

**THE PROCESS AND CHALLENGE OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT
WORLD VISION KENYA**

BY

MERCY WANGUI GICHEMA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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MERCY WANGUI GICHEMA

DATE

D61/62025/2010

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

y/A./^:

PROF. EVANS AOSA

DATE

School of Business

University of Nairobi

DEDICATION

To my two children. Ryan Warutere and Emmanuel Gichema. May this work inspire you to scale to higher heights in education. I will always love you and may you always experience God's blessings, favor and protection. To my husband, for the support, encouragement and patience throughout the course of this programme.

To my dear parents, Mr. and Mrs. Gichema, who would I be without you? Thank you for the prayers, inspiration to succeed, encouragement to forge ahead, patience to endure and motivation to rise to the challenge of completing my MBA degree course and life in general. I am so privileged and blessed to be called your daughter.

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ABSTRACT

Strategy implementation is an important process in strategic management. This process is faced with complexity and challenges as many organizations create great plans for their future, but fail to fully implement the desired changes. Strategy implementation task is the most complicated and time consuming part of strategic management cutting across vertically all facets of management and must be initiated from many points within the organization to ensure its success. The study focused on the process of strategy implementation and its challenges in World Vision Kenya. The research was conducted through a case study and the researcher used an interview guide as a primary data collection tool. The interview guide was administered through face to face interviews to staff in management level in various offices within the organization. The data collected was qualitative and was analyzed using content analysis method. The study found that all the staff were involved in the strategic implementation process in their various positions and they were fully aware of the strategic plan which was in operation, running from the year 2010 to 2012. The study concluded that the staff were able to identify the factors that facilitated successful strategy implementation. Communication and organizational structure were rated as the most critical success factors in strategy implementation. The study further concluded that some of the challenges that were affecting strategy implementation besides communication and organizational structure included, the context within which World Vision Kenya operated which was very volatile and was subject to external factors (natural, political and environmental) which the organization had little or no control over thereby affecting implementation. Secondly, staff had many competing priorities which distracted them from performing their core functions thereby affecting

strategy implementation. Also, the growth in financial resources (funding received) by the organization was not matching the growth of the human resource capital base thereby staff suffered from exhaustion and burn out. The study had limitations since it focused on only one organization or unit. Further research should be conducted to establish the process and challenges of strategy implementation among Non-Governmental Organization in Kenya both faith based and non-faith based organizations.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Organizations whether for profit or nonprofit, private or public have found it necessary in recent years to engage in the process of strategic management in order to achieve their corporate goals. The environments in which they operate have become not only increasingly uncertain but also more tightly interconnected. This requires a threefold response from these organizations. The organizations are required to think strategically as never before. They need to translate their insight into effective strategies to cope with their changed circumstances as well as developing rationales necessary to lay the groundwork for adopting and implementing strategies in the ever changing environment (Muthuiya, 2004).

Good strategies are only as good as they are successfully implemented. Without successful implementation, an organization will not obtain the intended results. Being able to formulate new strategies is not enough, an organization's management must also be able to translate the organization's strategic vision into concrete steps that get things done. According to Johnson and Scholes (2005) understanding the strategic position of an organization and considering the strategic choices open to it, is of little value unless the strategies that managers wish to follow can be turned to organization's action. Executing strategy effectively is important but is increasingly difficult in business environment characterized by turbulence, rapid technological advancements and ever evolving

sociopolitical and economic backgrounds. As a result, many organizations today find it challenging to successfully implement the strategies they set out (Bunda. 2012).

Strategies are a critical element in organizational functioning, but whereas most organizations have good strategies, successful strategy implementation remains a major challenge. Transforming strategies into action, is a complex difficult undertaking and it is not as straight forward as one would imagine.

World Vision Kenya is one of the Non-Governmental Organizations that is operating in Kenya. The environment in which it operates has become so dynamic and competitive that receiving donor funding has become a difficult, time consuming and unpredictable activity unlike in the previous years. This is because, donors are demanding more value for money for their funds and are also keen in entrusting their funds to organizations that will deliver goods and services as outlined in their strategic plans. One of the measures used to evaluate value for money is the ability of a Non-Governmental Organization to implement its strategy as spelt out in its strategic plan and in its annual operating plan. Therefore, the study on the process and challenges of strategy implementation is not only necessary for World Vision Kenya to meet its corporate goal but also to ensure its survival.

1.1.1 Strategy implementation in organizations

Strategy implementation is an important component of the strategic planning process. According to Mintzberg (1996) implementation means carrying out the predetermined

plans. Some strategies are planned and some others just emerge from actions and decisions of organizational members. Strategy implementation is concerned with the translation of strategy into organizational action through appropriate structure and design, resource planning and the management of strategic change (Johnson and Scholes, 2002). When considering implementation, questions relating to who should be responsible for carrying out the predetermined strategic plans, what are the structures in place and what changes are necessary must be addressed.

Strategic implementation is thus putting strategy into action. The way in which the strategy is implemented can have a significant impact on whether it will be successful or not. In most cases, different people from those who formulated it do implementation of the strategy. For this reason, care must be taken to communicate the strategy and the reasoning behind it. Otherwise, the implementation might not succeed if the strategy is misunderstood or if the affected parties resist its implementation because they do not understand why the particular strategy was selected (Thompson. 1993).

Kaplan and Norton (2008) identified six strategy execution processes in companies which include, translating the strategy, managing strategic initiatives, aligning organizational units with the strategy, formulating the strategy, reviewing the strategy and updating the strategy. The heart of execution lies in the three core processes these are, the people processes, the strategy processes and the operations processes.

Pearce and Robinson (2011) observed that to ensure success of a strategy, the strategy must be translated into carefully implemented action. This means that the strategy must be translated into guidelines for the daily activities of the firm's members, the strategy and the firm must become one in that the strategy must be reflected in the way the firm organizes its activities and the culture of the organization and the company's managers must put into place steering controls that provide strategic control and the ability to adjust strategies, commitments and objectives in response to ever changing future conditions. The transition from strategy formulation to strategy implementation gives rise to four interrelated concerns. These concerns include identifying action plans and short term objectives, initiating specific functional tactics, communicating policies that empower people in the organization, and committing to continuous improvement. Just being able to conceive new bold new strategies is not enough. An organization's management must also be able to translate the organization's strategy into concrete steps that get things done.

Strategy implementation as viewed by Thompson and Strickland (1989) is acting on what has to be done internally to put the chosen (formulated) strategy into place and achieve the desired targeted results. Organizations seem to have difficulties in implementing their strategies. According to Ansoff and McDonell (1990) one source of difficulty in the strategy process comes from the fact that in most organizations the pre- strategy decision making processes are heavily political in nature. Strategy introduces elements of rationality which is disruptive to the historical culture and power structure rather than confront the challenges posed by the environment.

According to Karani (2009) strategy researchers writers and practitioners largely agree that every strategy context is unique. Moreover they are almost unanimous that it is usually wise for strategists to adapt the strategy process and strategy content to specific circumstances prevalent in the strategy context. Therefore, there is no universal way of implementing strategy and this varies from organization to organization.

