



Failure and Success of Developmental and Research Projects: A Review of Tanzania Perspectives

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ABSTRACT: This paper reports the factors linked to success or failure of development and research projects in Tanzania. This was a desk literature study conducted to explore the said factors. The study results reveal that the factors robustly linked to research projects include community involvement, effective leadership and governance, sustainable funding sources, adequate resource distribution, technical know-how, and ongoing capacity enhancement. Furthermore, strong monitoring and evaluation play key roles in guaranteeing project sustainability. In contrast, the study disclosed that the factors associated with research project failure include lack of stakeholder engagement, poor planning and implementation, insufficient funding, political instability, and corruption. The paper also proposes solutions for improving these areas, including increasing stakeholder involvement, strengthening governance structures, ensuring long-term funding, and supporting improved planning and execution processes. Additionally, enhancing close monitoring and assessment could help overcoming the challenge of project delays and failure. The paper provides a useful insight into how future Tanzanian developmental and research programs could be better effectively managed and sustained to ensure long-term positive outcomes.

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The world is experiencing rapid population increase than ever, confirmed by the fact that the population grew from an estimated 2.5 billion in 1950 to 8.0 billion in 2022 and is projected to reach 9.7 billion and 10.4 billion by 2050 and 2100, respectively. The population increase is in line with rapid urbanization and demand for resources for sustenance of the inhabitants. Urbanization rates (for example) will jump from 55% in the current year (2024) to 68% in 2050 (Jain, 2021). These rates have triggered tremendous needs for natural resources extraction and utilization; the global natural resource consumption is forecast to rise to 60% by 2060, compared with 2020 levels (United Nations Environment Programme, 2024). The rise in resources extraction and utilization across the world

are meant to support developmental projects focusing on infrastructure (Pinderhughes, 2004). Such infrastructure as transportation, water supply and wastewater, storm water, telecommunication, power and other services like health, education, security make a better living for the inhabitants (Bhattacharyya, 2012). Elevated demands of such infrastructure and services have surpassed the available natural resources (Bansard and Schroder, 2021). This situation presents a need to conduct research aimed to find out reasonable, safer, and sustainable ways of extracting and utilizing natural resources. Spoken otherwise, co-existence of developmental and research projects calls for an imperative urgency in order to generate knowledge on how the population pressure can keep pace with

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increasing natural resource utilization available on the earth's surface. Several initiatives through governments (UK Department for International Development (DFID), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and Government of China) and a score of different non-government organizations (including Red Cross Society, and Care), donors, funders and funding organizations (World Bank, USAID, The Global Fund and Global Environmental facility European Union, among others, have emerged to support the efforts of governments across the world in matters pertaining to planning and implementation of development projects (UK Government, 2021; USAID, 2022; European Commission, 2020; UNDP, 2022; JICA, 2020). In particular, the United Nations Assembly formulated "sustainable development goals" aimed to improve the living world environment for the betterment and sustainability of inhabitants. Some SDGs embrace the guiding principles on sustainable extraction and utilization of natural resources (Fallah Shayan *et al.*, 2022).

In recent years, several projects like Light Up and Power Africa, The Great Green Wall (Africa), Ecosystem-based Adaptation in the Philippines (EbA Philippines), HIV/AIDS Program in Sub-Saharan Africa, Integrated Irrigation and Agriculture Development Project (Jordan), Climate-Smart Agriculture in Zambia, Tanzania's National Agricultural Input Voucher Scheme (NAIVS), Tanzania Water Supply and Sanitation Project, The Tanzania Wildlife Conservation Project (TWCP), have been aligned to achieving the SDGs. Therefore, SDG metrics have been established and used to assess the status of countries' efforts towards achieving the SDGs (Huan *et al.*, 2021; Lafortune *et al.*, 2020; Bidarbakhtnia, 2020; Paoli and Addeo, 2019). At the same time, several research projects like Global Lighting and Energy Access Partnership (Global LEAP), Water and Sanitation Initiatives in India, Kenya, and Chile, and The Malaria Elimination Program in sub-Saharan Africa have devised mechanisms and approaches for effective implementation of the projects (World Health Organization, 2011; Lynch *et al.*, 2018; Lander *et al.*, 2004). However, developing countries have endured difficulties related to effective implementation and sustainability of both the development and research projects. People from these countries seldom realize the long-term benefits of the projects due to persistence of developmental and research projects problems limiting their accomplishment. It is precisely on that basis that the factors attributable to

success, stagnation or failures of such projects were worth investigating.

