a structured plan of investigation, namely a set of pre-determined questions. The interview focused on obtaining qualitative data. The procedure was done through personal interview which requires an interviewer asking questions face to face. This method is preferred as it allowed the researcher to utilize the probing technique assisting in collection of a vast and rich amount of data.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The data obtained was analyzed using content analysis which involved a systematic qualitative description of the respondent's answers to the questions posed in the interview

guide. It involved observation and detailed description of the objects, items or things that comprise the study.

Content analysis, as a class of methods at the intersection of the qualitative and quantitative traditions, is used for rigorous exploration of many important but difficult-to-study issues of interest to management researchers (Carley, 2003). This approach was more appropriate for the study because it allowed for deep, sense, detailed accounts in changing conditions.



## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The research objective was to evaluate the Change Management at the International Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Nairobi, Kenya. This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objective and discussion of the same. It covers the change management process at CIAT as well the challenges faced in the undertaking of the change management process.

#### **4.2 Change Management process at CIAT**

This section of the interview guide sought to establish from the respondents how the Change Management practices at CIAT take place. The section covered question on the involved in the change process, employee involvement and strategic process period, persons involved in the process and the involvement of the staff in the process.

The success of an organizational change process will be determined by the team leaders guiding the process and the influence that they have on the other staff in the organization. On the question of who are involved in the change management process at CIAT, the respondents pointed that the top management and the respective heads of different departments are the champions. Since the change management process involves staff and changing of the working structures in the organization, it was also pointed that the human

resource department staff as well as the corporate head and the communication and knowledge management team play a critical role. The respondents appreciated the all inclusivity of the process at CIAT which they appreciated had enhanced the level of acceptance of the change process. The need to involve all the staff and other external groups that facilitate a successful change process was observed to be important by the respondents noted that in order to succeed, strategic change management must be carried out properly by ensuring that all stakeholders are included in the process from the beginning. They point that change identification, engaging the people, support of top management, making a communication a top priority, time and line leadership are essentials for effective change management.

For effective change management in an organization there need to an elaborate communication process between various departments and staff involved. Towards the same, the researcher sought to establish how communication among various departments take place and through what medium and final establish whether the communication system adopted by a firm will influence the success of the change management process. On the question of whether communication plays, all the respondents acknowledged that indeed communication is important to the realization of an organizations change process. It was pointed that communication is vital in creating awareness of the change, the need to change and clearing doubts about the impending change so that employees embrace the change and have the desire to change. The respondents noted that communication plays the role of changing the individual behavior of employees to adopt the change since it plays a big role because a change process that is not communicated will be resisted however positive because of short disturbances term.

Another point that reinforces the importance of having efficient communication system in the firm is that it explains the change process to all the employees, it clarifies issues and give direction, it gives a clear picture of where the organization wants to be in future and gives employees confidence in the new project being implemented. They pointed that during the adoption of the paperless system at CIAT (One corporate system) communication played a big role in giving employees confidence that they will not lose their jobs. Another example was that most employees resisted the restructuring process that was done in the year 2012 because of the new reporting lines that came into being i.e. finance separation from accounting. It was through effective communication that was initiated by CIAT upon noting the resistance that employees gained confidence to move forward with the change. An integral part of strategic change is effective internal communication that corresponds to each stage of the strategy. Communicating to employees as internal stakeholders is viewed as crucial for the outcome of change programmes. Launching a planned communication strategy for the purpose of informing timely is a prerequisite for fruitful feedback and eventual success.

A change process can be complex to customize and operationalized in an organization. There is need for a prior training on the staff members that will spearhead the process who should be ready to mitigate the challenges that come through and also capitalize on the benefits that result from the process. The researcher sought to establish the impact of training on effective change management process at CIAT. On this question, the respondents were unanimous that indeed training plays an important role in the change process. It was appreciated that training empowers employees to gain the required skills and knowledge of the change for example when the organization adopted the paperless

system, it was necessary for staff to be trained in order to have the required skills of the new system. Through training, employees acquire confidence of the change program e.g. the training received during the adoption of the one corporate system and also creates a desire to change among employees and reduces resistance. Training especially on the part of the managers managing the change process equips them with change management skills and they are likely to foresee the challenges that might be faced during the change process. Thus, understanding people's responses to change is instrumental in fostering their support and reaching organizational goals for the sake of mutual benefit.

