

Effectiveness of strategic change management practices at national Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation

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Abstract:

The objective of the study was to investigate the effectiveness of strategic change management practices at National Water Conservation and Pipeline Corporation. The Government of Kenya has been undertaking reforms in the water sector since 1974 that led to the establishment of NWCPC in 1989. In 1974, the Water Department under the then Ministry of Agriculture was elevated to a full Ministry, the Ministry of Water Development, with a mandate to actively steer water activities. It initiated a new plan aimed at investing more resources in the water sector to improve efficiency and expand water services to as many citizens as possible, through its motto 'water for all by the year 2000'. To ensure success, the ministry took over many water supplies previously managed by local communities, local authorities and other public institutions (GOK, 1997). The reforms culminated in the enactment of the Water Act (2002). A case study design was used. To achieve the main objectives of the study primary data was collected. Unstructured interview was employed to gather the relevant information for the research. The researcher developed the interview guide as shown by Appendix 2. Data was analyzed using conceptual analysis. The aspects of change were change of the roles of the corporation through the water Act of 2002. The employees embraced change management practices in state corporations particularly in the NWCPC since it brought about accountability and efficiency. These changes have been instrumental in the profitability of the corporations and reduced dependence on the government. The restructuring was very time and resource intensive and the results based assessment and remuneration should trickle down the management ladder. Adequate preparation and communication are essential in the change process. The changes led to the creation of more jobs in the sector, communication on any activity is done and efficiency was observed in the organization. The negative impact was mainly in the resources required for the process, lack of trickle down effect to the junior staff and reduced staff mandate. Change management was necessitated by poor service delivery, government directive, poor project planning and implementation and poor coordination and actualization of work plan. The objectives of the change were improvement of efficiency in resource utilization, efficiency with sector, improving effectiveness of staff so as to ensure the corporation delivers on its mandate, ensure customer satisfaction and improvement of management practices. Change agents were used for the carrying out of the reforms and modernisation programme through the involvement of management training companies, carrying out employee satisfaction surveys, sensitisation through a committee appointed by water ministry, explaining the impacts of the changes to the employees by the heads of departments and through workshops and seminars. The transfer was done through handing over previous duties & taking up new mandate, conformity to the transfer plan, information was passed through notice boards, meetings and public announcements; new strategy plan defined new organization structure complete with job description & tasks and through instruments such as ISO 9001:2000. The change process was systematically done through identification of key personnel to be trained as ISO internal auditors, in-house training,

appointment of new heads of departments and other staff fitting the new structure and through policy development, structural development, implementation and monitoring. To ensure commitment, NWCPC put in measures as financing all reform operations, constant review of programs, immediate assumption of its mandate and signing a pact with the government, improving staff salaries to improve staff morale and transferring competent staff to relevant sections & allocating resources to them.