Tanzania, a country in Sub-Saharan Africa, is endowed with rich natural resources and diverse ecosystems (Holmberg, 2008). The country has been a focal point for various developmental and research projects aimed at addressing critical socioeconomic issues and fostering sustainable growth (Gwaleba, 2018). Argued from infrastructure development to environmental conservation and research innovations point of view, these projects are essential for driving progress and improving the quality of life for Tanzanians. The projects play a pivotal role in shaping the nation's trajectory towards sustainable development and economic prosperity (World Bank, 2021; Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016; African Development Bank, 2020). The country has planned and implemented several projects, since independence in 1961, including urban planning and environmental projects. However, the path to successful project implementation is often fraught with challenges, leading to varying degrees of success and failure. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for refining project strategies and enhancing positive development outcomes.

Issues such as rapid urbanization, inadequate infrastructure, and insufficient regulatory enforcement have hindered effective urban planning. For instance, the National Human Settlements Development Policy has struggled to address the rising demand for affordable housing, with urban areas like Dar es Salaam witnessing uncontrolled informal settlements and lack of basic services (World Bank, 2021). Additionally, environmental projects aimed at addressing deforestation and land degradation have been limited by inadequate funding, weak governance structures, and poor community involvement (UNDP, 2020). The Tanzania Forest Conservation and Management Project, intended to protect the country's forests, but has faced challenges like insufficient local engagement and lack of monitoring, leading to limited success in curbing deforestation (World Bank, 2019). These failures point to the need for more robust planning, better resource allocation, and enhanced community participation to ensure the sustainability and success of urban and environmental projects in the country.

The success and failure of urban planning and environmental projects rely on several key factors, including governance, financial resources, community involvement, institutional capacity, and external influences. Strong governance, clear regulatory frameworks, and effective enforcement of

policies are essential for successful project implementation, whereas weak policies, political instability, and corruption often contribute to project failure (World Bank, 2021). Adequate financial resources, along with effective management and long-term budgeting, are critical; insufficient funding and misallocation of resources can significantly undermine project success (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016). Community participation is also crucial because projects that fail to engage local communities often face resistance or lack of ownership, leading to unsustainable outcomes (UNDP, 2020). Additionally, the institutional capacity to manage and execute projects, including skilled personnel and adequate technical expertise, is vital for ensuring the successful and sustainable management of urban planning and environmental initiatives (World Bank, 2021). External factors such as donor support and political will can also significantly impact the outcomes of these projects (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016). Finally, continuous monitoring and evaluation processes are necessary to adapt strategies and make improvements in real time, ensuring long-term sustainability (UNDP, 2020). When these factors are well-aligned, projects can be more likely to become sustainable, while their neglect or misalignment often leads to project failure. The current review aimed to provide a comprehensive analysis of the factors contributing to the success or failure of developmental and research projects in Tanzania, focusing on urban planning and environmental projects. By synthesizing existing literature and empirical evidence, this review seeks to highlight the key factors that consistently contribute to the success or failure of projects, and provide actionable insights and recommendations for improving project planning and management in the Tanzanian context. The findings from this review are expected to offer valuable insights for policymakers, project managers, and researchers involved in developmental and research projects in Tanzania. By identifying and understanding the success and failure factors, stakeholders can better design and manage projects to enhance their effectiveness and sustainability. The review is also expected to contribute to the broader debates on project management and development practices, offering lessons that could be applicable in similar contexts across East Africa and other developing regions.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employed a systematic and in-depth literature review revealing research evidence on a specific topic or research question with the aim of minimizing bias by using a structured and transparent approach (as suggested by Smith *et al.*, 2011). The review involved a detailed and structured approach to synthesizing evidence related to developmental and research projects in Tanzania. It focused on understanding the factors contributing to the success or failure of the projects specifically within the context of urban planning and environmental projects, as described hereunder.

Review Protocol and Comprehensive Literature Search: The inclusion of various studies in this review relied on their relevance to developmental and research projects particularly related to urban planning and environmental projects. The projects not related to these fields or conducted outside Tanzania were excluded from the review. The review entailed documentary search of the relevant literature using specific keywords such as related to project success and failure, urban planning, environmental projects, and Tanzania. Besides that, relevant terms such as “developmental projects Tanzania,” “research project failure Tanzania,” “urban planning success project Tanzania,” and “environmental impact projects Tanzania” were searched for to ensure obtaining relevant and compelling research results. The main database searched included google, PubMed, Google Scholar, Scopus, and local Tanzanian research repositories. Grey literature was also searched including reports, policy documents, and dissertations from Tanzanian universities or research institutions.