Researchers have revealed a number of problems in strategy implementation. Kibathi (2009) noted a number of problems in strategy implementation these include weak management roles, lack of communication, and lack of commitment to strategy, and unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy. Other problems are unaligned systems, structures and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable factors in the external environment. Aosa (1992) carried out an empirical investigation of aspects of strategy formulation and implementation within large, private manufacturing companies in Kenya. The study investigated strategic management practices in Kenya. He suggested that research could be extended to cover other sectors of the economy. He argued that a study with a narrower focus would achieve greater depth thereby providing further insights into the strategic management process in Kenya. Accordingly, he suggested that studies could focus on any of a variety of topics such as management training, managerial involvement in strategy, problems in strategy development and implementation.

1.1.2 The Non-Governmental Organizations(NGOs) in Kenya

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) can essentially be defined as organizations that are constituted outside the state but act in the public sphere. The very generic and all-encompassing term NGO as derived from the historical state or government organizations that discharge public duty or public policy. NGOs, therefore, constitute a variety of a very dissimilar organization that is tied together by their public duty and by not being part of the government (Ndegwa, 1993).In Kenya there are about 8,000 registered Non-Governmental Organizations ranging from small and local to large and international ones with significant annual budgets. Most of these Non-Governmental Organizations are engaged in some form of relief and development work in the country (www.ngocouncil.or.ke).

The Non-Governmental Organization sector has evolved over time and donors are not only accepting carefully formulated strategic plans and proposals from the players in the sector, but are also very keen in ensuring that the strategic plans and proposals are implemented. Future partnership in terms of funding is dependent on the Non-Governmental Organizations actualizing their plans. The actualization of the plans not only leads to accountability to the donors but also in ensuring that lives and the livelihoods of the communities that the Non-Governmental Organizations serve are transformed positively.

As a result of the highly competitive and dynamic environment, organizations have set up fully pledged strategic departments. These departments are crucial to an organization in

that they enable the organization to formulate, implement and evaluate strategies which ultimately leads to the realization of the corporate goal. Non-Governmental Organizations have not been left out in the creation of strategic departments. Whereas these departments may not be fully pledged, they are integrated with other operational units to enable them tap into the money that donors are willing to give out for charity. The departments are equally tasked to set out and continuously engage and dialogue with internal and external donors. As a result of the engagement, Non-Governmental Organizations are keen to continuously scan their external environment and to come up with policies and strategies that will give them a competitive edge over their competitors.

1.1.3 Overview of World Vision Kenya

World Vision Kenya is a faith based, child focused Non-Governmental Organization that started its operation in 1974. Initial interventions were in the form of emergency response towards a severe drought in that year. World Vision Kenya then moved into longer-term community development activities and currently works in three main sectors these are advocacy, transformational development and humanitarian emergency affairs.

World Vision Kenya today operates in an environment that is constantly changing. The changes, which are occurring both on the local and global level, have affected the way the Non-Governmental sector carries on its business. These changes are donors' increasing demand for value for money, desire for firms to embrace corporate social responsibility and conforming to legislations and international conventions such as Vision 2030 and the UN Convention for Children and Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

These changes are radical and World Vision Kenya has to strategically position itself, make strategic choices and tap the new opportunities that these external changes present. Successful strategy implementation is necessary for World Vision Kenya because it not only assists it meet its goals, but also to survive (www.wvcentral.org).

World Vision Kenya is currently undertaking a three year strategic plan which covers year 2010 to 2012. The organization continues to make considerable progress in positioning itself to cope with the changing demands of the environment. However, it still faces many problems while trying to achieve total success as envisioned in its strategic plan. This research will help to identify the strategy implementation process and the challenges that prevent World Vision Kenya from achieving full benefits of its current strategic plan which is also currently under review. It will also help the researcher and other stakeholders, to have a better understanding of the challenges faced by similar organizations and possible solutions that can be used to achieve greater success while implementing strategic plans.

1.2 Research Problem

The process of strategy implementation is important for the success of any organization and the realization of its corporate goal. However, it is difficult and most strategies fail at implementation stage. Practitioners are emphatic in saying that it is a whole lot easier to develop a sound strategic plan than it is to make it happen. A strategy may be good, but if its implementation is poor, the strategic objective for which it was intended may not be achieved. There is no universal way of strategy implementation. Johnson et al (2005) noted that it requires managers to develop appropriate strategies to specific circumstances

of an organization. Further, without proper strategy implementation, even the most superior strategy is useless.

Whereas a lot of time and resources is used in formulating strategies, the amount of time and resources invested in implementing strategy is limited. This is basically due to the notion that strategy implementation is simply an act of putting into action what has been formulated. Strategy formulation depends on business vision, market analysis, and entrepreneurial judgment. Successful implementation depends on working through others, organizing, motivating, culture building and creating strong fits between strategies and how an organization does its business. Lack of these ingredients makes strategy implementation more challenging than formulation. Okumus and Roper (1998) observed that despite the importance of the strategic execution process, far more research had been carried out into strategy formulation rather than into strategy implementation. Literature is dominated by a focus on long range planning and strategy content rather than the actual implementation of strategies, on which little is written.

A review of literature revealed that strategic implementation process has been widely researched by management scholars in Kenya. Aosa (1992) carried out an empirical investigation of aspects of strategy formulation and implementation within large, private manufacturing companies in Kenya, Awino (2000) studied the effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing higher education in Kenya. Kibathi (2009) studied challenges of strategy implementation at Oxfam Great Britain Kenya and Ong'ale (2010) studied challenges of strategy implementation at the Mission for Essential

Drugs (MEDS). Collectively they identified the following as the challenges of strategy implementation, weak management roles, lack of communication, lack of commitment to strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, lack of fit between strategy and structure and inadequate information and communication systems. Other challenges include failure to impart new skills/ inadequate staff training, inappropriate organization structure, lack of adequate resources, distractions from competing activities and uncontrollable factors from the external environment.

Organizations whether for profit or not for profit are involved in the process of strategy implementation. Further, they continue to face challenges in implementing their strategies and World Vision Kenya is not exempted. There is no universal way of implementing strategy, rather strategy implementation is context specific. What is the process of strategy implementation and what challenges does World Vision Kenya face in implementing its strategies?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study has two objectives:

- a) To establish how World Vision Kenya implements its strategy.
- b) To establish the challenges faced by World Vision Kenya in implementing its strategy.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of this study will be of great significance to various stakeholders. First, the Government of Kenya. Government ministries and policy makers will gain knowledge of the process of strategy implementation and challenges faced by Non-Governmental Organizations and use the knowledge to develop policies that enhance effective strategy implementation amongst such organizations. Non-Governmental Organizations play an important role in assisting the Government in achieving its social mandate to the people of Kenya. Therefore the findings will ensure the development of policies that will enhance the smooth implementation of programs undertaken by Non-Governmental Organizations.

Secondly, the management of World Vision Kenya will identify the challenges that are associated with strategy implementation. It will therefore inform the decision making process of the organization in the subsequent strategic planning period. It will act as a guide during strategy formulation and implementation processes. This will bring out factors that impede effective strategy implementation and survey the reasons for this scenario and provide crucial solutions for strategy implementation within World Vision Kenya.

Thirdly, scholars and researchers will find this study useful as it will contribute to academic literature on strategy implementation in Non-Governmental Organizations. Whereas considerable research has been conducted on commercial organizations on strategy implementation, little has been researched on Non-Governmental Organizations.