The effect of early involvement of the organizations members in the change process success was also sought to be established. The respondents pointed that early involvement of all the staff is vital in creating ownership of the process and reduces the risk of resistance and they gave an example that during the movement of organizations offices from Gigiri to Kasarani, employees were involved early enough in making decisions especially on the best way to manage the process hence they owned the process. It was also noted that through early involvement, questions and doubts can be addressed early enough and this worked in reducing resistance to change. It was evident during the restricting process which was a success in the end. Through early involvement, the people spearheading the change process can reinforce their message and this leads to reduction in degree of resistance because strong resisters can be identified early enough and resistance normalized before implementing the change program. In addition, early involvement ensures employees embrace the change proposal and the process is refined from the onset because it involves the people affected by the change.

Organizational transformation often implies a change in the tasks of line managers, their personal leadership style and their social relations with subordinates.

The management of a firm will determine the success or failure of a change process. They are tasked with coming up with appropriate mechanism and develop harmonious working relationship with other employees. The question was what role the management take in creating and sustaining a climate in the organization that motivates employees to work towards the successful implementation of the change process. It was found that the management encourage frequent communication from the communications department to all staff about the organizational goals, objectives, mission and values so that when change happens, the process is easier because employees are aware about the important aspects of CIAT and where it is going. In addition, it was found that six months ago, the organization through the communication department developed communication tools such as videos, print materials, pens, key holders, etc and gift items that depict the change that is emerging. These motivate staff in having positive anticipation of the emerging change. In addition, performance appraisal systems at the end of the year are being undertaken and the way an employee had supported the change process was considered as a variable. This motivates employees to positively embrace change when it occurs for appraisal purposes. For example, staff performance during the restructuring process was evaluated during year end appraisals. Consequently, there need to pay attention effective branding, in depth, personal, top management communication and demonstrative, regular monitoring.

On the question of which change management model was being adopted at CIAT, the interviewees seemed not to understand the different models that are currently in use. However, after explaining the different models, style /model of change management two of the responded did not identify with any model and they said that the change happening in not so organized that one of the models can be identified. However, three of the responded identified the Lewin's 3 step model because they were able to relate it to the change that happened recently of changing to a new paperless system called OCS (one corporate system). It was noted that during the unfreezing state, the status quo was not easy to be changed since the staff were still being motivated to continue with the then way of doing things. Unfreezing is seen as the most difficult and important state in the change process.

### **4.3 Challenges to Change Management at CIAT**

The introduction of changes in the way 'things are done' in an organization cannot occur without any challenges. Changes in an organization involves the introduction of new procedures, people or ways of working that have a direct impact on the various stakeholders within an organization. As a result, several challenges are bound to be faced by the firm and although each of these challenges can be unique, they are simultaneously independent and interrelated. Therefore, overcoming any one independently challenge cannot be sufficient for realizing sustainable change. There need to be a sustainable and holistic approach to confront the challenge to change management.

On the question of what challenges CIAT face in the implementation of change all the interviewees pointed that resistance to change came out as a common problem. Resistance to change by supervisors which trickles down to the staff they supervise came out. This they attributed to the tendency of most changes being made at the top level and at the HQ but those on the ground who are affected most are not consulted or their input being taken into consideration. In addition, the time taken to effect the change often takes too long past the required time. As McMillan (2008) posits, when there is change management, there is need for resources that are dedicated to a change initiative failure to which the success of the change might be curtailed. Without a dedicated change management resource, change management activities slip and there is not a single point of contact focused on the people side of change.

Sometimes the change benefits are not appreciated by some staff e.g. the relocation of offices from Gigiri to ICIPE. The fear of the unknown, lack of buy-ins from staff who were not consulted during the change process and undefined organizational structure which hinders the flow of information also came out as a major problem in the implementation of change process at CIAT. The interviewees also posited that in some cases the organization has faced limited resources in term of finances and skilled manpower to carry out the change process effectively in the organization. There is need to do everything possible to anticipate reactions and likely impediments to the introduction of change (Armstrong, 2006).

The success of the change process at CIAT is also influenced by external factors outside the control of the organization. On being asked what are some of the external factors that

the organization face, the interviewees enumerated several factors that include economical factors that include reduced funding resulting from the influence from competing NGO's who sometimes negatively influence staff in a bid to promote resistance and this result in scaling of funding from the donors. The other problem that CIAT faces included social and cultural factors e.g. language barriers when communicating the change to other country offices for instance in the Congo CIAT office where French is the national language. In addition, change in the CGIAR consortium often has an adverse impact in the change process within CIAT because major changes within the organization have to be in line with the CGIAR policies and guidelines. This problem is also compounded by the globalization process where the organization is expected to use same systems and tools across its offices world-wide but time differences and language barrier hinder training and implementation phases of change process. All these factors hindered successful implementation of the changes in the organization.

