STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REGISTRATION BUREAU IN KENYA

BY

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of a degree in any other University.

Signed……………. Date…….………...

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D61/76089/2009

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the University supervisor.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this project to my son, Eugene, one of my greatest teachers. I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank the Almighty God as my source of all inspiration from the start to the end of this project.

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To you all, I say thank-you and God bless you.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

Cap   : Chapter

CEO   : Chief Executive Officer

CRD   : Civil Registration Department

DRA   : Department of Refugee Affairs

GOK   : Government of Kenya

ICT   : Information and Communication Technology

IPRS   : Integrated Population Registration System

ISO   : International Standards Organization

MIRP   : Ministry of State for Immigration and Registration of Persons

NRB   : National Registration Bureau

NSSF   : National Social Security Fund

PC   : Performance Contracting

PESTLE : Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental

RBM   : Results Based Management

RRI   : Rapid Results/Response Initiative

SWOT   : Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (Analysis)

ABSTRACT

Organizations implement a variety of strategies in order to fulfill their objectives. Though this is their target, it is not often the case as some organizations with good strategies end up implementing them poorly. This prompted the Government of Kenya to introduce Public Sector reforms that has resulted to all Government ministries, departments and agencies developing strategic plans to guide their strategic direction and the formulation and implementation of their long-term goals and objectives. The Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons is no exception and this prompted the researcher to carry out a study in the department of National Registration Bureau. The objectives of the study were to establish the strategy implementation practices in the department of National Registration Bureau, and challenges encountered in strategy implementation. A case study research design was used to conduct the study and an interview guide administered to seven senior managers in the department. The study findings revealed that the organizational structure, organizational resources, culture, leadership style, internal communication systems, Information Technology, policies and procedure, and core competencies and skills were factors affecting strategy implementation in the department. The department encountered various challenges during the implementation process and measures have been put in place to deal with the challenges. The findings revealed a link and relationship with other studies on related subjects carried out by other researchers. The researcher recommends that performance management need to be embedded and rolled out across the department, since it contributes to successful strategy implementation. The department needs to employ a world class state of technology in terms of equipment, infrastructure and skills. The study was limited by the fact that the researcher having adopted a case study design makes it difficult to generalize the findings and therefore, the results cannot be inferred to another organization. The researcher had to work within limited time span and this constrained the scope as well as the depth of the study. The researcher suggests similar studies involving middle and lower level staff be carried out to get their insight regarding strategy implementation in the department. A study could also be conducted in future to investigate how performance management in NRB can be improved to support strategy implementation process.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background of the study

Strategic management is the set of decisions and actions used to formulate and implement strategies that provides a competitively superior fit between the organization and its environment so as to achieve organizational goals (Prescott, 1986). It involves long-term, future-oriented, complex decision making, and requires considerable resources and therefore, top-management participation is essential. In order for the organizations to achieve their goals and objectives, it is necessary for them to adjust to their environment (Pearce & Robinson, 1997). An organization's ability to adapt to its outside environment is dependent on knowing and interpreting the external changes that are taking place. It therefore needs to develop strategies that would enable it to adapt to its environment, for its survival and success. An organization's strategy is management's action plan for running the business and conducting operations. Strategy is the determination of the basic goals and objectives of an enterprise, the adoption of the courses of action and allocation of resources necessary to carry out the goals. It is a blueprint of actions to be done in an organization arising out of the need to achieve certain organizational goals.

Strategies are critical element in organizational functioning, but whereas most organizations have good strategies, successful implementation remains a major challenge. Implementing strategies successfully is vital for any organization, either public or private. Without successful implementation, even the most superior strategy is useless. The notion of strategy implementation might at first seem quite straightforward, that is, the strategy is formulated and then it is implemented. Implementing would thus be perceived

as being about allocating resources and changing organizational structure. However, transforming strategies into action is a far more complex and difficult task (Aaltonen and Ikavalko, 2002). Since implementation of strategies remains the greatest bottleneck, many organizations are not able to address their goals adequate.

In Kenya, strategic plan formulation and implementation is a statutory requirement for public sector institutions and state corporations. Whether it is merely an act of compliance to the law or for the benefits derived from adoption of strategic plans, organizations are increasingly embracing them. The strategic plans stipulate the objectives and the strategies that have been put in place to bring the organizational goals to pass. The Ministry of Immigration and Registration of Persons developed a five year strategic plan 2008 – 2012, which is now being implemented. The department of National Registration Bureau plays an important role in the socio-economic and political development of the country by empowering the citizenry to enjoy their constitutional rights. There is therefore need to establish the strategy implementation practices in NRB and the challenges faced in implementing the strategies.

1.1.1 Strategy Implementation

Strategy implementation is a vital component of strategic management process. Implementation involves putting into action the logically developed strategies. It has been defined as "the process that turns strategies and plans into actions to accomplish objectives" (Pride & Ferrell, 2003, p. 574). Wheelen and Hunger (2008, p. 214), state that "strategy implementation is the process by which objectives, strategies, and policies are put into action through the development of programs, budgets and procedures".

According to Steiner et al. (1989), implementation of policies and strategies is concerned with the design and management of systems so as to achieve the best integration of people, structures, processes and resources in reaching organizational objectives. Thus, implementation is the process of translating strategic plans and policies into results. Once strategies have been developed, they need to be implemented. Unless they are successfully implemented, the organization will not obtain desired results. Successful strategy implementation involves empowering others to act on doing all the things needed to put the strategy into place and execute it proficiently (Thompson & Strickland, 2003). Strategy implementation is the sum total of the activities and choices required for the execution of a strategic plan. An excellent implementation plan will not only cause success of an appropriate strategy, but can also rescue an inappropriate strategy.

Implementing strategies successfully is about matching the planned and realized strategies, which together aim at reaching the organizational vision. Despite the fact that organizations understand the significance of strategy implementation, in most of the organizations, implementation often falls short of the goals that organizations have set for themselves. This is because organizations and their managers forget this vital component of the strategic management process. They are not paying as much attention to planning the implementation of their strategies as they give to formulating them. The development and selection of strategies to be pursued is considered to be easier and less time consuming than implementing them. Implementation deserves considerable attention for the success of strategies (Shah, 1996).