Finally, it will form a basis of further studies in this organization and in the Non-Governmental Organization sector as a whole.

2.2. Concept of Strategy

The concept of strategy and strategic management are understood in all organizations whether for profit or nonprofit, private or public. Strategic management is the managerial process of having a plan, setting objectives, creating a strategy, implementing the strategy, and then over time evaluating whether the strategy is working and if it is not, adjusting the strategy and resources accordingly (Johnson and Scholes, 1999). Johnson et al. (2003) viewed strategic management as having three dimensions: first, it is a process, second, it is a plan, and third, it is a position. The organization's strategy is a plan for the future and having strategy into action. Strategy position is associated with identifying the nature of the strategy of the external environment, an organization's strategic capability (resources and competencies) and opportunities and threats of the future. Strategic management involves identifying the future, and then for the future strategy at both business and corporate levels and the systems for achieving strategy in terms of both the structure and activities of the organization.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews available literature on strategy implementation and its challenges. It summarizes the information from other researchers who have carried out their research in the same field of study and what is available in terms of literature from scholars across the globe.

2.2 Concept of Strategy

The concept of strategy and strategic management are important in all organizations whether for profit or nonprofit, private or public. Strategic management is the managerial process of forming a strategic vision, setting objectives, crafting a strategy, implementing and executing the strategy and then over time initiating whatever corrective adjustments in the vision, objective, strategy and execution that are appropriate (Thompson and Strickland, 1989). Johnson et al (2005) observed strategic management as having three key elements within it these are, understanding the strategic position of the organization, strategic choices for the future and turning strategy into actions. Strategic position is concerned with identifying the impact of the strategy of the external environment, an organization's strategic capability (resources and competences) and expectations and influence of stakeholder. Strategic choices involve understanding the underlying bases for future strategy at both business unit and corporate levels and the options for developing strategy in terms of both the directions and methods of development.

Strategy is a fundamental management tool in any organization and is a multi-dimensional concept that can be looked into in different ways. Ansoff and Mc Donnell (1990) observe that strategy is a set of decision making rules for guidance of organizational behavior. Such rules define goals and objectives, business strategy, organizational concept and organizational operating procedures. According to Johnson et al (2005) strategy is the direction and scope of an organization over a long term, which achieves advantage in a changing environment through its configuration of resources and competences with the aim of fulfilling stakeholder's expectations. Mintzberg et al (2003) looked at strategy as the pattern or plan that integrates an organization's major goals, policies and action sequences into a cohesive whole. A well formulated strategy helps to marshal and allocate an organization's resources into unique and viable posture based on its relative internal competencies and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the environment and contingent moves by intelligent opponents. In implementing its activities, organizations should ensure that their day to day activities contribute to the achievement of the organization's overall goal as outlined in the strategic plan.

Strategies are a critical element to organizational functioning, but whereas many organizations have good strategies, successful strategy implementation remains a challenge. To ensure success the strategy must be translated into carefully implemented actions (Pearce and Robinson, 2011). Turning strategy into action is concerned with ensuring that strategies are working in practice.

Since strategic decisions influence the way organizations respond to their environment, it is very important for organizations to make strategic decisions and define strategy in terms of its function to the environment. The purpose of strategy is to provide directional cues to the organization that permit it to achieve its objectives while responding to the opportunities and threats in the environment (Piercy, 2002). Equally important, a strategy serves as a vehicle for achieving consistent decision making across different departments and individuals. Hamel (1991) views organizations as composed of many individuals all of whom are engaged in making decisions that must be coordinated.

2.3 Strategy implementation process

Strategy implementation is concerned with the translation of strategy into organizational action through appropriate structure and design, resource planning and the management of strategic change (Johnson and Scholes, 2005). When considering implementation, questions relating to who should be responsible for carrying out the predetermined strategic plans, what are the structures in place and what changes are necessary must be addressed.

Strategy implementation is putting strategy into action. The way in which the strategy is implemented can have a significant impact on whether it will be successful or not. In most cases, different people from those who formulated it do implementation of the strategy. For this reason, care must be taken to communicate the strategy and the reasoning behind it. Otherwise, the implementation might not succeed if the strategy is misunderstood or if the affected parties resist its implementation because they do not

understand why the particular strategy was selected. Strategy implementation is influenced by factors such as organization structure and relationships (division of labor, information systems and coordination of divided responsibility), organizational processes and behavior (standards and measurement, motivation and incentive systems, control systems) and top leadership (Mintzberg et al, 2003).

A brilliant strategy that cannot be implemented creates no real value. Effective implementation begins during strategy formulation when questions of how to do it should be considered in parallel with what to do. Effective implementation results when organization's resources and actions are tied to strategic priorities, and when key success factors are identified and performance measures and reporting aligned (www.deloitte and touche).An excellent implementation plan, will not only cause the success of an appropriate strategy, but also can rescue an inappropriate strategy. Strategy implementation is therefore crucial to effective management.

The implementation process of a strategy typically impacts every part of the organization structure from the biggest organization unit to the smallest frontline work group (Thompson and Strickland, 1989). They point that every manager has to think through the question, "What has to be done in my area to implement our part of the strategic plan and what should I do to get these things accomplished?". All managers therefore become strategic implementers in their areas of authority and responsibility and all employees should be involved.

Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe that transforming strategies into action is a far complex and difficult task. Implementing strategy is a tougher, more consuming challenging than crafting strategy. It entails converting the strategic plan into action then into results. Similarly it is always more difficult to do something (strategy implementation) than to say you are going to do it (strategy formulation). Implementation is successful if the company achieves its strategic objectives and targeted levels of financial performance. What makes it too demanding is the wide sweep of managerial activities that have to be attended to, the many ways managers can tackle each activity, the skill that it takes to get a variety of initiatives launched and moving, and the resistance to change that has to be overcome.

2.4 Factors that determine strategy implementation

Implementing strategy involves empowering others to act on doing all the things needed to put the strategy into place and to execute it proficiently. Organizations have realized that strategy implementation depends on several factors. Aosa (1992) observed that strategy implementation is likely to be successful when congruence is achieved between several elements. Of particular importance includes organization structure, culture, resource allocation systems and leadership.

Thompson and Strickland (1989) observed that whereas crafting strategy is largely an entrepreneurial activity, implementing strategy is primarily an internal administrative activity. Whereas strategy formulation entails heavy doses of vision, analysis and entrepreneurial judgment, successful strategy implementation depends upon the skills of

working through others, organizing, motivating, and culture building and creating strong fists between strategy and how the organization does things. Ingrained behavior does not change because a new strategy has been announced. There are various factors that determine strategy implementation.

First, leadership is needed for effective implementation of strategy, as this will ensure that the organization effort is united and directed towards achievement of its goals (Pearce and Robinson, 2008). Leadership is considered to be one of the most important elements affecting organizational performance. Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe that the Chief Executive Officer and the heads of major organizational sub units are obviously the persons most responsible for leading and key noting the tone, pace and style of strategy implementation.

The specific tasks of strategic leadership include, leading the process of shaping values, molding culture, energizing strategy accomplishment, keeping the organization innovative responsive and opportunistic, dealing with politics of strategy coping with power struggles and of building consensus and initiating corrective actions to improve strategy execution (Thompson and Strickland, 1989).