The success of a change process can also be affected by existence of competing activities that cause distractions inhibiting effective change management process at CIAT. It was found that a lack of adequate resources that compete for the core activities of the organization as well the change process is an inhibiting factor to change management. Routine activities and duties leave no time for the staff to implement the change process. In addition, it was found that the recent change of system required staff to work overtime and come to work over weekends but most staff failed to do so because of other commitments e.g. school and family hence inhibiting effective change process. Personal interest or social status where some managers sabotaged the change process when they



felt that their status or authority will be diminished by the change also came out as a major factor that affected successful implementation of the change process.

Poor communication between different players in the organization and without can also affect the success of the change process at CIAT. Poor communication was found to lead to a lot of time being wasted as staff take much longer to embrace change. For instance, poor communication during the restructuring process led to a lot of time being taken by management to complete the process. Given that CIAT is an organization with limited financial resources, every staff member's time is very important and costly and if change was well communicated and embraced early then this time would be preserved for more productive activities. Further, with poor communication the image of CIAT is compromised as most of the time the staff will be talking negatively about the change if they do not understand its positive impact and as a result lengthens the time taken for the change to take place because staff has to be committed for the project to succeed.

The researcher also sought to establish what mechanisms are being put in place to address the challenges facing the change process in the organization. On this question, the results were that there is need for clear communication at different levels of the change process to be initiated and initiate staff training to acquire the necessary skill for the change program. Effective communication need to be adopted that has proper coordination of the change process and training of staff. The staff needs to be involved in the change process and necessary training be undertaken for them to effectively go through the change process. In addition it also came out that the top management supports change and is well coached to lead their teams to successful change e.g. during the adoption of the paperless

system, the top management appointed change agents both in headquarter and Africa offices and they were well trained to manage the process. A well-defined organizational structure that fosters good communication channel during the change process will need to be put in place.

#### **4.4 Discussion**

The findings reinforced the reality in the current context of organizations operating in an environment that is characterized by turbulence that it needs to be ready to affect or be affected by the changes in the environment. CIAT was found to have attempted to align its operations to the changes in the environment ranging from the donor financing constraints to need to align the organizations structure to adapt effectively to the demands of the market. As Pfeffer & Salancik, (2003) argued, while supporting the open system theory, that when organizations and communities conduct their business they influence and change their external environments, while at the same time being influenced by external changes in local and global environments in a two-way influential change known as active adaptive change. The findings support the open system theory and the need of the organization to adapt to the opportunities and confront the changes the environment presents. Consequently, CIAT was found to be undertaking strategic changes in order to align their business strategies to the environment thereby matching the resources and activities of the organization to that environment. This, according to Hill and Jones (2001), would present to the organization, a state that increases competitiveness advantage.

The findings also was that for an organization to sustain the momentum on normal day-to-day pressures to meet customer demands and also avoid situations where people will return to the methods and behaviours that they are familiar and comfortable with, it is necessary to provide resources for change and built necessary communication structures across the organizations structures. It was found that an integral part of an organizations strategic change is effective internal communication that corresponds to each stage of the strategy. Communicating to employees, as internal stakeholders, was found to be important for a successful change process programme. This finding was found to be in line with that of Barrett (2002) who similarly found that launching a planned communication strategy for the purpose of informing timely the organizations employees is a prerequisite for fruitful feedback and eventual success of the change process.

The finding of the study recognized the role of the organization management in determining the success or failure of the change process. During the change process, the managers are tasked with coming up with appropriate mechanism and develop harmonious working relationship with other employees during the change process. Consequently, as Kanter *et al.*, (2002) found out, early involvement of managers will enable them to translate the general goals of organizational change efforts into specific departmental objectives. This was because, as was found, organizational transformation often implies a change in the tasks of line managers, their personal leadership style and their social relations with subordinates. Therefore there is need for managers to incorporate fully the views and suggestions of the other employees which, as Barney (1991) pointed out, constitute an important resource as advocated by the resource based theory.