Not all strategies that are formulated are effectively implemented. Organization, both large and small worldwide spend billions of dollars each year on strategy formulation. It is easy to do an effective job of formulating strategy, but difficult to equally implement it. Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2007, p. 15) suggest that "good strategy plus good strategy implementation give rise to good management". According to Pearce and Robinson (1997), successful strategy implementation mainly depends on the firm's primary organization structure, organization leadership, organization culture and on individual organizational members particularly key managers. They recognized that motivating and rewarding good performance by individuals and organizational units are key ingredients in effective strategy implementation. Common to the various reward and sanction approach to implementing strategy is growing recognition of the need for an incentive system linked to both short run and long run considerations. The relative emphasis given to these considerations should be determined by the focus of the strategy. For firms with growth oriented strategies, incentives systems weighed towards long term payoffs are more appropriate. For firms pursuing more immediate strategic goals, the incentive emphasis should shift accordingly.

1.1.2 The Kenyan Civil Service

The Kenya Civil Service is the policy implementation arm of the Government. In executing this role, it is guided by public policy pronouncements and the attendant development plans and circulars. The Civil Service is constituted by Ministries and Departments which are divided into headquarters and field units (GOK, 2006). The Ministries are responsible for planning and implementing their own programs. The Civil

Service plays a critical role in the socio-economic development of the nation as well as in the maintenance and improvement of public services. Efforts are continuously being made towards reforming the Civil Service with the objective of making it more professional, responsive to national development challenges and efficient in the delivery of services.

Since independence, the Kenya Civil Service has witnessed tremendous growth both in terms of numbers and the variety of its functions. It has also undergone considerable diversification in its composition, with new cadres and professional categories evolving over time, in response to the changing needs of the economy (Government Press, 1984). The Civil Service therefore constantly adjusts itself to the new demands being placed upon it to keep pace with the progress in the delivery of services to its citizens.

The Government of Kenya has been undertaking a series of reforms aimed at enhancing quality, efficiency and transparency in service delivery by public sector institutions. Among the key reforms is the Results Based Management (RBM), generally and Performance Contracting (PC) in particular, which have strategic planning as the main point of reference. As indicated in the "General Guidance and Direction for Negotiating the 2007/08 Performance Contracts" the "Strategic plan is the cornerstone for the design and development of a performance contract" in public sector institutions. For the MIRP, Strategic Planning is required not only for PC purposes but also for ensuring the realization of its goals and objectives in the dynamic environment in which it operates.

1.1.3 The Department of National Registration Bureau

The Ministry of State for Immigration and Registration of Persons was created in February 2005 following the re-organization of Government through the Presidential circular number 1 of 2005. The Ministry draws its functions from the mandates of its five departments namely Immigration, National Registration Bureau (NRB), Civil Registration Department (CRD), Department of Refugee Affairs (DRA), and the Department of Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS). The Ministry's core functions include providing immigration services, registration of persons, births and deaths and management of refugees. In carrying out the above functions, the Ministry is strategically placed to provide database for use by other Ministries, government corporations and other agencies in the private sector.

National Registration Bureau (NRB) one of the departments in the Ministry of Immigration and Registration of persons was established in 1978. It administers and enforces the Registration of Persons Act (Cap. 107), Laws of Kenya, which makes provisions for the compulsory registration and issuance of Identity cards to all Kenyans who have attained the age of eighteen years and above and maintenance of a comprehensive database. The functions of the department include the following. Identification and registration of all Kenyan citizens who have attained the age of 18 years and above, production and issuance of secure identification documents, management of a comprehensive database of all registered persons and detection and prevention of illegal registration. In fulfilling the core mandate, the department plays an important role in the socio-economic and political development of the country by

empowering the citizenry to enjoy their constitutional rights. In order to access services by the customers, the department has established 600 registration centers countrywide and as it deems appropriate, mounts Mobile registration units in areas without established offices from time to time.

The Ministry developed a five year strategic plan 2008-2012 which sets out clear targets to be achieved so as to attain the outlined productivity, profitability and efficiency. Successful implementation of NRB's strategies will improve efficiency, improve customer service, enhance operational efficiency and improve the productivity of internal resources. The research was to determine the strategy implementation practices in NRB and the challenges it faces in implementing the strategies. The study explored strategy implementation practices in terms of organizational activities by focusing on the strategy implementation and challenges faced by National Registration Bureau.

1.2   Research problem

To ensure organizational success, successful strategy implementation is fundamental. Decision makers are often faced with a dilemma when things do not go according to plan. With respect to the strategic plan, their anxiety is often focused around the difficulty in ensuring that the strategic plan becomes a "living plan" rather than a document that gathers dust on the shelf. The strategic plan is expected to be a guiding document for the organization. However, poor implementation of the plan can result in it becoming an ineffective document. If the organization has a strategic plan that is a visually pleasing document, but does not get implemented, the resulting gap is an issue not just for senior management, but for all staff in the organization. One reason for this gap could be that

the process followed in developing the plan may only have involved senior management in setting the direction and vision for the organization, with the expectation that implementation is a role for the other members of the organization. As a result, what often develops is a situation where there is a lack of buy-in and understanding of the plan by the rest of the staff members. This failure to align the plan with the frontline operating departments in the organization often results to poor implementation. This creates a gap that makes it difficult to achieve success.

In order to fulfill its vision, NRB has adopted the strategic plan 2008-2012 which sets out actions that the department needs to pursue to achieve productivity and efficiency. While NRB's strategy executing approaches always have been tailored to the department's situation, the implementation processes have always been challenging and complicated. Over the years, the department has been crafting strategies (plans) to contain or control corruption and illegal registration but still the same vices are common practices. The strategies adopted by NRB have partially been implemented. It is indeed the concern of stakeholders of NRB as to where the problem is and what needs to be done to make the implementation of strategies (plans) formulated workable and hence streamline the working of the organization. This study sought to find out if the strategies put in place by NRB were successfully implemented.