Top management is essential and crucial to the effective implementation of strategic change. Top management provides a role model for other managers to use in assessing the salient environmental variables, their relationship to the organization, and the appropriateness of the organization's response to these variables. Top management is also

responsible for the design and control of the organization's reward and incentive systems. Johnson et al (2005) observe the managers responsible for implementation of strategies, usually line managers, may be so busy with the day to day operations of the business that they cede responsibility for strategic issues to specialists or consultants.

Secondly, communication process during strategy implementation cannot be over emphasized. Employees need to be notified on a regular basis of the process of strategy implementation. However practically, communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation is frequently delayed until the changes have already crystallized. This makes many organizations face the challenge of lack of a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding the formulated strategy. Additionally, inability to solicit questions and feedback, lack of communication causes more harm as the employees are not informed about the new requirements, tasks and activities to be performed by the affected employees, and, furthermore, cover the reason behind changed circumstances.

Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe that communication goes a long way in galvanizing organization wide commitment to the chosen strategic plan. Communication is the glue that sticks together all members of staff to the chosen strategic plan. The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it. To deal with this critical situation, an integrated communications plan must be developed. Such a plan is an effective vehicle for focusing the employees' attention on the value of the selected strategy to be implemented (Rapa and Kauffman. 2005).

Wheelen and Hunger (2008) state that communication is key to the effective management to change. Rationale for strategic changes should be communicated to workers not only in newsletters and speeches but also in training and development programs.

Thirdly, an organization does not exist within a cultural vacuum. Its operations are affected by what Johnson and Scholes (2005) term as "interacting spheres of culture". Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe that every organization is unique in culture. Corporate culture is the philosophy, the attitudes, the beliefs and the shared values around which the organization operates. Such things in a company's activities can be hard to pin down, even harder to characterize accurately in a sense, they are intangible and "soft". An organization's culture is an important contributor (or obstacle) to successful strategy execution.

Thompson and Strickland (1989) further state that it is the strategy maker's responsibility to choose a strategy that is compatible with the "sacred" or unchangeable parts of the prevailing corporate culture. It is the strategy implementer's task, once strategy is chosen, to bring the corporate culture into alignment with strategy and keep it there.

As a weakness, culture may obstruct the smooth implementation of strategy by creating resistance to change (Pearce and Robinson, 2011). Aosa (1992) stated that it is important that the culture of an organization be compatible with the strategy being implemented because where there is incompatibility between strategy and culture, it can lead to a high organizational resistance to change and de-motivation which in turn can frustrate the

strategy implementation effort. However, when culture influences the actions of the employees to support current strategy, implementation is strengthened.

An optimal culture is one that best supports the mission and the strategy of the company of which it is part. Unless a strategy is in complete agreement with the culture, any significant change in strategy should be followed by a modification of the organization's culture. Although a corporate culture can be changed, it may often take a long time, and it requires much effort. A key job of management involves managing corporate culture. Management must evaluate what a particular change in strategy means to the corporate culture, assess whether a change in culture is needed and decide whether an attempt to change the culture is worth the likely cost (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008).

Fourthly, structure is the division of tasks for efficiency and clarity of purpose and coordination between interdependent parts of the organization to ensure organizational effectiveness. Structure of the firm should be constituted with the strategy being implemented. If activities, responsibilities and interrelationships are not organized in a manner that is consistent with strategy chosen, the structure is left to evolve on its own (Pearce and Robinson, 2011).

Organizational structure is a major priority in implementing a carefully formulated strategy. It helps people pull together in their activities that promote effective strategy implementation. The structure of an organization should be compatible with the chosen

strategy and if there is incongruence, adjustments will be necessary either to the structure or strategy itself (Koske, 2003).

Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe structure is no more than a managerial device for facilitating the implementation and execution of the organization's strategy and ultimately, for achieving the intended performance and results. The structural design of an organization acts both as a harness that helps people pull together in their performance of diverse tasks and as a means of tying the organizational building blocks together in ways that promote strategy accomplishment and improved performance. The best organizational arrangement is the one that best fits the firms' situation at the moment.

Finally, all organizations have at least four types of resources that can be used to achieve desired objectives: financial, physical, human and technological (Thompson and Strickland, 1989). Resources allocation is a central management activity that allows for strategy execution. Strategic management enables resources to be allocated to priorities established by annual objectives. A number of factors commonly prohibit effective resource allocation. These include overprotection of resources, too much emphasis on the short run financial criteria, organization politics, vague strategy targets, a reluctance to take risks and lack of sufficient knowledge (David, 1997).

How well a strategy implementer ties the organization's budget directly to the needs of strategy can, quite clearly, either promote or impede the process of strategy implementation and execution. Too little funding deprives sub units of the capability to

carry out their pieces of the strategic plan. Too much funding is a waste of organizational resources and reduces financial performance. Both outcomes argue that for the strategy-implementer to be deeply involved in the budgeting process, closely reviewing the programs and proposals of strategy critical sub units within the organization. A ready willingness to shift resources in support of strategic change is especially critical (Thompson and Strickland, 1989).

2.5 Challenges to strategy implementation

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 the challenges to successful strategy implementation have not been widely investigated, there are some issues that have surfaced in many studies (Muthuiya, 2004).

The implementation of appropriate strategies remains one of the most difficult areas of management. Researchers have revealed that 1 out of 10 strategies are implemented successfully. Studies that have been done have pointed a number of challenges in strategy implementation, these include weak management roles in implementation, a lack of communication, lacking a commitment to the strategy, unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy, unaligned organization systems and resources, poor coordination, sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable environmental factors (Thompson et al 2009).

The most important problem experienced in strategy implementation in many cases is the lack of communication. Aaltonen and Ikavalko (2001) state that the amount of strategic communication in most of the organizations is large, both written and oral communication is used in form of top down communication. According to Wang (2000) communication should be two-way so that it can provide information to improve understanding and responsibility and to motivate staff. Communication should not be seen as a once off activity focusing announcing the strategy. It should be an ongoing activity throughout the implementation process.

Awino (2000) identified four problem areas affecting successful strategy implementation these are: lack of fit between strategy and structure, inadequate information and communication systems and failure to impart new skills. Koske (2003) identified most challenges as concerning, connecting strategy formulation to implementation, resources allocation, match between structure and strategy, linking performance and pay to strategies and creating a strategy-supportive culture. Before any strategy can be implemented, it must be clearly understood. Clear understanding of a strategy gives purpose to the activities of each employee and allows them to link. Lack of understanding of the strategy may lead to challenges in its implementation.

Finally, a lot of time and resources are invested in the strategic planning process. However, for implementation it is assumed that the action points developed in the planning process will be implemented. However, strategy implementation which is turning brilliant strategic thinking effectively into brilliant results is not as straight

forward as it is assumed. The same energy and resources that are put into planning should be put into implementation, this will ensure that the organization reaches its overall goal.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the research methodology that will be used to find answers to the research questions. In this chapter the research methodology will be discussed as follows, research design, data collection, and data analysis.

3.2 Research Design

A research design is a plan for selecting the sources and types of information used to answer the research question(s). The study was a case study since the unit of analysis was one organization. The study was aimed at getting detailed information regarding the strategy implementation process and the challenges faced by World Vision Kenya in strategy implementation. A case study allowed an investigation to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real life events.