Screening and Selection of Reports, Journal Article Publications, and other Publications: The initial screening of the documents relied on a review of the titles and abstracts to identify studies related to the success and failure of projects in Tanzania. Relevant documents were selected for a Full-Text-Review to ensure that they meet the inclusion criteria. The documents that provided detailed information on the factors influencing project outcomes, specifically related to planning and environmental issues were selected for the comprehensive review process (Figure 1).

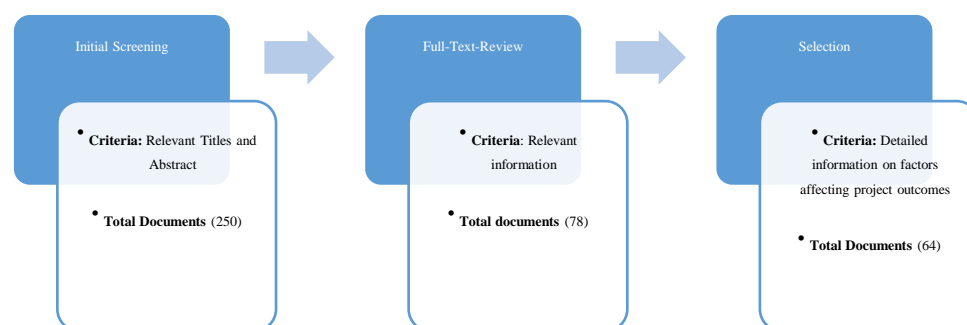


Fig 1: Detailed screening and selection process

Data Extraction and Analysis: Data extraction was conducted focusing on the success and failure factors. The information was systematically collected from each (included) study regarding the factors affecting project outcomes and their relevance to the success or failure of developmental and research projects in the domains of urban development and environment. The qualitative analysis of the information was carried out through summarizing the findings to identify recurring themes related to success or failure in the context of Tanzanian projects. This was consolidated by a subgroup analysis to examine the differences based on project type (e.g developmental vs. research, and urban planning vs environment), planning strategies, and implementation and management aspects.

Interpretation of Results: The data were analyzed to identify the specific factors influencing urban planning and environmental project outcomes in Tanzania. The study examined how factors such as political instability, resource allocation, community involvement, and environmental challenges contribute to either the success or failure of such projects. The researcher also explored how these factors relate or differ and their practical consequences for decision-makers. For policymakers, project managers, and researchers, this analysis offers actionable insights on mitigating risks, enhancing stakeholder engagement, and improving long-term project sustainability in Tanzania.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Developmental and research projects are critical for advancing economic growth, social welfare, and technological innovation. The literature reviewed revealed the factors influencing success or failure of such projects in Tanzania. A total of 65 studies were perused covering a wide range of sectors, health and education being the most prominent. The review revealed a spectrum of project outcomes, with varying degrees of success or failure potentials.

Factors Leading to Successful Projects

Community Engagement: By incorporating local stakeholders in the planning, execution, and assessment of projects, initiatives can better align with community needs and values, resulting in better outcomes and sustainability. Project designers can use local knowledge and cultural context to effectively tailor interventions, which can lead to more acceptable and relevant solutions that resonate with community members. Projects that actively engage local communities embrace higher success rates.

When communities are actively involved, they develop a sense of project ownership. This empowerment fosters commitment and participation, ensuring that initiatives are sustained long after the external support has ended. Kapuya *et al.* (2024) and Sanka (2024) found that community-driven health initiatives not only improved health metrics but also fostered a sense of ownership among local populations. The involvement of local stakeholders can also enhance the relevance and sustainability of projects. Projects that integrate community feedback and needs tend to achieve higher success rates compared to those that operate in isolation from local communities (Mapunda, 2014; Naku, Kihila, and Mwageni, 2021).

Participatory approaches align with community needs and cultural contexts, leading to increased trust and collaboration. Building trust between project implementers and community members is essential. Strong relationships facilitate better communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution, which are crucial for navigating challenges during project execution (Mgonja, 2023; Spiess and Felding, 2008).