A number of studies have been done in the area of strategy implementation in various organizations in Kenya. Michael (2004), studied factors influencing strategy implementation by International NGO's operating in Kenya and found that the development partners mostly fund small programs, leaving the organizations to fund

large projects, and also the delay in disbursing funds makes the organizations not to complete their projects in time. Koske (2003), studied strategy implementation and its challenges in public corporations with emphasis on Telkom Kenya Ltd, and found out that the corporation sets some targets which become hard to accomplish, and also there was lack of dedication by the staff to ensure successful accomplishment of the strategies. Njuguna (2009), studied strategy implementation at St. John's Community Centre and found out that the organization does not have a strategy for local resource mobilization, and therefore depends on international donors whom they have to report to on their implementation.

There is no evidence of similar study done in the area of strategy implementation in the department of National Registration Bureau, hence permeating a significant knowledge gap. Increased research in this area is necessary to unveil what entails success in strategy implementation and the challenges associated with implementation of organizational strategies. This study was designed to fill this gap by emphasizing on the strategy implementation practices in National Registration Bureau. What strategy implementation practices are adopted by the department of National Registration Bureau in Kenya?

1.3 Research objectives

The study had two objectives.

i.   To establish the strategy implementation practices in the department of

      National Registration Bureau.

ii.   To establish the challenges encountered by NRB in implementing its strategies.

1.4   Value of the study

The report of this study will be useful to the policy makers in making decisions on the management of the organization. The report will be an important source of information to stakeholders, donors, members of the society and other parties who have a stake in the welfare of NRB.

The study will assist the Management to know the challenges encountered in implementing their strategies, and give a better perspective of how they can implement their strategies successfully. It will be a valuable platform for managers in trying to bridge the apparent gap between strategy formulation and implementation. The report will also provide suggestions to other organizations on how to improve on professional practices in strategy implementation.

The findings of this study will contribute to building the existing body of knowledge in strategic management and specifically on strategy implementation. The findings will provide information to scholars and researchers who might need to research on strategy implementation in future. The body of knowledge closes some gaps and opens avenues for further research in related topics.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the review of literature which is related to and consistent with objectives of the study. The literature gathered focuses on the concept of strategy, strategy implementation practices, issues of critical importance in strategy implementation, McKinsey 7-s framework, and challenges in strategy implementation.

2.2 The concept of Strategy

Strategy is a set of decision-making rules for guidance of organizational behavior (Ansoff and McDonnell, 1990). It is the direction and scope of an organization over the long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder expectations (Johnson, Scholes and Whittington, 2008). An organization's strategy consists of the competitive moves and business approaches that managers are employing to grow the business, attract and please customers, compete successfully, conduct operations, and achieve the targeted levels of organizational performance (Thompson et al., 2007).

The purpose of strategy is to achieve the following four elements. First, is setting direction, which involves defining a clear and simple long-term goal which is capable of motivating effort. The second element is concentrating resources, that is, focusing all resources, efforts and enthusiasm in the agreed direction. The third element is maintaining consistency that is, progressing in the same direction, with the same focus over long periods of time, deviating only when necessary. Lastly is retaining flexibility,

that is, maintaining a continuous assessment of the various environments and key variables on which the strategy depends and continually reviewing the necessity for revising the agreed strategy (Gordon, 1999).

The characteristics of strategic decisions include the following. Business domain, which is the scope of an organization's activities. It includes what the organization will do and what it will not do. Long term direction of an organization, which looks at the direction the organization is moving and its vision. Strategic fit with the business environment, which involves matching of the activities of an organization to the environment. Competitive advantage, which is the basis for attracting and retaining customers. An organization has competitive advantage if they have customer loyalty. The organization's resource and competences, and values and expectations of powerful actors in and around the organization (Johnson et al., 2008)

2.3   Strategy Implementation Practices

Strategy implementation is an integral component of the strategic management process and is viewed as the process that turns the formulated strategy into a series of actions and then results to ensure that the vision, mission, strategy and strategic objectives of the organization are successfully achieved as planned (Thompson & Strickland 2003).

Strategy implementation is the use of managerial and organizational tools to direct resources towards accomplishing strategic results (Hrebiniak, 1984). Strategy implementation is the administration and execution of the strategic plan. Managers may use persuasion, new equipment, changes in the organizational structure, or a reward system to ensure that employees and resources are used to make the formulated strategy a

reality (Daft, 2000). The success of organizations depends on the effective implementation of strategies. It plays a vital role in the attainment of corporate objectives of a firm. Without effective implementation of strategy, organizations are unable to reap the benefits of performing an organizational analysis, establishing organizational direction and formulating strategy. The most elegantly conceived, most precisely articulated strategy is virtually worthless unless it is implemented successfully (Shah, 1996).

Several identifiable actions characterize strategic leadership that positively contributes to effective strategy implementation namely, determining strategic direction, establishing balanced organizational controls, effectively managing the organization's resource portfolio, sustaining an effective organizational culture, and emphasizing ethical practices. Implementation is successful if the organization achieves its strategic objectives and targeted level of financial performance. What makes it too demanding is its wide sweep of managerial activities that have to be attended to, the many ways managers can tackle every activity, the skills that it takes to get a variety of initiatives launched and moving, and the resistance to change that has to be overcome (Thompson & Strickland, 2003).

Good strategy execution requires diligent pursuit of operating excellence. It is a job for companies whose management team, and success hinges on the skills and cooperation of operating managers who can push needed change in their organization units and consistently deliver good results. Strategy implementation can be considered successful if

things go smoothly enough that the company meets or beats its strategic and financial performance targets and shows good progress in achieving management's strategic vision (Thompson et al., 2007). The implementation process of a strategy impacts every part of the organization structure, from the biggest organizational unit to the smallest frontline work group. Manager have to think of what needs to be done in their area to implement their part of the strategic plan, and what they should do to get things accomplished. All managers therefore become strategic implementers in their areas of authority and responsibility and all employees need to be involved (Thompson and Strickland, 2003).