Kothari (2004) noted that a case study involves a careful and complete observation of social units. It is a method of study in depth rather than breadth and places more emphasis on the full analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and other interrelations. Primary data which is collected from such a study is more reliable and up to date. Aosa (1992) argued that a study with narrower focus would achieve a greater depth thereby providing further insight of the strategic change management practices in Kenya.

3.3 Data Collection

The researcher used both primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through face to face interview while secondary data was collected by use of desk research techniques from published reports and other documents. Secondary data included the organization's publications, periodicals and information from the internet.

An interview guide was developed to assist in the collection of the qualitative data. An interview guide comprised of a list of various questions the researcher sought to learn from the organization. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions. The open-ended questions enabled the researcher to collect qualitative data. This was used in order to gain a better understanding and enable a better and more insightful interpretation of the results from the study. The interview guide was developed while considering the available literature on the topic of research, research work conducted by other scholars and the research questions which this scholar sought to determine.

World Vision Kenya's mode of operation is in three fold, that is the National Office based in Nairobi, the regional office also known as the Sub Branch office based in 7 regions across Kenya and in the field offices which are spread across different counties. The interview guide was administered to six representative staff across the offices so as to have a holistic view on the process of strategy implementation and the challenges experienced by World Vision Kenya while implementing strategy. The staff comprised of Associate Director, Livelihoods and Residence Coordinator, Design and Monitoring Officer, Accounts Manager, Field Coordinator and Program Manager.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data collected was thoroughly examined and checked for consistency, completeness and comprehensibility. It was analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis is a systematic qualitative description of the composition of the objects or materials of the study.

Content analysis involves observations and detailed description of objects, items, or things that comprise the sample. The use of this analysis method was important as it saved on time and resources. Content analysis was used to analyze the respondents' views about the process of strategy implementation in World Vision Kenya.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents primary data findings, their analysis and interpretations. The study was done by use of an interview guide. The data analysis was done in line with the objectives of the study, which were to find out how World Vision Kenya implements its strategy and the challenges faced while implementing its strategy.

Primary data and secondary data were collected and analyzed. Primary data was collected using an interview guide containing open ended questions to allow for further probing during discussions. Secondary data was collected by examining related documents such as strategic plans, information contained in the organization's website and financial statements.

The study interviewed six representative staff based at the National Office, Sub Branch Office and Field Office. This was to ensure that the study had a holistic view of the process and challenges of strategy implementation hence the data collected was concurring.

4.2 Overview of respondents

The data was collected from six management team based in the various offices within the organization. Three of the respondents were based at the National Office, two were based at the Sub Branch Office and one was based at the Field Office. The responses therefore

had the advantage that they could give a holistic view of the organization's mode of operation. The respondents were equally distributed in terms of gender.

From the study findings, all of the respondents were senior management at their various offices. The study sought to establish the duration that the respondents had worked with World Vision Kenya. From the findings, five out of the six interviewees had worked with World Vision Kenya for a period of over five years with one respondent having worked for 2 years. Their responses hence had the advantage of good command and responsibility being that they were senior management staff in their offices and had experience and aptitude owing to the years of experience in the organization.

All of the respondents were involved in the operationalization of World Vision Kenya's strategic plan, further they were aware of the current strategic plan in operation. This had an advantage to this study because all the respondents knew the overall corporate goal and was of a great resource especially in pointing out the reasons that hindered the organization from achieving this goal. The respondents were unanimous in the extent of measurement of strategy implementation and this was through preparation of monthly, quarterly, biannual and annual reports which comprised of programming and financial reports.

4.3 Strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya

All the interviewees were aware of the strategic implementation process. It was established that the process of implementation started with the formulation of strategic

plans. The organization's strategic plan is formulated for a period of three years with the current strategic plan running from year 2010 to 2012. It was out of the three year strategic plans that annual operating plans were derived which have objectives, targets, means of verification and objectives for each year. Further, it established that when preparing the strategic plans, there is participation and active involvement of staff across the three offices. This encourages ownership of the strategic plan and greatly assists at the point of implementation since the staff have a general idea of the overall corporate goal and their role in the realization of that goal.

The study sought to find the extent to which leadership and the level of commitment of top management affected the strategic implementation at World Vision Kenya. All the interviewees'were in agreement that leadership and the level of commitment of top management affected strategic implementation at World Vision Kenya. Leadership's commitment sets the pace at which strategy was implemented in the organization. Further, the study established that leadership ensures that the organization effort is united and directed towards achievement of its goals. The study established that the organization had a Board of Directors in place and the National Director reported to the Board of Directors hence was the main link between the staff and the Board. The Board of Directors gives overall leadership especially on policy issues to the organization it is also the main governing body in the organization. As such all policies, plans and reports including operational, financial and audit are approved by the Board of Directors. It was also established that the Internal Audit function reported directly to the Board of Directors, this created greater autonomy for the audit function. Membership to the board

was based on skills, experience, commitment and values that board members had to offer to steer forward the vision and mission of the organization. The leadership structure in the organization was well defined and structured and greatly assisted in decision making and strategy implementation.

The study findings were that communication was a key success factor in strategy implementation. Communication ensured that there was a common understanding across all the members of staff and led to harmonized implementation of the strategy. World Vision Kenya being a donor funded organization has to communicate regularly to partners on the implementation status. Communication to partners includes methods such as, operational and financial reports, video documentary and stakeholder's conferences. Further, the study established that internal communication was done regularly and a two way mode of communication was encouraged whereby feedback and suggestions are given. It was established that the organization had started the production of a monthly bulletin which is sent through email to all staff. This bulletin is used to communicate important corporate information and make formal announcements.

All respondents agreed that organizational culture affected strategy implementation to a great extent. Organizational culture is the norm of doing things. The match between strategy and culture was crucial for successful implementation of the strategy. Previously, the organization was not keen in reviewing policies regularly as such some of the policies that were archaic and had been overtaken by events hence hindering implementation. However, it was established that the management had in recent

past reviewed some of the policies in light with the current trends in the sector, social, environmental and economic conditions thereby greatly improving the process of implementation. Innovation was also being appreciated in the organization as opposed to conducting business in the same old way with a committee of innovators being constituted. The study further revealed that the management of World Vision Kenya was putting deliberate effort in ensuring that the culture of excellence in strategy implementation was inculcated in the day to day operations of the organization. This was through the use of TEECAP model (Team work Excellence Execution Commitment Accountability Passion) which advocated for excellence in execution.

From the findings, the interviewees were of the opinion that organizational structure had greatly influenced strategy implementation. Organizational structure is particularly important in decision making. Not only does structure dictate how objectives and policies are established but also dictates how resources are allocated. Organizational structure also determines the speed with which timely decisions were made. It was established that the organization had a three level structure. The first level was made of the National Office which was made of technical staff across all sectors and also the support function. The second level was made of regions also known as Sub Branches which were clustered in seven regions across the country. The organization is big in size and has an expansive distribution coverage area and in order to assist in better management the country was classified into seven regions. The staff that are based in the Sub Branch Offices are mainly managers in their different departments and their main function is to support the field offices under their jurisdiction. The final level is the Field Offices which is the place

where actual implementation takes place. Staff in the field offices are involved with actual implementation in partnership with community members. Implementation is in various fields such as health, water and sanitation, education and food security.

