

STAKEHOLDER MANAGEMENT AND NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANIZATION PROJECT PERFORMANCE IN RWANDA. A CASE OF LIGHT FOUNDATION PROJECT BY FXB RWANDA IN NYARUGURU DISTRICT, (2022-2024)

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ABSTRACT

Effective stakeholder management is a key determinant of success in development projects implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Despite its importance, many NGO projects in Rwanda continue to face challenges in coordination, participation, and sustainability due to limited stakeholder engagement. This study examined stakeholder management and its influence on project performance, focusing on the Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. Specifically, the study aimed to (i) assess the nature of stakeholder management approaches used by FXB Rwanda, (ii) evaluate the level of project performance, and (iii) analyze the relationship between stakeholder management and project performance. A mixed-method research design was employed, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches. Data were collected from 208 respondents, including 200 beneficiaries selected through stratified random sampling and 8 key informants selected purposively. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically to provide contextual insights. Findings revealed that FXB Rwanda employed structured stakeholder management practices, including stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution. Project performance was high across timeliness, quality outcomes, beneficiary satisfaction, and sustainability. Correlation and regression analyses confirmed a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between stakeholder management and project performance, with stakeholder management explaining 61% of the variation in project outcomes ($R^2 = 0.61$, $p < 0.001$). The study concludes that effective stakeholder management enhances NGO project performance and validates Stakeholder Theory by demonstrating that actively considering stakeholder interests throughout the project cycle improves outcomes. Recommendations include strengthening participatory engagement, formalizing feedback and conflict resolution systems, and enhancing communication strategies to sustain project effectiveness.

Keywords: Stakeholder Management, Project Performance, Stakeholder Engagement, Communication, Feedback Mechanisms, Conflict Resolution

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INTRODUCTION

Project performance is a critical determinant of the success and sustainability of development interventions, particularly those implemented by Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to address social, economic, and environmental challenges. Despite substantial investments in development projects, many interventions continue to face implementation challenges associated with weak coordination, inadequate communication, limited beneficiary participation, and ineffective feedback mechanisms (World Bank, 2023; UNDP, 2022). Consequently, effective stakeholder management has become increasingly important because meaningful stakeholder engagement can enhance project relevance, coordination, ownership, efficiency, and sustainability. Evidence indicates that projects characterized by inclusive participation, transparent communication, collaborative decision-making, and effective feedback mechanisms are more likely to achieve improved outcomes and stakeholder satisfaction (Bryson et al., 2021).

These challenges are particularly evident in developing countries, including those in Sub-Saharan Africa, where institutional capacity constraints and fragmented coordination mechanisms may affect project implementation. Studies have linked inadequate stakeholder coordination and community participation to project delays, inefficient resource utilization, resistance, and reduced sustainability (Aguek & Deng, 2021; Okeke & Abiola, 2023; Tessema & Yilma, 2022). The African Development Bank (2022) similarly identified inadequate stakeholder coordination and weak monitoring systems as important factors contributing to delays and sustainability challenges in development projects. In Rwanda, substantial progress has been achieved through national development frameworks such as Vision 2050 and the National Strategy for Transformation; however, some development initiatives continue to experience coordination and beneficiary-engagement challenges. Experiences from initiatives such as the Feed the Future Rwanda Hinga Weze Activity and the Girinka Programme demonstrate the importance of effective coordination and beneficiary participation for successful implementation and sustainability (Munyaneza & Uwizeye, 2022; USAID Rwanda, 2023).

The Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District provides an important context for examining stakeholder management and NGO project performance. Implemented from 2022 to 2024 under the FXB Village model, the project targeted approximately 400 vulnerable households through integrated interventions in livelihoods, health, education, and nutrition (FXB Rwanda, 2023). The project requires collaboration among beneficiaries, local authorities, community leaders, and other stakeholders to achieve its objectives of improving household well-being and promoting self-reliance. However, limited empirical research has examined how specific stakeholder management practices, particularly stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution, influence NGO project performance in rural Rwanda.