Implementing strategy is largely an administrative activity and its success depends on working through others, organizing, motivating, culture building and creating strong fits between strategy and how the organization does things (Thompson & Strickland, 2003). The implementers of strategy should therefore be fully involved in strategy formulation so that they can own the process. Management issues to strategy implementation includes establishing annual objectives, devising policies, allocating resources, altering existing organization structure, restructuring and re-engineering. It also includes revising reward and incentive plans, minimizing resistance to change, matching managers with strategy, developing a strategy supportive culture, developing an effective human resource function and if necessary downsizing (Pearce & Robinson, 1997).

There are three element of successful strategy implementation. The first is strategy communication and acting. Two-way communication with all employees is important in improving strategy implementation. Understanding the strategy however, requires a

possibility of commenting, querying or questioning it. This can be achieved by continuous two way communication with feedback and reacting to bottom-up messages. The second element is identification of and support for strategic actors. Middle management has a pivotal role in strategy communication, for instance, in filtering strategic messages. Middle managers require adequate communication skills and also motivation in order to succeed in their communicative role. For strategic actors to succeed in their roles, they must first become conscious of their role. Therefore, managers need to encourage different actors to consider their role in strategy implementation. Roles that have been regarded as minor, for example bottom-up strategic communication, must be recognized. By encouraging personnel to develop their abilities to participate in their strategic process, strategic capabilities can be developed. The third element is structures and systems aligned with strategy. Linking organizational goal-setting systems to strategy is essential. Identification of those work-related objectives that the personnel members have created for themselves is called for. These objectives are often those that really influence the decisions made in everyday work (Aaltonen & Ikavalko, 2002).

2.4 Issues of Critical Importance in Strategy Implementation

According to Shah (1996), there are five issues of critical importance in strategy implementation. First is the strategy making process itself. Organizations need to pursue the components of strategy formulation process effectively for formulating the strategies which are implementable. Selection of the best strategy is extremely important for effective strategy implementation. A well conceived strategy is one that takes into

account issues of implementation during the strategy formulation process. Top management commitment is another issue of critical importance in strategy implementation. This refers to the involvement and support of top management to the implementation process, including willingness to put great deal of effort, allocating resources at appropriate time, giving adequate support to implementation process, building supporting systems and making necessary changes in organizational structures, among others. Top management commitment to the strategy implementation process is essential and without such commitment the whole process of strategy formulation and implementation is doomed to failure. The third factor is effective leadership. Leadership is the key determinant in the success or failure of any human institution. The leader's role in strategy implementation is critical because he provides the basic leadership and impetus for the implementation process. Effective leadership is required at all levels of the implementation process for decision making, guidance, support and motivation of people involved in implementation. Organizations need to assess the factors which contribute towards effective leadership in implementation process.

The fourth factor is employee commitment. This refers to the willingness of employees to put a great deal of effort and work with sincerity and dedication and in cooperation with others. Lastly is rewards and incentives. The most significant opportunity to improve the rate of success of strategy implementation is to tie rewards and incentives to successful strategic plan implementation. When rewards and incentives are tied to successful implementation of strategies, managers come to see improved performance as a necessary and important part of their jobs. In the absence of effective linkage between rewards and performance, people get demoralized, suspicious and lose the excitement of contribution.

Therefore, organizations should design effective rewards and incentive schemes for motivating their people to contribute their best to the implementation process (Shah, 1996).

The success of organizations today mainly depends upon the successful implementation of well conceived strategies. Successful implementation requires that the strategy, the organization, the people and their relationships, the systems and the measures all must be aligned and made to work towards a common goal. Organizations need to focus on these issues meticulously while planning the implementation of their strategies and during the course of their execution. Failure of strategy implementation are inevitable when organizations fail to accord due importance to these issues during the process of implementation (Shah, 1996).

2.5   McKinsey 7-s Framework

The McKinsey 7-s framework was developed by Peters and Waterman as a tool for managing and covering all aspects of strategy in an organization, in the late 1970s. The framework maps seven interrelated factors that influence an organization's ability to implement strategies. All components of the framework, strategy, skills, staff, style, systems, structure and shared values are equally important and interconnected. Hence, altering one component is likely to impact on the others, illustrating the point that effective strategy is not only one element of the framework. Effective strategy is determined, in part, by the relationship between strategy, structure, systems, staff, skills, style and shared values in the framework. Companies which are excellently managed have seven elements in common which are strategy, structure and systems (the three

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"hardware" elements of success) and style, skills, staffing, and shared values (the four "software" elements of success).

Structure is defined as the skeleton of the organization or the organizational chart. McKinsey describe strategy as the plan or course of action in allocating resources to achieve identified goals over time. The systems are the routine processes and procedures followed within the organization. Staff are described in terms of personnel categories within the organization, whereas the skills variable refers to the capabilities of the staff within the organization as a whole. The way in which key managers behave in achieving organizational goals is considered to be the style variable. This variable is thought to encompass the cultural system of the organization. The shared values variable refers to the significant meanings or guiding concepts that organizational members share (Peters & Waterman, 1982). The underlying concept of the model is that all the seven of these variables must "fit" with one another in order for strategy to be successfully implemented.

2.6   Challenges in Strategy Implementation

A formulated strategy can only generate an added value for the organization if it successfully implemented. Implementation of strategies has always been known to face various challenges. Challenges that occur during the implementation process of a strategy are an important area of research, because even the best strategy would be ineffective if not implemented successfully. Despite the fact that challenges to successful strategy implementation have not been widely investigated, there are some issues that have surfaced in many studies (Muthuiya, 2004).

Researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation which include weak management roles in implementation, a lack of communication, lacking a commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy. Other problems include unaligned organizational systems and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities, and uncontrollable environmental factors (Aaltonen & Ikavalko, 2002). Alexander (1985) identifies inadequate planning and communication as two major obstacles to successful implementation of strategies. Thompson and Strickland (2003), observe that strategy implementation challenge is to create a series of tight fits between strategy and the organization's competencies, capabilities and structure, between strategy and budgetary allocation, between strategy and policy, between strategy and internal support systems, between strategy and reward structure, and between strategy and corporate culture.

Awino (2001), identified lack of fit between strategy and structure, inadequate information and communication systems, and failure to impart new skills, as factors affecting successful strategy implementation. Aosa (1992), observed that lack of compatibility between strategy and culture can lead to high organizational resistance to change and lack of motivation, which can in turn frustrate the strategy implementation. Koske (2003), observed that there are many organizational characteristics, which act to constrain strategy implementation. He identified most challenges as concerning connecting strategy formulation to implementation, resource allocation, match between structure with strategy, linking performance and pay to strategies and creating a strategy supportive culture.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to present an overview of the methodology that guided the study. The chapter discusses the research design, data collection methods and data analysis techniques.

3.2   Research Design

This study was conducted through a case study research design. This was deemed an appropriate design as the study involved an in-depth investigation of the phenomenon of strategy implementation and its challenges with specific emphasis on NRB. It is a method of study in depth rather than breadth. The case study research method is used continually by researchers in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues, and problems.

According to Kothari (2004), the case study method is a very popular form of qualitative analysis and involves a careful and complete observation of a social unit, be that unit a person, a family, an institution, a cultural group or even the entire community. It places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their interrelations. The objective of the case study method is to locate the factors that account for the behavior patterns of the given unit as an integrated totality. Researcher Yin (1994, p.23) defines a case study research method as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, when the boundaries between

phenomenon and context are not clearly evident, and in which multiple sources of evidence are used".

3.3 Data Collection

Primary and secondary data was used in the study. The pertinent primary data was collected to meet the objectives of the study. Secondary data was obtained from reports, MIRP strategic plan, publications and manuals, and NRB's Information Management System.

The data collection instrument was an interview guide. This instrument proved flexible, provided the interviewer with greater control of the interview situation and gave an opportunity to probe further. The interview guide is one with predetermined questions with an open-ended format that are asked to all informants in the same manner (York, 1989). In an interview guide, open-ended questions provide the interviewer with greater freedom and less restrictions (Kadushin, 1990).

The interviewees consisted of 7 senior managers, within the divisions of the department namely, Administration, Quality Assurance, Production, Field Services and Fingerprints divisions. This group of respondents was considered for the interview because of their positions and the role they play in strategy implementation. The data was recorded by writing the responses as provided by the informants.

3.4 Data Analysis

Qualitative data was collected and analyzed using content analysis, which is a method of qualitative analysis. Analysis is about searching patterns of relationships that exist among

data groups. Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication. This technique measures the extent of emphasis, or omission of emphasis, on any analytical category (Zikmund, 2003).

Content analysis is well suited and relevant to the study at hand. Its major benefit emanates from the fact that it is a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding. It has the attractive features of being unobtrusive, and being useful in dealing with large volumes of data. The technique of content analysis extends far beyond simple word frequency counts. Subjecting the collected data to content analysis allows the researcher to learn about underlying attitudes, biases, or repeating themes.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and findings of the study on the basis of the research objectives set out at the beginning of the study. The study sought to establish the strategy implementation practices in the department of National Registration Bureau and the challenges encountered in strategy implementation. The nature of data collected was qualitative and was analyzed qualitatively using content analysis based on the meanings, implications emanating from the respondents' information on strategy implementation.

4.2   Awareness of MIRP strategic plan

All the respondents appreciated the fact that a strategic plan is a road map on which the operations of the department are anchored. It is thus regarded as the lifeline of the organization. They all embraced it and are all aware of the organizational objectives and the critical activities derived from the strategic plan. It was confirmed that the organization had a mission, vision and core values, which were clear to all the employees and that they were advertised within the organization. It was revealed that the Permanent Secretary, Heads of Departments, Senior Management Team and consultants were involved, in the formulation of the Ministry's strategic plan. The developed document was validated by the Ministry's stakeholders as a policy document, published and issued for strategic direction of the organization.

The respondents reiterated that the document needed to be made alive in the entire organization and not to be viewed as a preserve of management. All employees are

charged with the responsibility of implementing the strategic plan, with the Permanent Secretary (CEO), Directors and Managers taking the lead role. All the respondents understood the specific objectives of the department which include the following. Identification and registration of all Kenyan citizens who have attained the age of 18 years and above, management of a comprehensive database of all registered persons, production and issuance of secure identification documents, and detection and prevention of illegal registration. These defined the core activities of the department. The objectives are termed as forward looking as they make provision for planning for the future as projected in the strategic plan. These also give a clear indication of the specific areas of implementation. The findings indicated that various initiatives or action plans have been put in place to achieve the departmental objectives.

4.3 Strategy Implementation Practices in NRB

The vision of the Ministry is to be a global leader in population registration and migration management. It is in this context that the strategic plan for the period 2008 – 2012 was developed. The plan outlines the corporate vision, mission, and strategic objectives that the Ministry has put in place to ensure leadership in all aspects of registration, issuance of secure documents and management of vital population data. It also identifies and explains core values, which inform all decisions and actions as is evident in the services and products. The strategic plan has been aligned with the Government of Kenya policy direction and is geared to meeting Kenya Vision 2030 objectives by restructuring its organs and operations to meet the inherent coverage, accuracy, relevance and integrity challenges. The strategic plan takes into account the Ministry's commitment to enhance

national security and socio-economic development of the country by undertaking timely and efficient registration of persons and issuance of secure identification documents, maintaining a comprehensive and integrated population database, and undertaking proper migration management.