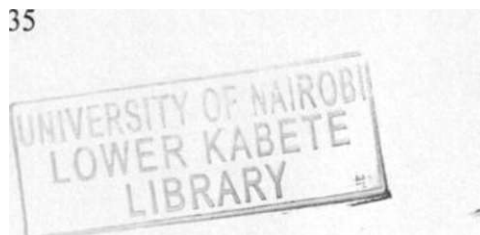
The study found out that World Vision Kenya was endowed with enormous financial, physical and technological resources necessary in the process of strategy implementation. Further, the study established that the multiple funding streams available to the organization ensured that there was always a smooth flow of humanitarian interventions. It was also established that the organization has a human resource base with vast experience in the Humanitarian industry. The human resource base was made up of National and Expatriate staff who were very knowledgeable in various aspects of the humanitarian sector. It was established that the organization had challenges with connectivity in some of the remote areas where its field offices are located. This was because the means of communication is limited or unavailable; as a result the process of relaying information to and from the offices is hindered thereby hindering implementation.

4.4 Challenges to Strategy Implementation at World Vision Kenya

The process of strategy implementation is the most complex and difficult part in strategic management. The findings indicated various challenges in strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya. The challenges were as a result of internal and external environment within which the organization operated in.

The first challenge was change in context within which the organization operated. This is mainly because of factors external to the organization and was as a result of natural factors, environmental factors or political factors. For example, in the current strategic plan, World Vision Kenya had not envisioned working in a refugee context and hence this was completely missing in its strategic plan. However, the massive influx of refugees into the country had made it necessary for World Vision Kenya to work in a refugee context, a case in point being Daadab Refugee Camp. The acute drought that was experienced in the Horn of Africa region in the year 2011 meant that World Vision Kenya had to change its approach from developmental interventions to emergency interventions thereby posing a challenge to implementation of strategy. The Post-Election Violence that erupted in 2007/ 2008 also meant that the organization had to move from developmental based interventions to relief interventions. The change in context implied that the organization had to change from implementing its strategy as spelt out in its strategic plan thereby inhibiting the achievement of the overall corporate goal.

The second challenge was the organizational structure. World Vision Kenya has a structure that is made up of three levels of authority these are the Field Office, Sub Branch Office and the National Office. The respondents felt that the structure sometimes led to duplication of duties and promoted bureaucracy. It also made the reporting structure unnecessarily long and time consuming hence slowing down the decision making process. Sometimes there were overlaps within the various functions which led to conflict or neglect of some activities as each function expected the other to handle an



issue. It was noted that there was information delays as information flowed from one level to the next thereby inhibiting speedy implementation.

Another challenge recorded by the respondents was on resources. Implementation of strategy requires that the resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are in place and are in alignment with the strategy being implemented. Whereas the organization has enormous financial, physical and technological resources, the human resource was being affected by high staff turnover which slowed down implementation. Trained and experienced staff were being poached by other Non-Governmental Organizations. Staff replacement process also took some time and this ultimately led to delay or non-achievement of the corporate goal. It was noted that some of the interventions were short term emergencies running for 2-3 months, therefore having all the necessary resources available on time was of importance so as to effectively implement such interventions. It was further established that, as the organization experienced financial growth, the human resources had not grown in the same ratio hence affecting strategy implementation. The human resource imbalance was more pronounced within the support services function. For effective implementation to take place all resources should grow proportionately to avoid straining one resource over the other.

According to the respondents, the fourth challenge faced was the presence of competing duties that distracted the attention of strategy implementers. Competing duties are engagements that came up in the course of the staffs work that needed the concerned staff attention but were not necessarily planned for. The competing duties were

categorized as any other duties in the individual staffs performance agreement. Competing duties include attending various trainings, workshops and emergency response activities. These duties meant that the staff was not undertaking their core responsibilities thereby inhibiting or slowing down implementation.

Organizational culture was cited as one of the impediments to successful strategy implementation by the respondents. There was a culture of doing business as usual without making deliberate effort to improve on the business processes. The Non-Governmental Sector was evolving and most of the partners were demanding for greater value for money for the funding disbursed. This called for innovation and creative ideas of doing humanitarian interventions. The culture of not improving on processes thereby implied that implementation was taking longer than it ought to take.

The study further established that the organization was very dynamic and was ready to embrace new approaches to implementing strategy without evaluating its previous strategy. This posed a problem in that the organization did not have time to reflect on what worked or did not work in the old approach. According to the respondents, this attributed to repeating mistakes which was demotivating to the staff involved since they had less control.

Some of the respondents pointed out working environment as part of the challenges to the process of implementing the strategy. Some of the developmental programme areas were located in very remote and arid areas encompassed with security issue. This meant that

the staff in such field offices were unable to stay with their families. A lot of time is hence spent by these staff travelling up and down to connect with their families who they left behind. This has slowed down the implementation process resulting from such divided attention. Also such staff are unable to further their studies due to lack of schools in such areas hence they fail to embrace new ways of doing things as triggered by the changes in the environment.

Finally, the interviewees were in agreement that some of the Field Offices were located in very remote areas where communication was a challenge. Information to and from the field offices was slow therefore inhibiting timely decisions being made which ultimately led to challenges in achieving the corporate goal. The emergency environment which the organization sometimes operated in demanded that very quick decisions are made. The inaccessibility of some of the areas meant decisions were not made as fast thereby hindering implementation.

4.5 Addressing strategy implementation challenges at World Vision Kenya.

Findings from the study indicated that the organizational structure should be made less complex with roles and responsibilities clearly spelt out. This would ensure that there was no duplication of functions and would also go a long way in enhancing timely decision making necessary for effective implementation.

The challenges resulting from context in which the organization operated could not be fully eliminated since they were factors beyond the control of the organization. However, the respondents were of the opinion that they should be indicated as assumptions in the strategic plan of the organization. This would be of importance especially during the evaluation stage of the strategic plan whereby it would categorically be reported that the reason for the non-achievement of the corporate goal was because of the assumptions which were out of control of the organization.

Respondents were of the opinion that growth in funding should be matched with growth in the other resources that is technological, physical and human resources. More so human resources should match funding levels such that there is a match between the responsibilities assigned to each member of staff to enhance effective implementation and reduce on burn out. Additionally, the organization should devise measures to ensure that staff were retained and motivated to perform their day to day tasks to avoid high turnover rates.

The study established that staff should be involved in the core functions of their positions and disruptions such as trainings and meetings should be minimized as much as possible to enable them meet their targets as spelt out in their performance agreements. This could be achieved through proper planning and coordination within the various functions and levels of the organization.

The respondents were of the opinion that management was deliberate on improving communication challenge within the organization. This had been by introducing measures such as improving connectivity of remote field office by using technologies such as radio calls, VSAT and modems. Further, there was a monthly bulletin which was circulated through the corporate email system informing all staff of developments taking place within the organization.

The organizational cultural processes are of major importance as they help in delivering successful strategies. They are particularly important due to the complex and dynamic environments that the organization operated in. The respondents appreciated the fact that the management had become very intentional in promoting excellence in execution. As a result, it had adopted the TEECAP model (Teamwork Excellence Execution Commitment Accountability Passion) which advocated for excellence in execution. Innovation was also being advocated for in the organization and a committee had been tasked with the responsibility of finding new, innovative and improved ways of conducting business with the ultimate aim of improving implementation hence achieving the corporate goal.