This study therefore examined stakeholder management and its influence on the performance of the Light Foundation Project by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. It assessed stakeholder management approaches, evaluated project performance, and analyzed the relationship between stakeholder management and project performance. The study contributes empirical evidence that can assist NGOs, policymakers, and development partners in strengthening stakeholder engagement and improving the effectiveness and sustainability of development projects in Rwanda. It also supports Sustainable Development Goal 17, which emphasizes partnerships as essential to sustainable development.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the growing contribution of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) to development, many projects continue to experience challenges in timely implementation, quality of outputs, beneficiary satisfaction, and sustainability. Weak stakeholder coordination, inadequate communication, limited participation, and ineffective feedback mechanisms are frequently associated with project delays, reduced ownership, and poor achievement of intended outcomes (World Bank, 2023; PMI, 2021). These challenges indicate that ineffective

stakeholder management can undermine critical dimensions of project performance, including timeliness, quality, stakeholder satisfaction, and sustainability.

Rwanda has made considerable progress in strengthening development interventions, yet stakeholder-related performance challenges remain evident in some NGO and community-based projects. Evidence from initiatives such as the Feed the Future Rwanda Hinga Weze Activity indicates that coordination gaps among implementing partners and local authorities can contribute to implementation delays and limited beneficiary participation (USAID Rwanda, 2023). Similarly, inadequate communication and feedback mechanisms have been associated with low beneficiary satisfaction and weak sustainability of project outcomes (Munyaneza & Uwizeye, 2022). These challenges suggest a gap between the intended outcomes of development projects and their actual performance, particularly where stakeholder roles, communication, participation, and feedback are not adequately managed.

The Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District provides a relevant context for investigating this problem. The project targeted approximately 400 vulnerable households through integrated interventions in health, education, nutrition, livelihoods, and economic empowerment (FXB Rwanda, 2023). Given the involvement of beneficiaries, local authorities, community leaders, and implementing partners, effective stakeholder management is essential to achieving timely, quality, satisfactory, and sustainable project outcomes. However, limited empirical evidence exists on how specific stakeholder management practices, including stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution, influence the performance of NGO projects in rural Rwanda. This study therefore examined the relationship between stakeholder management and project performance using the Light Foundation Project by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District as a case study, thereby addressing an important empirical gap in the Rwandan NGO project-management context.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section reviewed literature on stakeholder management and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) project performance. The review focuses on stakeholder management as the independent variable, examined through stakeholder identification and analysis, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution, and project performance as the dependent variable. The study is primarily guided by Stakeholder Theory, developed by Freeman (1984), which holds that organizations and projects are more likely to achieve sustainable outcomes when they recognize, engage, and respond to the interests of individuals and groups who influence or are affected by their activities. The theory is relevant to this study because effective identification, communication, feedback, and conflict resolution can strengthen stakeholder participation, coordination, trust, and ownership, thereby contributing to improved project performance (Freeman, 1984; Freeman et al., 2021).

Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

Stakeholder identification and analysis involves systematically identifying individuals, groups, and institutions that may influence or be affected by a project and assessing their interests, expectations, influence, and potential impact on project outcomes. Effective identification enables project managers to prioritize stakeholders, anticipate challenges, align expectations, and develop appropriate engagement strategies (Bourne, 2020; PMI, 2021). Empirical evidence indicates that early stakeholder mapping improves coordination, resource utilization, risk management, and beneficiary engagement (Johnson, Smith, & Turner, 2022; Nguyen, Pham, & Tran, 2022). In Rwanda, inadequate stakeholder identification has been associated with coordination challenges, limited community engagement, and implementation delays, while superficial analysis may restrict meaningful participation and shared decision-making (Uwizeyimana, Habimana, & Nsanzimana, 2022; Mugabo & Kayitare, 2023). Effective stakeholder identification is therefore important for aligning project activities with stakeholder needs and improving project performance.