The 2008 – 2012 strategic plan, is a five year plan whose implementation entailed breaking down the document into activity phases in this case, one year action plan. Implementation teams were formed to steer the process at the departmental level. They facilitated designing of specific strategic objectives in line with the corporate strategy. They also stipulated projections, strategies and activities which are geared towards achieving the same. Once the key milestones in the strategic plan are broken down into departmental objectives, action plans to reflect individual activities are drawn. Quarterly reviews are carried out to measure level of compliance of the activities against the targets. Performance contracts are extracted from the annual strategic plan. They contain negotiated organizational targets as per the strategic plan against which the performance of the department would be rated. The performance contracts vary with the annual action plan as derived from the strategic plan.

Work plans are a critical factor in performance management and form the basis of individual indulgence in the strategic plan implementation, as they define specific roles each person plays in the whole process. The managers interviewed gave an indication that the work plans exist but more needed to be done to ensure that they are aligned and are in congruency with the organizational goals. Further responses pointed out that the staff needed to be sensitized to ensure that they understood and visualized the document, to

enable successful work plans which would lead to great achievements in implementation. Annual staff appraisals are carried out to evaluate the strategy implementation process. In addition to internal evaluations that are carried out, a mid-term review of the plan is also undertaken to improve overall plan implementation.

4.4 Factors affecting Strategy Implementation in NRB

4.4.1 Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of NRB was observed as appropriate with regard to strategy implementation. The current structure is based on clear functional organizational operations which make it appropriate and supportive to strategy implementation. Respondents were asked to describe how the current organizational structure supports or hinders the implementation of strategies. It was confirmed that the organizational structure helps in formulation, design and implementation of policies and programs and regulates the communication from the bottom to the top and also helps in decision making.

It was also revealed that since the organization is formal, authority is centralized and bureaucratic in nature. This leads to decision making being slow and communication not being very effective. Sometimes the flow of information from the management takes a lot of time to trickle down to the lower level, thus delaying.

4.4.2 Organizational Resources

National Registration Bureau boasts of qualified staff, forming a valuable resource to the organization. On human resource development, the department completed training of

fingerprint officers in fingerprint technology, ICT, counseling, Disaster Management, HIV/AIDS sensitization and customer care. Most of the employees have also acquired qualifications through self- initiated programs which are viewed as being aligned to their line of operations. This is perceived to give them an edge in their understanding of their duties. All that is needed is adequate utilization of this resource and general ownership by top leadership and support of the strategic plan.

Other resources said to be influencing strategy implementation are budgetary resources. The study findings revealed that the department has over time been faced with inadequate financial resources due to low budgetary allocations from the Ministry of Finance, thus impeding the process of strategy implementation. The budgetary resources were not sufficient to meet organizational objectives because funds are always limited, as the department relies on funding from treasury. There is competition of the scarce resource with other Government Ministries and institutions. Also, budget keeps fluctuating, that is, there are budget cuts due to unforeseen circumstances like drought, workers strikes among others. The financial demands are always higher than the given resources, therefore, there are constraints in most of the operations.

4.4.3 Organizational Culture

There was an overwhelming agreement that culture has a strong influence on strategy implementation. An organization's culture is a general pattern of behavior, shared beliefs and values that members have in common and helps in nurturing and dissemination of core values. Match between strategy and culture is crucial for successful implementation of strategy. The study revealed that the organizational culture supports the

implementation of strategies. The organization is a government institution and the turnover of the Permanent Secretary (CEO), and Directors is high. As such, there is a culture of independence and thus decisions are planned and documented which helps in communication, as document acts as a point of reference, detailing who is to do what, what stage the implementation is in, remind management the direction to take and also helps in evaluation as it is used to review performance and progress against the objectives.

The culture of the organization to serve customers observing ethics and being honest to safeguard the security of the Nation supports a lot the implementation of strategies. The organizational culture also develops values among employees, that supports team work and motivate employees, that is, through setting of employees contributory funds, the Kitambulisho Welfare Funds. The cultural aspects such as resistance to change and fear of the unknown were dealt with by involvement of managers and training, together with communication of benefits of changing a strategy to all staff.

4.4.4 Leadership Style

The Senior Management of NRB was in the forefront in providing leadership to enable strategy implementation. It was agreed that they provided the needed guidance and direction toward achieving the targeted results of the department. The management showed an active team spirit in the strategy implementation process. Appointments to key positions are deemed to be on merit and operations are as per the statutory requirement.

Leadership training sessions were conducted to instill a set of management competencies. They pointed out various kinds of challenges they faced and how they were able to

overcome them thus showing good leadership. An example of the good leadership is how they were able to prioritize strategies based on the finances available vis-a-vis the urgency to implement the strategy.

4.4.5 Internal Communication Systems

Communication is critical and central to the success of strategy implementation process. The study findings revealed that the communication systems are not very effective in enhancing access to information by the workers. Some communication systems do not facilitate faster access to information. The system needs to be streamlined and updated to use ICT, for example, use of e-mails. Currently, communication within the department is through letters, circulars, workshops, meetings and posters. In workshops, people are engaged in discussions, reminders, learning and clarifications. In meetings there are discussions, posters educate and inform, while circulars outline issues, policies, and procedures to be followed. There is lack of clear communication policy. A customer care centre needs to be set up, to handle customer enquiries and complaints.

The respondents indicated that they get feedback from employees regarding issues arising during implementation. This is communicated through letters seeking clarifications or reports. Feedback is also gotten through the departmental meetings, workshops and seminars, and arising from correspondences to Head of department. It was revealed that the reaction of employees can give a guideline and also serves as a feedback mechanism. Communication needed to be encouraged in the organization as a strategic management tool. Organizational communication plays an important role in training, knowledge dissemination and learning during the process of strategy implementation.

4.4.6   Information Technology

Information Technology dictates most of the operations in National Registration Bureau. The ICT section though regarded as one offering support plays a key role in the realization of the objectives of the department. The respondents pointed to it as being the facilitator or hindrance to their objectives. It opens up the department to the fast moving world of Information Technology.

Whereas the 2nd Generation Identity Card system has been very successful in the first 10 years, with time it has been faced with various challenges due to rapid growth in ICT development of new identification technologies globally. These challenges include, manual registration processes, wastage of resources and obsolete technologies among others. Furthermore, the need for a more secure identity card is necessitated by emerging threats of fraud while using the card, terrorism, and illegal immigration.