4.6 Discussion of findings

The objectives of the study were to find out how World Vision Kenya implements its strategy and to find out the challenges faced by World Vision Kenya while implementing its strategy. The discussion of the study's findings are two fold, compare with the existing

theory on strategy implementation and secondly compare with studies done by other researchers.

4.6.1 Comparison with theory

Thompson and Strickland (2003) stated 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. According to Ansoff and McDonnell (1990) one source of difficulty in the strategy process comes from the fact that in most organizations the pre- strategy decision making processes are heavily political in nature. Strategy introduces elements of rationality which is disruptive to the historical culture and power structure rather than confront the challenges posed by the environment.

From the content analysis of the study it was established that leadership, communication, organizational structure, organizational culture and resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are factors that influence strategy implementation. The findings from this study are therefore consistent with theory.

The study further revealed that the organization had adopted measures to mitigate against the challenges it faced in the course of implementation of its strategies. Some of the measures include increased communication and information sharing amongst staff. This has been through the publications of the monthly bulletins which was shared with staff

using the corporate email system, lunch and learn sessions where staff are educated / informed about new developments affecting the organization over lunch and in quarterly review meetings where staff are asked to give feedback and suggestions. The management was also inculcating a culture whereby staff are not only encouraged to execute strategies but execute strategies with excellence. This culture will not only lead to the realization of the corporate goal but will also lead to greater accountability to partners. The organization's field offices are located in remote areas, as a means to promote staff retention the management has come up with a hardship policy for staff who work in the very remote areas.

The study further revealed that the organization is looking into ways of removing some of the long business processes that lead to unnecessary delays and inhibit fast and efficient decision making. The organization sometimes works in an emergency context for example when there are floods and the speed with which decisions are made can determine if a life is saved or lost. Some of the ways that the organization is addressing this challenge is by shortening the turnaround time of major business processes without compromising on quality and formation of a committee made up of staff from various departments whose mandate is to look into ways of improving the business processes and advice management on the same.

4.6.2 Comparison with other studies

This study presents findings similar to other studies and is thus consistent with previous studies. Muthuiya (2004) found out that the factors that hindered strategy implementation

in African Medical and Research Foundation Kenya (AMREF Kenya) were inadequate provision of required resources, advocate and supporters of strategic decisions leaving the organization during the implementation period and unsupportive organization culture. Kibathi (2009) studied challenges of strategy implementation at Oxfam Great Britain Kenya and noted a number of problems in strategy implementation these include weak management roles, lack of communication, lack of commitment to strategy, and unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy. Other problems are unaligned systems, structures and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable factors in the external environment.

Ong'ale (2010) studied challenges of strategy implementation at the Mission for Essential Drugs and Supplies (MEDS) identified the following as the challenges of strategy implementation, inadequate leadership from the departmental and sectional managers, inadequate staff training, inappropriate organization structure, lack of adequate resources, distractions from competing activities and uncontrollable factors from the external activities. Ocholla (2010) studied challenges of strategy implementation at the Kenya Medical Research Institute observed that communication, bureaucracy, poor teamwork/coordination and non-participative and autocratic leadership among some managers as the hindrances to strategy implementation. Mutuku (2011) found out that level of commitment of top management, organizational culture and communication were the key success factors in strategy implementation at the Kenya Society of the Blind.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter relates the findings of the research study to the objectives of the study. It comprises of the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations. It also highlights limitations of the research study and suggestions for further research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The objective of the research was to determine the strategy implementation practice in World Vision Kenya and also find out the challenges that the organization faces in implementing its strategy. The study findings will therefore be analyzed in the context of the two research objectives.

The study findings will not only assist the organization identify its current strategy implementation practices but will also assist in highlighting the challenges it encounters while implementing its current strategy. This will be of great help since it can inform the next strategic planning process. The process of strategic management is not static and it involves a lot reflection and innovation.

5.2.1 Strategy implementation in World Vision Kenya

The study established that the organization formulates a three year strategic plan which is used as a basis of implementation. Further, the organization uses a participatory approach

in strategy formulation. This is advantageous in that the involvement of staff make them own the strategy and are therefore willing to support in its implementation.

On organizational culture, the study deduced that organizational culture affected strategy implementation to a great extent. The organization had previously conducted its business in the old ways without improving on its processes. However, the study further revealed that the management and staff had adopted a model referred as TEECAP (Teamwork Excellence Execution Commitment Accountability Passion) whose aim was not only ensure implementation of strategy but also to ensure that there was excellence in execution. Unless a strategy is in complete agreement with the culture, any significant change in strategy should be followed by a modification of the organization's culture. Although a corporate culture can be changed, it may often take a long time, and it requires much effort. A key job of management involves managing corporate culture. Management must evaluate what a particular change in strategy means to the corporate culture, assess whether a change in culture is needed and decide whether an attempt to change the culture is worth the likely cost (Wheelen and Hunger, 2008).

Communication was cited as being one of the key success factors in strategy implementation. It was further established that the organization was making deliberate effort in enhancing communication through its monthly bulletin whereby strategic information is shared, major announcements made and feedback is received on various issues through the editor of the bulletin. Thompson and Strickland (1989) observe that communication goes a long way in galvanizing organization wide commitment to the

chosen strategic plan. Communication is the glue that sticks together all members of staff to the chosen strategic plan. The way in which a strategy is presented to employees is of great influence to their acceptance of it.

The research established that World Vision Kenya had multiple sources of funding. This ensured that there were financial resources to encourage continuous humanitarian interventions. It also established that the organization was endowed with a rich human capital base which is able to fund raise and implement activities in the proposals. Resources allocation is a central management activity that allows for strategy execution. Strategic management enables resources to be allocated to priorities established by annual objectives. A number of factors commonly prohibit effective resource allocation. These include overprotection of resources, too much emphasis on the short run financial criteria, organization politics, vague strategy targets, a reluctance to take risks and lack of sufficient knowledge (David, 1997).

5.2.2 Challenges of strategy implementation in World Vision Kenya

The second objective of the study was to determine the challenges faced by World Vision Kenya in strategy implementation. The organization encountered several challenges while implementing its strategy.

The study revealed that the organizational structure of World Vision Kenya was long which is made up of three levels, these are Field Office, Sub Branch Office and National Office. This led to duplication of duties and promoted bureaucracy. This further inhibited fast decision making process which was of paramount importance especially in

emergency situations. The long structure also meant that business processes for example approval processes, recruitment of staff and procurement took a longer period of time to be concluded thereby negatively impacting on implementation. According to Chandler (1962) there is an intrinsic association between strategic thinking and structure. A proper organization structure should facilitate teamwork, commitment to organization's policies, proper communication and an effective control system. For effective strategy implementation, there has to be compatibility between the strategy and the structure of the organization. According to Mintzberg et al (2003) the weakness of most organizational structures is lack of emphasis and co-ordination and how to effectively implement organizational plans and policies.

The study established that the challenge resulting from the context in which the organization operated could not be fully eliminated since it is highly influenced by external factors. These factors include natural, environmental, political and social factors. However, these factors should be listed as assumptions during the strategic planning process. According to Pearce and Robinson (2003) a firm's external environment is made of economic, social, political, technological and ecological factors which should be considered in the strategy process.

