

To Assess the Effect of Stakeholder Engagement on Project Success of Trident Foundation Limited Kalumbila

Lancy Shamikobo^{1*}, Dr. Elizabeth Zyambo Munengami¹

¹Cavendish University, Zambia

* Corresponding Author

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Abstract

This study explores the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success at Trident Foundation Limited (TFL) in Kalumbila, Zambia. Trident Foundation Limited, which implements community development initiatives, relies heavily on stakeholder involvement for project sustainability and impact. Findings from the research reveal that stakeholder participation enhances project planning, transparency, sustainability, and community trust. However, issues such as conflicting expectations and low awareness levels affect the quality of engagement. The study recommends regular consultations, improved communication, capacity building, and strategic stakeholder mapping as tools to improve project outcomes.

Keywords: Stakeholder Engagement, project sustainability, Project Success, Trident Foundation Limited, Zambia

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1. Introduction

Stakeholder engagement plays an important role in the successful implementation of projects across various sectors, including corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives. Effective stakeholder engagement fosters collaboration, enhances transparency, and mitigates potential conflicts that may arise during project execution (Aaltonen & Kujala, 2016). In project management, stakeholder engagement involves identifying, analysing, and actively involving individuals or groups who have a stake in the project outcomes (Freeman et al., 2017). Trident Foundation Limited, a CSR arm of First Quantum Minerals' Kalumbila mine, implements various community developmental projects in Kalumbila District, Zambia. Given the socio-economic and environmental implications of these projects, understanding the impact of stakeholder engagement on project success is crucial. This chapter introduces the study, outlining the background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, scope, and significance of the study.

1.1 Background of the Study

Stakeholder engagement has become a vital component of project success in modern project management practices. Project success is often measured by the achievement of predetermined objectives, stakeholder satisfaction, timely completion, and overall project sustainability (Mok et al., 2015). Engaging stakeholders effectively ensures that their interests, concerns, and expectations are integrated into project planning and execution, thereby reducing resistance and fostering ownership (Eskerod & Jepsen, 2016).

In the mining sector, CSR-driven projects play a crucial role in fostering positive relationships between companies and local communities (Lindman et al., 2020). Mining companies such as First Quantum Minerals (FQM) have increasingly invested in CSR initiatives to promote social and economic development in their operational areas. Trident Foundation Limited, established by FQM, implements projects in education, health, infrastructure, and livelihood improvement in Kalumbila. However, the success of these projects depends on how well the foundation engages stakeholders, including community members, government agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and traditional leaders. Studies have highlighted that inadequate stakeholder engagement leads to project failures, community resistance, and reputational risks for organizations (Chinyio & Akintoye, 2008). Conversely, proactive stakeholder engagement enhances trust, improves decision-making, and increases project acceptability (Sloan, 2016). Given the significant role of Trident Foundation Limited in driving community development in Kalumbila, this study seeks to assess how stakeholder engagement impacts project success within the organization.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Despite the recognized importance of stakeholder engagement in project success, many CSR projects still face challenges such as lack of community support, project delays, and sustainability issues. In the case of Trident Foundation Limited, some projects have encountered resistance from local communities, delays in implementation, and concerns regarding the level of stakeholder involvement. If stakeholders are not adequately engaged, projects may fail to meet their intended objectives, leading to wasted resources and negative perceptions of the organization. While previous studies have examined the role of stakeholder engagement in project management, limited research focuses specifically on CSR projects in the mining sector, particularly in Zambia. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by assessing the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success at Trident Foundation Limited Kalumbila. The findings will provide insights into effective stakeholder engagement strategies that can enhance project outcomes and foster sustainable community development.

1.3 Research Objectives

Main Objective

To assess the effect of stakeholder engagement on project success at Trident Foundation Limited.

Specific Objectives

- i) To assess how stakeholder involvement influences project planning and implementation.
- ii) To identify challenges faced during stakeholder engagement.
- iii) To recommend strategies for improving stakeholder engagement at Trident Foundation Limited.

1.4 Research Questions

- i) How does stakeholder engagement influence project outcomes?
- ii) What are the challenges associated with stakeholder engagement at Trident Foundation Limited?
- iii) What strategies can improve stakeholder involvement?