In view of the rapidly changing technology in the production of secure documents, and in line with the Government policy on integration of population registration systems and vision 2030, the department is, therefore, faced with the need to improve the registration system to embrace global trends and standards by introducing identity cards made of superior materials and incorporating the latest security features. The department is in the process of introducing the 3rd Generation Identity Card system.

4.5   Challenges of Strategy Implementation in NRB

Organizations face difficulties while implementing their strategies for different reasons, ranging from weak management roles in implementation, lack of knowledge and

communication to guide their actions, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, poor coordination, inadequate capabilities, competing activities within the working teams, misaligned operations, insufficient monitoring and evaluation, among others.

The department, just like any other organization has been faced with various challenges arising from both internal and external to the organization. The research findings revealed a number of challenges NRB faced in implementing its strategies. These challenges include inadequate budgetary allocation by central government to finance the department's programs like mobile registration services in remote areas and improvement of service infrastructure. Depending on how much it is allocated in a year, the department is constrained in its operations. It cannot freely enlarge its operations without reference to the budget, yet its clientele is on the rise. The department is engaged in seeking for more funds from treasury to finance its projects. This is being complemented with cost cutting measures on financial resources to optimize the available resources effectively.

The study revealed that the communication systems are slow, thus affecting the implementation of strategies. The department has engaged in improvement on ICT to enhance effective communication. There is also lack of adequate policy and legal framework, the Cap 107. Measures are in place to ensure that they are reviewed and updated.

A sizeable component of the department's business processes are still manual resulting into bureaucratic inefficiencies, loss of records, and delays in service delivery. Such processes will also most likely not be compatible or may even provide bottlenecks to the

Integrated Population Registration System (IPRS). The department has put in place reform initiatives like RRI, to enhance service delivery and is pursuing ISO certification.

Organizational culture was also viewed as an impediment to successful strategy implementation. This is due to resistance to change, misunderstanding, ignorance and poor team spirit among some employees. The department has engaged in training staff through seminars and workshops, and making them aware of their responsibilities, and ensuring that the departmental objectives are in each individual appraisal forms. It was revealed that the monitoring and evaluation system is slow, and a monitoring and evaluation committees has been formed to enhance the same.

It was also revealed that the department was faced with the challenge of an influx of foreigners from neighboring countries who continuously attempt to fraudulently acquire the National Identity cards. Measures have been placed in place to curb the same, whereby the department has collaborated with other government agencies like NSIS in carrying out the process of identifying citizens. Vetting committees are also established in various registration centers, whenever necessary.

4.6 Discussion of Results

The findings of this study are well aligned with the previous studies (Awino 2001, Koske 2003, Michael 2004, and Njuguna 2009). All of these studies observed that there must be a tight fit between the strategy and how the organization does things. Successful strategy implementation involves creating a series of tight fits between strategy and structure, between strategy and organizational skills and competencies, between strategy and corporate culture, between strategy and reward systems, between strategy and

budgets, between strategy and internal policies and procedures and supportive from subsystems.

In his study, Manyarkiy (2006) found out that top management had easy access and high understanding of corporate strategic plan as compared to middle level managers and operational staff at NSSF. Similar findings are reflected in this study where it was found out that the senior management were well informed and committed to strategic plan implementation in NRB.

In establishing the challenges faced, the study found out that organizational structure, resources, culture (shared values), Information Technology and communication influenced strategy implementation in NRB. This is in agreement with findings of other researchers like Gesare (2006), who established that strategic plan implementation in the public sector, is faced with similar challenges mentioned above.

Authors Alexander (1985) and Thompson and Strickland (2003), have put forward their major considerations of the challenges that organizations encounter while implementing strategy and the findings of this study attest to them. This was also emphasized by Olali (2006) in her study of challenges of strategic plan implementation in the Co-operative bank of Kenya. She further indicated that despite these challenges, management was on top of things ensuring that they kept the implementation process remained on course. Similar sentiments were expressed by the management of NRB indicating that despite the challenges encountered, the process of strategy implementation was going right.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter relates the findings of the research study to the objectives set out in chapter one. It comprises of the summary of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations. It also highlights the limitations of the study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary

5.2.1 Strategic Implementation Practices in NRB

The first objective of the study was to establish the strategy implementation practices in the department of National Registration Bureau. The study revealed that the implementation process was on course. The current strategic plan was deemed as one that would propel the organization to greater heights amidst threat of insecurity, strained government support, pressure from emerging economic, political, social, and technology trends in a dynamic environment.

The study revealed several factors affecting strategy implementation in NRB. These include the organizational structure, organizational resources, culture, leadership style, internal communication systems, policies and procedures, core competencies and skills and Information Technology. These factors either support or hinder the implementation of strategies in any organization. As stated in the literature review, adequate resources, favorable organizational culture among other factors, enhance the success of strategy

implementation. Adequate leadership is needed for effective implementation of strategy, as this will ensure all organizational effort is united and directed towards achievement of organizational goals. Organizational structure should be compatible with the chosen strategy as it is through structure that organizations are positioned so as to execute their strategy.

5.2.2 Challenges of Strategy Implementation

The second objective of the study was to establish the challenges encountered by NRB in implementing its strategies. Results of the study show that the major challenges encountered by the organization are, inadequate budgetary allocation by central government to finance the department's programs and improve on service infrastructure, existing bureaucracies leading to slow decision making and ineffective communication systems, lack of adequate policy and legal framework, manual business processes resulting into bureaucratic inefficiencies, loss or records and delays in service delivery, resistance to change, and slow monitoring and evaluation system. Another challenge is influx of foreigners from neighboring countries, who continuously attempt to fraudulently acquire the National Identity cards. These issues affect the operational efficiency which forms the basis of strategy implementation.