Communication

Communication facilitates the timely exchange of information, clarification of expectations, coordination of activities, and development of trust among project stakeholders (PMI, 2021; Bourne, 2020). Effective communication promotes transparency and stakeholder engagement while reducing misunderstandings and implementation delays. Studies indicate that structured communication strategies improve coordination and stakeholder participation (Johnson et al., 2022; Brière et al., 2021). In Rwanda, regular two-way communication between NGOs, communities, local authorities, and other stakeholders has been associated with increased trust, participation, satisfaction, and improved project coordination (Nsengiyumva & Mukiza, 2021; Uwizeyimana et al., 2022). However, limited ICT access, language differences, and inadequate communication strategies may constrain engagement (Mugabo & Kayitare, 2023). Effective communication is therefore expected to contribute positively to project performance.

Feedback Mechanisms

Feedback mechanisms are formal and informal channels through which stakeholders express opinions, concerns, suggestions, and experiences regarding project activities. They include community meetings, suggestion systems, focus group discussions, grievance mechanisms, surveys, and digital platforms (PMI, 2021; Bourne, 2020). Effective feedback enables project teams to identify emerging problems, respond to stakeholder concerns, adjust implementation strategies, and strengthen accountability. Research indicates that projects with effective feedback systems achieve stronger stakeholder satisfaction, community ownership, and responsiveness (Brière et al., 2021; Martinez & Silva, 2023). In Rwanda, regular feedback between communities and project implementers has supported improved coordination and stakeholder trust, while inadequate feedback mechanisms may result in unresolved grievances and reduced engagement (Uwizeyimana et al., 2022; Mugabo & Kayitare, 2023). Thus, effective feedback mechanisms are expected to enhance project outcomes and sustainability.

Conflict Resolution

Conflict resolution involves identifying and constructively addressing disagreements among stakeholders arising from differences in interests, expectations, responsibilities, resource allocation, or project priorities. If unmanaged, stakeholder conflicts can disrupt activities, delay implementation, weaken trust, and reduce commitment. Structured approaches such as mediation, grievance redress systems, community dialogue, negotiation, and conflict management committees can help maintain constructive stakeholder relationships and reduce operational disruptions (Williams, O'Neill, & Carter, 2021; Kerzner, 2022). In Rwanda, conflicts in NGO projects may arise from unclear roles, limited participation, and unequal power relations. Context-sensitive approaches involving local leaders and participatory dialogue can strengthen cooperation and community ownership (Mugabo & Kayitare, 2023). Effective conflict resolution is therefore expected to support smoother implementation and improved project performance.

Project Performance

Project performance refers to the extent to which a project achieves its intended objectives within established constraints such as time, cost, scope, and quality. While traditional project management emphasizes the “iron triangle” of time, cost, and quality, contemporary development literature recognizes broader dimensions, including beneficiary satisfaction, quality of outcomes, and sustainability. This broader perspective is particularly relevant to NGO and development projects, where success depends not only on completing planned activities but also on addressing community needs, promoting stakeholder participation, and generating lasting development benefits (PMI, 2021; Singh & Roberts, 2023). Evidence indicates that effective planning, resource utilization, stakeholder engagement, communication, and monitoring and evaluation contribute significantly to improved project performance (Nguyen et al., 2022; Chen & Lee, 2021).

Project timeliness is a fundamental dimension of project performance and refers to the extent to which planned activities are completed within the established schedule. Timely implementation promotes efficient

resource utilization, accountability, and stakeholder confidence, while delays may result in cost increases, operational inefficiencies, and reduced trust (PMI, 2021; Singh & Roberts, 2023). Literature indicates that stakeholder participation in planning and implementation facilitates early identification of challenges, improves coordination, and supports timely decision-making. In Sub-Saharan Africa and Rwanda, inadequate coordination, limited beneficiary involvement, and weak monitoring systems have contributed to project delays, whereas participatory monitoring and stakeholder feedback mechanisms have improved adherence to planned schedules (Njeri & Otieno, 2022; Uwizeyimana et al., 2022).