The research also found that during the implementation of the change process at CIAT, the organization faced several challenges that ranged from resistance to change by supervisors and other staff, the fear of the unknown, lack of buy-ins from staff, inadequate resources in form of finances and skilled manpower to carry out the change process effectively in the organization and ineffective communication process. Thus, there is need for an organization to do everything possible to anticipate reactions and likely impediments to the introduction of change (Armstrong, 2006). A well-defined organizational structure that fosters good communication channel during the change process will need to be put in place. The need to involve all the staff and other external groups that facilitate a successful change process will be consistent with the views of Galup *et al.*, (2009) who note that in order to succeed; strategic change management must be carried out properly by ensuring that all stakeholders are included in the process from the beginning. They point that change identification, engaging the people, support of top management, making a communication a top priority, time and line leadership are essentials for effective change management.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents a summary of the key findings of the study as well as the conclusions, limitations of the study, and recommendations for further research.

#### **5.2 Summary**

In summary, the study shows that the interviewees are aware of the change management process of The Centre for Tropical Agriculture (CIAT), Nairobi, Kenya. The organization was found to be currently in the midst of a change process that involved among others changing their head office to ICIPE centre at Kasarani. The change process was found to be adopting a top-down approach. As a result, the junior staff and some of the middle level managers feel that they need to be involved more by the top managers especially in strategy policies that affect them. Lewin's 3 step model was found to be the approach being employed in the organization. In addition it was found that the top management and the respective heads of different departments were the lead persons tasked with the spearheading the change process in the organization. Since the change management process involved staff and changing of the working structures in the organization, the human resource department staff as well as the corporate head and the communication and knowledge management team played a critical role as well.

Effective communication process between various departments and staff involved in the change process was found to be an important factor in the successful implementation of the change process. Communication creates awareness among the staff and also clears doubts about the impending change so that employees embrace the change and have the desire to change by clarifying any issues that might arise during the change process. In addition, the organization has been undertaking training of staff members to cope with the changes happening and how to support the same change process. Training plays an important role in the change process by empowering employees with the required skills and knowledge of the change. Further, CIAT has taken the initiative to involve early its employees in creating ownership of the process and reduces the risk of resistance by ensuring that employees embrace the change proposal and the process is refined from the onset because it involves the people affected by the change.

The challenges that the organization face in its change management process includes, resistance to change by supervisors which trickles down to the staff they supervise came out. This resistance was attributed to the tendency of most changes being made at the top level and at the HQ but those on the ground who are affected most are not consulted or their input being taken into consideration. Sometimes the change benefits are not appreciated by some staff e.g. the relocation of offices from Gigiri to ICIPE. The success of the change process at CIAT is also influenced by external factors outside the control of the organization. The external factors that affect change process in the organization include reduced funding resulting from the influence from competing NGO's who sometimes negatively influence staff in a bid to promote resistance and this result in scaling of funding from the donors. A lack of adequate resources that compete for the

core activities of the organization as well the change process is an inhibiting factor to change management. Routine activities and duties leave no time for the staff to implement the change process. In addition, there is need for clear communication at different levels of the change process to be initiated and staff training be undertaken to achieve the desired change.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

Change management process is a very vital process in the sustainability of the organization. Organizations will have to embrace change from one time to another in order to adapt the organizations working to the business demands at a given point in time. From the findings, it was established that the change process in the organization follows a top-down approach while implementation process adopts a bottom up approach. This disconnect in the process has in some way brought about challenges in the success of the change process. In addition the change management process cannot be free of any challenges and it is incumbent upon the management to develop appropriate mechanism to reduce or eliminate the effect of these challenges in the change management process.

Another important conclusion from the study is that in the present day operating environment, in which the actions of an organization will affect and be affected by stakeholders, it is important that an organizations change process be an all inclusive process where the junior staff, community and donors views are accommodated for in order to realize reduced resistance during the change process. Further, effective monitoring and evaluation of the change process during implementation was found to be

critical. The organization should be able to put in place measures for tracking down progress and facilitating learning and decision making in a quick manner and therefore increase the chances of achieving the desired results. In an effort to improve the change process, an external consultant will be recommended that will give independent opinions and guidance towards the achievement of the same objectives.

#### **5.4 Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

The research findings highlight the role of the management on the change process which will include coming up with effective strategies to realize the objective of the change process, involvement of all the stakeholders in the change management and offering the necessary training to the same stakeholders. This implies that senior management must consider their internal strategic management processes, training, communication and involvement of their staff, and their own role in championing the desired change process to manage the change process being undertaken in the organization. It was also found that different organizations have adopted different forms of change programs but the results are not immediate. Consequently, it is imperative for managers to know that changes in the working environment is necessary and be prepared not to earn the returns in a short – term period but instead mid-term to the long term operations of the firm.