1.5 Scope of the Study

This study focuses on community development projects carried out by Trident Foundation Limited in Kalumbila District. Stakeholders include community leaders, local government officials, residents, and internal staff.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study provides insight into how stakeholder engagement affects project success, offering lessons not just for Trident Foundation Limited, but also for other CSR-focused organizations in similar socio-economic contexts (Freeman, 2017).

2. Literature Review

2.1. Stakeholder Engagement in Trident Foundation Limited Projects

Stakeholder engagement involves identifying, consulting, and collaborating with individuals or groups affected by a project (PMI, 2017). At Trident Foundation Limited, projects typically undergo participatory planning where community voices are incorporated to enhance ownership and long-term impact.

2.2. Relationship between Engagement and Project Success

Engagement improves project outcomes by fostering trust, minimizing resistance, and enhancing decision-making (Chinyio & Akintoye, 2008). The alignment of stakeholder interests with project goals contributes to success metrics such as timeliness, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability (Aaltonen & Kujala, 2010).

2.3. Challenges in Stakeholder Engagement

Conflicting expectations, low community awareness, and inadequate funding (Muriithi & Crawford, 2013), often hinder stakeholder management. In rural Zambia, low literacy levels and power imbalances further complicate meaningful participation.

2.4. Strategies for Improvement

To mitigate these challenges, stakeholder mapping, transparent communication, regular consultation, and feedback loops are essential (IFC, 2007; Bourne, 2016).

3. Research Methodology

This study adopted a qualitative research design using a case study approach to investigate stakeholder engagement at Trident Foundation Limited. A deductive research approach guided the investigation, allowing for a focused exploration of stakeholder dynamics using a mono-method qualitative strategy. Data were collected through structured interviews with a purposive and convenience-based sample of 50 participants, including Trident Foundation Limited staff, management, and stakeholders. The study employed a cross-sectional time horizon to capture data at a specific point in time. An interview guide served as the primary data collection tool, while relevant reports provided secondary data. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic coding. Ethical considerations were carefully observed, including informed consent, confidentiality and voluntary participation.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Stakeholder Involvement in Planning

Most respondents confirmed that Trident Foundation Limited involves stakeholders in initial planning phases. This participatory model contributes to better project alignment and relevance (Freeman, 2017).

4.2. Consultation before Major Decisions

Findings show that while Trident Foundation Limited conducts consultations, the frequency and inclusivity of these meetings need improvement. Inclusive engagement ensures legitimacy and trust (Olander, 2015).

4.3. Communication

Respondents highlighted both strengths and weaknesses in communication. While Trident Foundation Limited provides regular updates, some delays in feedback were reported.

4.4. Impact on Project Outcomes

Projects that involved stakeholders from the beginning were completed on time, within budget, and received community support. These results align with the findings of Chinyio and Akintoye (2015).

4.5. Project Sustainability

Stakeholder engagement was found to have a direct influence on project sustainability. Projects with strong local support continued beyond donor funding cycles.

4.6. Challenges

- Low interest among some groups due to inadequate sensitization.
- Conflicting expectations among chiefs, district leaders, and beneficiaries.
- Insufficient funds dedicated to stakeholder mobilization and training.

4.7. Discussion of Findings

The findings confirm that stakeholder engagement is vital for project success. Trident Foundation Limited's inclusive practices enhance legitimacy and project ownership. However, as noted by Muriithi and Crawford (2013), deeper engagement requires more resources, community education, and trust-building mechanisms. Engaging stakeholders not only increases transparency but also serves as a conflict management tool. For instance, participation reduces opposition and enhances social license to operate (Esteves et al., 2012). Still, managing diverse interests remains a complex but necessary process.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

Stakeholder engagement significantly impacts the success of projects implemented by Trident Foundation Limited. Projects with high levels of engagement experienced better acceptance, relevance, and long-term benefits. However, limited

awareness, conflicting stakeholder priorities, and resource constraints continue to affect full participation.

5.2. Recommendation

- Increase stakeholder capacity through training and sensitization.
- Hold frequent consultations to maintain stakeholder interest and trust.
- Allocate more resources to engagement activities.
- Adopt stakeholder mapping tools to prioritize influence and interest.
- Implement transparent reporting and feedback systems.

Declaration of Competing Interests

The authors declare that they are not aware of any competing financial interests or personal relationships that may have influenced the work described in this document.

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Ethical considerations

The article followed all ethical standards appropriate for this kind of research.

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