It is important for the NRB's activities and work efforts to directly relate to accomplishing its strategic plan. It will be impossible to implement strategy if this link is not made. In order to achieve this, NRB must always refer to its strategic plan whenever they are intending to engage in any program. They should also ensure that enough resources are allocated to carry out their strategic plan. Too little resources will tend to

stifle the ability of the organization to carry out programs documented in the plan. Employees who will be expected to implement strategies should be fully involved in its development. This will avoid a situation where critical implementation issues are left out of consideration during formulation stage.

5.3 Conclusion

Strategy implementation is no doubt the most difficult part of strategic management process and many strategies fail at the implementation stage. For an organization to successfully implement its strategy, it must ensure the existence and alignment of all strategy supportive aspects of the organization. There must be a fit between strategy and structure, between strategy and culture, between strategy and budgets, between strategy and the organizational skills and competencies, between strategy and reward systems, and between strategy and internal policies, procedures and challenges that affect strategy implementation.

Strategic plan implementation has thus been adopted by the department not only because it is a statutory requirement but due to its relevance as a management tool. The whole process as perceived by management is participatory, the factors influencing the implementation noted and the challenges therein, making it possible for management to chart the way forward. Their focus is now on ensuring their own commitment and staff involvement in the process to ensure success.

5.4 Recommendations

Following the findings from the study, a few recommendations have been made to enhance strategy implementation in the department. Though they may not eliminate the challenges, the recommendations will enable the department of National Registration Bureau to amicably handle them to reduce their adverse effects on strategy implementation.

Performance Management is an enabling factor related to the organization and a contributor to successful strategy implementation. Performance Management needs to be further embedded and rolled out across NRB. All employees need to be stakeholders in the future direction of the organization. Their daily performance and activities should be measured along the specific milestones and core values identified by the strategic plan.

The department should make great effort to tap into the wealth of experience, knowledge and ability of their staff to ensure that they are strategically placed to enhance strategy implementation. From the interviews held with the senior management, there seems to be no linking of rewards to performance to ensure commitment to successful strategy implementation. Tying rewards and incentives to the achievement of organizational goals is a key factor in good strategy execution. Management should look into ways of rewarding employees who excel in achieving their individual targets. This would also ensure that transition in transfer of implementation responsibility from top management to the junior staff is embraced knowing that it rewards.

The use of "top–down" approach is seen as imposing strategies due to lack of ownership. The top management need to consider a cultural change by adopting a "bottom-up"

approach in strategy formulation and implementation in order to bring on board all the employees and relevant stakeholders, organize retreats that help build team work, provide standards, values, and informal rules that nurture and motivate people to do their jobs in ways that promote good strategy execution.

To ensure that the objectives are achieved, the researcher recommends sourcing of funds from donors. This will provide alternative funds which besides ensuring all eligible stakeholders benefits, will instill public confidence in the ability of the department to deliver, hence boosting its image.

Technology plays a big role in ensuring that the department achieves its objectives. It is recommended that the department employs a world class state of technology. This is in terms of equipment, infrastructure and skills.

In view of the critical role played by the department in the realization of economic development and the Kenya Vision 2030, it is imperative that that the top management seriously considers adopting the above mentioned recommendations.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study having adopted a case study design makes it difficult to generalize the findings. This is because a case study allows for in-depth study of a given unit and in this context strategy implementation in NRB. The results of the analysis cannot be inferred to other organizations.

Interviewing top management in the department on strategy implementation is like asking for a self evaluation. It also demands that the informant makes a judgment on the

organization they work for. It is expected therefore that some of the responses were likely to be biased as the informant may perceive penalties resulting from a particular position on an issue. This was however minimized by assuring the informants that the information was to be used solely for academic purposes.

The study was carried out within limited time. The time allocated for this study was insufficient considering that the researcher was a full time employee. This constrained the scope as well as the depth of the research.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The research focused on practices of strategy implementation and challenges exclusively. A study could be conducted in future to investigate how performance management in NRB can be improved to support strategy implementation process.

The researcher suggests that a study whose respondents include middle and lower staff would provide greater insights on their perception of strategy implementation in the department. This would focus on their involvement, role of management and the challenges they faced in seeking to achieve organizational objectives. Their contribution to the success of the implementation process is vital thus the need to find out their take on the whole process.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
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MBA PROGRAMME

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DATE........ 13|09|2012 ....

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter ...... MERCY GACHERI ....

Registration No............. D61|76089|2009 ....

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.

IMMACULATE OMANO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
MBA OFFICE, AMBANK HOUSE

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APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION PRACTICES IN THE DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL REGISTRATION BUREAU

1. Who were involved in the formulation of MIRP strategic plan 2008 - 2012?

2. Who is charged with the responsibility of implementing the strategic plan?

3. What are the specific objectives of the department?

4. What initiatives or action plans have you put in place in order to achieve these objectives?

5. Do the existing policies and procedures applicable to work enhance achievement of core objectives?

6. What are the core competences and skills employed by the department to translate the organizational strategies to actions successfully?

7. How does the organizational structure support or hinder the implementation of strategies?

8. How does the prevailing organizational culture support or hinder the implementation of strategies?

9. Are the budgetary resources sufficient to meet the organizational objectives?

10. How effective are the communication systems in enhancing access to information by the workers?

11. How would you describe the available communication systems' support to strategy implementation?

12. Do you get feed-back from employees regarding issues arising during implementation?

13. Is the senior management of the department in the forefront in providing leadership to enable strategy implementation?

14. What is the general attitude of junior and middle level staff towards the organizational strategies? Do they have adequate information on their roles in strategy implementation?

15. What challenges do you face in terms of employee morale, behavior and general approach to work during the implementation of strategies?

16. Are employees activities regularly reviewed to be in line with the departmental objectives?

17. Does NRB offer rewards and incentives for good performance? If yes, do the offers motivate your team to seek excellence in strategy implementation?

18. What challenges do you encounter in the process of strategy implementation?

19. What is the department doing to overcome the strategy implementation challenges?

20. What is your general comment on strategic management in NRB?

Thank you