## **5.5 Limitation of the Study**

This research had several limitations. First, the research findings reinforced the role of multiple stakeholders in the success of organizational change and found that for successful change process, the organization should incorporate them. The role of the other stakeholders was not taken into consideration in this study. The research only restricted itself to one organization and concerned itself with qualitative factors. The case study would have benefited from more interviewees. However, the findings may have salience in the public, not-for-profit and voluntary sectors, where continuous change process is increasingly being used as a lever to achieve social and economic reform.

Further, the study did not account for certain behavioral factors – related to employees’ and managers’ characteristics, attitudes, and experience levels – as well as organizational factors – such as structure, size, and business nature – that play a moderating role in the relationships highlighted in this study.

## **5.6 Suggestions for Future Research**

Future research is recommended to use mixed methods research in order to validate the results of this research, and apply a longitudinal study to better capture the relationships between change process and organizational performance. Conducting a replication study with more organizations being considered with random sample selection can enhance the methodological rigor of the study and increase the possibility of having a better and a supported external validity. Also, another possible source of data could be the customers to the firm whose opinions, along with those of executives, can give a better insight of the

change - performance relationship. Furthermore, taking into consideration certain factors that may have a moderating role in these relationships, such as the country culture, could enrich the research results.

The study needs to be carried out on the other mitigating actions to be taken so as to complement and sustain change process in an organization. In addition, a study needs to be undertaken to determine the exact time frame of the impact of change process on organizational performance and determine the most appropriate time for the next change process to be undertaken. This would enable firms to have time table for subsequent change in advance to avoid time crushes and poor implementations as this gives the firms ample time to prepare in advance for the change process. Moreover, a similar study needs to be conducted in a different industry to see the practical applications of the findings in the particular industry.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **Appendix I: Interview guide**

#### **CHANGE MANAGEMENT AT THE INTERNATIONAL CENTRE FOR TROPICAL AGRICULTURE (CIAT), NAIROBI, KENYA**

##### **Part A: Change Management practices at CIAT**

1. Who are involved in the change management process at CIAT? What criteria is used in selecting the change champions and what role do they play in the change management process in the organization?
2. In the organizations change management process, how is communication among various departments take place and through what medium? Does the communication play any role in the process of change management at CIAT? If so, please explain how communication facilitates the change process in the organization.
3. Does CIAT train the change champions on effective management of the change process? What is the role of management development programmes /training on effective change management process at CIAT?
4. Organizational change process affects majority of employees and their participation is important for the successful change process? What is the effect of early involvement of employees in the change process success? Does non-involvement affect the success of the change process?
5. Does the organization have a systematic process of undertaking the change process? What are some of the mechanisms that are put in place to counter any negative effects to the change process at CIAT?
6. What are some of the initiatives/steps that are taken by management in creating and sustaining a climate within the organization that motivates employees in embracing the changes being undertaken at CIAT? In your own opinion, are these steps adequate? What

other initiatives can be introduced to increase the success rate of the change management process?

### **Section B: Challenges to change management at CIAT**

9. The top management of the organization affects the success or failure of the change management process at CIAT. How does the top management involvement or non-involvement in the change management process affect the success of the process at CIAT?

10. How do the organizational structure at CIAT and the relationship with the parent body affect the change management process at CIAT? What other factors in the external environment had an adverse impact in the change process in the organization?

11. How does the existence of competing activities/programs being undertaken by the organization affect the success of the change process at CIAT? Would appropriate alignment of the programs to the change process reduce the hurdle to successful change process?

12. How does improper communication system being employed among different players within and without the organization affect the success of the change process? Do diminished feelings of ownership and commitment by employees to change management process at affect the success of the process CIAT?

13. How does involvement or non-involvement of external stakeholders affect the success of the change process at CIAT? Does dependence of funding from the parent body affect the change process? How lack of finance affected the change process?

14. Which strategies do you think would be effective in helping overcome the challenges encountered during change management process at CIAT?

15. What are the possible solutions to the challenges of change management process at CIAT?

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME**

Appendix II: Letter of introduction



**UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  
**MBA PROGRAMME**

Telephone: 020-2059162  
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi  
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197  
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 15/9/2014

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

The bearer of this letter BEATRICE NYABOKE ORINA

Registration No. DG1 / 60207 / 2011

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.

**PATRICK NYABUTO**  
**MBA ADMINISTRATOR**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**