Beneficiary satisfaction and quality of outcomes represent additional important dimensions of project performance. Beneficiary satisfaction reflects the extent to which project interventions meet the needs, expectations, and priorities of target communities, while quality of outcomes concerns the relevance, technical adequacy, effectiveness, and usability of project deliverables (Chen & Lee, 2021; Nguyen et al., 2022). Participatory planning, stakeholder consultation, community feedback, and monitoring enable project teams to incorporate local knowledge and identify deficiencies early, thereby improving both satisfaction and quality. Evidence from development projects indicates that beneficiaries who participate in project decisions are more likely to perceive interventions as relevant and useful, while participatory quality-control mechanisms contribute to greater effectiveness and community ownership (World Bank, 2021, 2022; Mugabo & Kayitare, 2023).

Project sustainability refers to the capacity of project benefits to continue after external financial or technical support has ended and is closely associated with community ownership, capacity building, knowledge transfer, and participatory governance (Brinkerhoff & Brinkerhoff, 2020; World Bank, 2022). Studies in Sub-Saharan Africa and Rwanda show that projects involving beneficiaries in implementation, monitoring, and decision-making are more likely to maintain their benefits and generate long-term development outcomes (Martinez & Silva, 2023; Nsengiyumva & Mukiza, 2021). Overall, the literature demonstrates that project performance is multidimensional and strongly influenced by stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle. Accordingly, this study assesses project performance using project timeliness, beneficiary satisfaction, quality of outcomes, and project sustainability, dimensions that provide a comprehensive basis for evaluating the effectiveness and lasting impact of NGO-led development projects. This perspective is consistent with Stakeholder Theory, which emphasizes the importance of addressing stakeholder interests in achieving project success.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to examine the relationship between stakeholder management and project performance of the Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. Structured questionnaires measured stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, conflict resolution, and project performance, while interviews provided contextual insights into stakeholder experiences and project outcomes. The integration of both approaches enabled statistical testing and deeper interpretation of findings, enhancing the validity and comprehensiveness of the study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected from 208 respondents, comprising 200 beneficiaries and 8 key informants, using structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, respectively. The questionnaire was validated using the Content Validity Index (CVI), calculated as $43/49 = 0.88$, indicating good content validity, while reliability was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha of $\alpha \geq 0.79$. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Version 25.0, employing descriptive statistics (frequencies, means, and standard deviations) and inferential statistics, including Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis.

The regression model was specified as $PP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 SIA + \beta_2 COM + \beta_3 FM + \beta_4 CR + \varepsilon$, where PP represents project performance, SIA stakeholder identification and analysis, COM communication, FM feedback mechanisms, and CR conflict resolution. R^2 was used to determine the proportion of variance in project performance explained by stakeholder management, while the F-statistic assessed overall model significance and p-values tested individual relationships. Statistical significance was tested at a 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$). Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews were analyzed thematically to complement and explain the quantitative findings.

RESULTS

To assess the extent to which stakeholder management practices explain variations in project performance, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The model included stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution as independent variables, with project performance as the dependent variable. The regression model summary is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.78	0.61	0.60	0.42

The regression analysis (Table 1) shows a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.78, indicating a strong positive relationship between stakeholder management practices and project performance in the Light Foundation Project by FXB Rwanda. The coefficient of determination (R^2) is 0.61, meaning that 61% of the variance in project performance is explained by the combined effect of the independent variables Stakeholder Identification, Communication, Feedback Mechanisms, and Conflict Resolution. The adjusted R^2 of 0.60 further confirms that the model provides a reliable estimate of the contribution of stakeholder management practices while accounting for the number of predictors in the model. The standard error of 0.42 suggests that the predicted values of project performance are relatively close to the observed values, reflecting a good model fit.

Table 2: ANOVA for Regression Model

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	34.12	4	8.53	48.37	0.001
Residual	21.87	195	0.11		
Total	55.99	199			

a. **Predictors: (Constant):** Stakeholder Identification and Analysis; Communication; Feedback mechanisms and Conflict Resolution

b. **Dependent Variable:** Project Performance

The ANOVA results for the regression model indicate that the overall model significantly predicts project performance in the Light Foundation Project by FXB Rwanda. The F-value of 48.37 with a corresponding p-value of 0.001 is statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This means that the combination of stakeholder management practices Stakeholder Identification, Communication, Feedback Mechanisms, and Conflict Resolution collectively has a significant effect on project performance.