The researcher found out that other challenges included, inability of growth in funding to match with human resource leading to exhaustion and burn out among staff. There was high turnover rate of staff who were being poached by other Non-Governmental Organizations. This can be addressed by ensuring that there is a match between all the

resources. For organizations to achieve their desired goals and objectives they must have at least four types of resources these are financial resources, physical resources, human resources and technological resources. For effective implementation of as a strategy, there has to be a fit between the resources available and resources demands of the process of strategy implementation (David, 1997). The study also found out that staff had competing priorities some of which were not in their job descriptions thereby derailing them from performing their core functions. All activities affecting staff should be well coordinated and planned so as to ensure that implementation is not negatively affected.

The findings of this research are consistent with other studies, Aosa (1992) observed that strategy implementation is likely to be successful when congruence is achieved between several elements. Of particular importance includes organization structure, culture, resource allocation systems and leadership. Awino (2000) studied the effectiveness and problems of strategy implementation of financing higher education in Kenya and found out four problem areas affecting successful strategy implementation these are, lack of fit between strategy and structure, inadequate information and communication systems and failure to impart new skills. Kibathi (2009) studied challenges of strategy implementation at Oxfam Great Britain Kenya and noted a number of problems in strategy implementation these include weak management roles, lack of communication, lack of commitment to strategy, and unawareness or misunderstanding of the strategy. Other problems are unaligned systems, structures and resources, poor coordination and sharing of responsibilities, inadequate capabilities, competing activities and uncontrollable factors in the external environment.

5.3 Conclusion

In conclusion it was found from the study results that there were different challenges that were encountered by World Vision Kenya in implementation of its strategy. The context in which the organization operated in was a major challenge in strategic implementation. The context was affected by external factors which the organization has little or no influence over and the best it can do is to adopt accordingly. High staff turnover rate was also a major challenge that the organization was grappling with. Others included communication, organizational structure and culture.

The study concluded that World Vision Kenya had adopted various methods to curb the challenges it faced. This included, improving communication with staff by use of a monthly bulletin which is circulated to all staff via the corporate email system, enhancing a culture of excellence in execution using the TEECAP (Teamwork Excellence Execution Commitment Accountability Passion) model and setting an innovation team to improve business processes of the organization.

The findings from the study indicate that some of the factors that influence strategy implementation include, context in which the organization operates, communication and corporate culture. Further, the study also highlighted some of the ways that World Vision Kenya is using to overcome those challenges which could be replicated in other similar organizations.

5.4 Implications of the study

From the observations of the study, World Vision Kenya had addressed some of the challenges that it faced in strategy implementation which was commendable, however more could be done.

The study recommends that the organizational structure be relooked into with roles and responsibilities of various positions and offices be clearly defined, this will go a long way in avoiding duplication of work, bureaucracy and will also enhance fast, effective decision making. The study found out that communication was a key success factor within strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya. The study recommends that communicating with employees should be timely whenever there are changes in the organization and there should be a two-way-communication program that permits and solicits questions from employees about issues regarding formulated strategies and new approaches to implementation. This is especially important due to the dynamic nature of approaches used in strategy implementation by World Vision Kenya.

The organization should work on its organizational culture and align its strategies to the culture. The organization culture should support the strategies formulated. Culture affects many organizations and previous studies have found out that whenever there is a mismatch between the organization culture and its strategies, the strategies might fail at the implementation level. Successful cultural changes have to be led by top management. The study also found out that World Vision Kenya was losing many of its key, trained and experienced staff to other Non-Governmental Organizations. There was need to

come up with policies that would enhance staff retention. Human resource is a very expensive resource and training takes time, patience and a lot of effort. It should therefore be safeguarded as much as possible.

5.5 Limitations of the study

The study was based on World Vision Kenya which is a faith based Non-Governmental Organization on strategy implementation and its challenges. The study therefore cannot be taken as the actual representative of the situation within the Non-Governmental Organization sector in Kenya as the findings are organization specific and apply to World Vision Kenya.

The study focused on strategy implementation aspect of strategic management process. It did not therefore focus on other aspects of the strategic management process which are formulation, control, monitoring and evaluation. These are important components of the strategic management process and should therefore not be ignored.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

The study suggests that a follow up study be carried out in the organization to determine how the challenges identified were dealt with in the next strategic planning period. The follow up research should also document the effects of incorporating the findings of this study in the next strategic planning process and the effect in the achievement of the overall corporate goal.

Another study should be carried out covering the wider Non-Governmental Organization sector to enable comparison of the findings. The study should include both faith and not for faith Non-Governmental Organizations. If possible, a survey of the major Non-Governmental Organizations is recommended in order to draw conclusions about the challenges encountered in strategy implementation and strategic management in general. This can be used to establish whether the results and conclusions obtained differ significantly from what this study has established.

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APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AT WORLD VISION KENYA

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. In which department do you currently work?
2. What is your position in the department?
3. How long have you been working in World Vision Kenya?
4. How does your current position assist in accomplishing the corporate strategic plan of World Vision Kenya?
5. What is your principle role in this position as far as strategy implementation is concerned?
6. How do you measure the extent to which the strategic plan has been successfully executed?

PART B: STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. How does World Vision Kenya implement its strategy?
2. What is the most important factor when implementing strategy at World Vision Kenya?
3. Who is involved in strategy implementation process in World Vision Kenya?
4. What initiatives are taken by management in creating and sustaining a climate within the organization that motivates employees in their implementation role?
5. What role does the responsibility of manager's play in strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya?
6. What is the importance of management ability or competence in achieving successful strategy implementation?

7. How does the level of commitment of top management affect strategic implementation at World Vision Kenya?
8. How do management practices affect strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya?
9. What role does early involvement of staff members in strategy implementation play?
10. What role does communication play in the process of strategy implementation at your organization?
11. What role does organizational culture play in implementation of strategy?
12. What role does organization structure contribute towards implementation of strategy?
13. What policies in place to ensure that co-ordination of activities across functions at the World Vision Kenya?
14. What is the importance of resources (financial, physical, human and technological) in strategy implementation?

SECTION C: CHALLENGES OF STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

1. To what extent do you think that World Vision Kenya is affected by leadership/management in strategy implementation?
2. What are the challenges in strategy implementation caused by underdevelopment of integrated communications plan at the World Vision Kenya?
3. What is the impact of poor communication and diminished feelings of ownership and commitment by employees to strategy implementation?

4. What causes delay in communicating with employees concerning issues related to the strategy implementation?
5. In your own view, how does organizational culture affect strategy implementation?
6. What are the challenges caused by organizational structure towards strategy implementation?
7. What are the challenges caused by ineffective coordination and poor sharing of responsibilities of strategy implementation activities?
8. How does shortage of resources (financial, physical, human and technological) or having excess resources (financial, physical, human and technological) affect the implementation of strategies in the organization?
9. What are some of the challenges that surface during strategy implementation that had not been anticipated?
10. What other factors in the external environment had an adverse impact in strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya?
11. What are some of competing activities that cause distractions inhibiting strategy implementation?
12. What other challenges do you face in strategy implementation in your organization?
13. What are the possible solutions to the challenges of strategy implementation at World Vision Kenya?