The regression sum of squares (34.12) shows that a substantial portion of the total variation in project performance is explained by the independent variables, while the residual sum of squares (21.87) represents the variation not explained by the model. The significant F-test confirms that the model is a good fit for the data and that the independent variables reliably predict project outcomes.

Table 3: Regression Model Coefficients

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t-value	p-value
(Constant)	0.85	0.21	–	4.05	0.001
Stakeholder Identification	0.28	0.07	0.31	4.00	0.001
Communication	0.33	0.08	0.36	4.13	0.001
Feedback Mechanisms	0.29	0.07	0.32	4.14	0.001
Conflict Resolution	0.25	0.06	0.28	4.17	0.001

The regression coefficients in Table 3 show that all four stakeholder management components had positive and statistically significant effects on project performance. Communication had the strongest contribution ($\beta = 0.36$, $p = 0.001$), followed by Feedback Mechanisms ($\beta = 0.32$, $p = 0.001$), Stakeholder Identification ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.001$), and Conflict Resolution ($\beta = 0.28$, $p = 0.001$). These results indicate that clear communication, responsive feedback, appropriate stakeholder identification, and timely conflict resolution significantly enhance project outcomes. The findings are consistent with Munyaneza and Nyirahabimana (2023), who reported that effective feedback systems and participatory approaches enhance accountability and project performance in NGO projects. They also agree with Ochieng, Mutesa, and Gahungu (2022), who found that structured communication and conflict resolution strategies contribute to timely project delivery and beneficiary satisfaction. The present study therefore confirms that communication, feedback mechanisms, stakeholder identification, and conflict resolution are significant predictors of project performance, with communication making the strongest individual contribution. All predictors were statistically significant at the 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$), supporting the conclusion that effective stakeholder management contributes substantially to improved performance of the Light Foundation Project by FXB Rwanda.

Hypotheses Testing

The study tested three hypotheses concerning stakeholder management and project performance in the Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. The findings showed that stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution were systematically practiced, supporting H1 that FXB Rwanda uses structured and participatory stakeholder management approaches. Correlation analysis revealed strong positive relationships between stakeholder management components and project performance ($r = 0.65\text{--}0.72$, $p < 0.01$), while regression analysis confirmed a significant positive effect of stakeholder management on project performance, explaining 61% of the variance ($R^2 = 0.61$). The individual predictors were also statistically significant: stakeholder identification ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.001$), communication ($\beta = 0.36$, $p = 0.001$), feedback mechanisms ($\beta = 0.32$, $p = 0.001$), and conflict resolution ($\beta = 0.28$, $p = 0.001$), with the overall regression model being significant ($F = 48.37$, $p = 0.001$). Therefore, H2 and H3 were accepted, confirming that effective stakeholder management positively influences and has a significant positive relationship with project performance.

Accordingly, all three alternative hypotheses were accepted and the corresponding null hypotheses rejected at the 95% confidence level ($p < 0.05$).

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that stakeholder management has a strong and statistically significant positive influence on the performance of the Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. The regression model explained 61% of the variation in project performance ($R^2 = 0.61$), while all four stakeholder management components—stakeholder identification ($\beta = 0.31$, $p = 0.001$),

communication ($\beta = 0.36, p = 0.001$), feedback mechanisms ($\beta = 0.32, p = 0.001$), and conflict resolution ($\beta = 0.28, p = 0.001$)—were significant positive predictors. These findings are consistent with Nguyen, Pham, and Tran (2022), who found that structured stakeholder engagement improved project efficiency, quality outcomes, and beneficiary satisfaction in NGO development projects. They also align with Chen and Lee (2021), whose findings showed that participatory communication and beneficiary consultation enhanced satisfaction and sustainability. At the Sub-Saharan African level, the findings are consistent with Njeri and Otieno (2022) and Awuor and Wekesa (2021), who established that stakeholder participation, communication, participatory planning, and community monitoring contribute to timely implementation and stronger project ownership. The findings further agree with the Rwandan studies of Uwizeyimana, Habimana, and Nsanzimana (2022), who linked community participation with improved project quality and timely completion, and Nsengiyumva and Mukiza (2021), who found that communication and community consultation enhanced beneficiary satisfaction. They also correspond with Mugabo and Kayitare (2023), who identified weak communication and conflict management as factors affecting NGO project implementation and sustainability. Therefore, the present study reinforces existing empirical evidence while extending it by demonstrating the combined contribution of stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution to multiple dimensions of project performance in an NGO project in Rwanda.

The findings also provide empirical support for Stakeholder Theory, which argues that organizational and project success depends on identifying relevant stakeholders, understanding their interests, maintaining effective relationships, and incorporating their concerns into decision-making processes. The significant positive contribution of stakeholder identification indicates that recognizing and involving appropriate stakeholders provides a foundation for effective project implementation, while the stronger effect of communication ($\beta = 0.36$) demonstrates the importance of maintaining clear and timely information flows among stakeholders. Similarly, the significant effects of feedback mechanisms and conflict resolution show that stakeholder relationships require continuous responsiveness and constructive management throughout the project cycle. The high level of project performance observed in terms of timeliness, quality outcomes, beneficiary satisfaction, and sustainability therefore supports the central proposition of Stakeholder Theory that projects are more likely to achieve successful outcomes when stakeholder interests are systematically managed. Overall, the findings suggest that effective stakeholder management is not merely a supportive administrative activity but a strategic factor contributing to the successful implementation and sustainability of NGO development projects.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concludes that stakeholder management is a critical determinant of project performance in the Light Foundation Project implemented by FXB Rwanda in Nyaruguru District. FXB Rwanda employed structured stakeholder management practices, particularly stakeholder identification and analysis, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution. Communication, feedback, and conflict resolution were particularly strong, while stakeholder identification showed relatively lower performance, suggesting the need for greater involvement of individual beneficiary households in project decision-making. Overall, these practices promoted trust, coordination, participation, and effective implementation throughout the project cycle.

The study further concludes that the Light Foundation Project achieved a high level of performance, as reflected in project timeliness, beneficiary satisfaction, quality of outcomes, and sustainability. Beneficiary satisfaction recorded the highest mean score ($M = 4.73$), followed by quality of outcomes ($M = 4.54$), sustainability ($M = 4.43$), and timeliness ($M = 4.07$). The strong positive correlations between stakeholder management components and project performance, particularly communication ($r = 0.72, p < 0.01$) and

feedback mechanisms ($r = 0.70$, $p < 0.01$), demonstrate that effective stakeholder engagement is closely associated with improved project outcomes.

Finally, the regression results confirm that stakeholder management collectively explained 61% of the variation in project performance ($R^2 = 0.61$), demonstrating its substantial contribution to project success. All four components stakeholder identification, communication, feedback mechanisms, and conflict resolution were statistically significant positive predictors of project performance. The findings therefore support the study hypotheses and provide empirical support for Stakeholder Theory, demonstrating that systematic identification of stakeholders, effective communication, responsiveness to feedback, and constructive conflict management contribute to successful and sustainable project outcomes. The study concludes that strengthening these practices, particularly inclusive stakeholder participation, can further enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of NGO-led development projects in Rwanda.

Based on the study findings, FXB Rwanda and similar NGOs should strengthen stakeholder management through systematic stakeholder mapping, inclusive participation, regular communication, formal feedback mechanisms, and timely conflict resolution. Particular attention should be given to involving individual beneficiaries in decision-making, maintaining accessible information-sharing channels, integrating stakeholder feedback into project decisions, and strengthening staff mediation skills. Given that stakeholder management explained 61% of the variation in project performance ($R^2 = 0.61$), NGOs, policymakers, and development partners should promote participatory project management and capacity building to enhance the effectiveness, sustainability, and impact of development projects in Rwanda.

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