Community engagement promotes higher levels of participation among local stakeholders. This can include community members in decision-making processes, which not only democratize project implementation but also enhances the relevance and

effectiveness of interventions. In addition, engaging communities provides valuable feedback and insights during projects implementation. Their ongoing participation in monitoring activities ensures that projects can be adapted in real time to address emerging challenges (Manumbu, 2020; Iddi and Nuhu, 2018).

The “adapting to climate change in coastal Dar es Salaam – ACCDAR” - embraced a strong participatory approach, engaging the Dar es Salaam community at various stages of project implementation. This was carried out through different engagement mechanisms/techniques such as participatory back casting used as a bridge between the forecasting scenarios produced in the previous tasks and the identification of community-based adaptation initiatives; other techniques included participatory technique of the Theatre of the Oppressed and participatory workshops.

The project “Developing Core Capacity to Address Adaptation to Climate Change in Productive Coastal Zones of Tanzania” employed consistent participation including District Environmental Director, NGOs and CBOs in the planning and implementation of adaptation interventions, in particular for ecosystems restoration. Community engagement was most effective when CBOs had established capacities and prior experience in climate change adaptation initiatives. This, was an important catalyst for implementing the project activities and achieving the intended objectives.

Strong Leadership and Governance: Effective governance was identified as a cornerstone for project success. Projects led by transparent and accountable governance structures are more likely to achieve their objectives (Chaligha, 2014). Strong leadership is associated with clear communication, efficient resource allocation, and effective stakeholder engagement, which are crucial for navigating challenges during project implementation. The World Bank (2020) indicate that effective governance structures, including transparent decision-making processes and accountability mechanisms, significantly impact project outcomes in Tanzania. Weak governance and corruption have been cited as major factors contributing to project failures (Urassa, 2021; Rahman *et al.*, 2022).

Sustainable Funding and Resources Allocation: Projects with diverse funding sources can result in better outcomes. The initiatives supported by a mix of government funding, NGO contributions, and international donor support are more resilient to

economic fluctuations. This financial diversity allows projects to maintain operations even when one funding source falter. Besides, adequate funding and efficient resource allocation are critical to the success of developmental projects. Israel (2024) highlights that inadequate funding and mismanagement of resources frequently lead to project failures in Tanzania. Conversely, projects with well-planned budgets and resource mobilization strategies tend to show better outcomes (Lugongo, 2022; Israel, 2024).

Technical Expertise and Capacity Building: The availability of technical expertise and the capacity for project management are critical for successful project implementation. Nnene (2024) identifies a lack of technical skills and training as a significant barrier to project success in Tanzania. Conversely, projects that invest in capacity building and technical training tend to fare better. Capacity building is as a critical factor for sustainability. Projects focusing on training local personnel and strengthening institutional frameworks tend to sustain their benefits longer (Chambers *et al.*, 2013). By equipping local actors with skills and knowledge, projects foster self-reliance and reduce dependency on external support. For instance, the ACCDAR employed a work package for building capacity of Dar es Salaam’s Local Government Authorities (LGAs) for the design of community-based adaptation initiatives as part of the implementation of the NAPA action of the United Republic of Tanzania. This was achieved through trainings to enhance the LGAs’ capacities in: i) understanding CC issues related to Dar’s coastal plain and peri-urban livelihood systems; ii) identifying effective measures for supporting the coastal peri-urban inhabitants in their efforts to adapt to CC; and, iii) integrating them into existing UDEM strategies and plans.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Continuous monitoring and evaluation practices are linked to project adaptability and long-term success. Kayaga (2015) emphasized that projects with robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks could identify issues early and implement corrective measures swiftly. The feedback mechanisms enable stakeholders to refine strategies and improve outcomes based on the real-time data. The ACCDAR employed a series of monitoring and evaluation activities, about six (6) monitoring and six (6) monitoring and evaluation were submitted, respectively. The processes allowed for the opportunity to unveil the challenges faced during the implementation and suggest the possible changes that could be implemented before it is too late.

External Factors and Contextual Challenges: External factors such as economic conditions, political stability, and environmental challenges also affect project outcomes. Macroeconomic factors and environmental conditions contribute to the success or failure of projects in Tanzania, emphasizing the need for adaptive strategies to cope with these external challenges.

Failure Factors and Enhancement Strategies for Developmental and Research Projects in Tanzania

Lack of Stakeholder Engagement: Insufficient stakeholder engagement is a significant barrier to the success of developmental projects in Tanzania. Many initiatives fail to achieve their objectives because they do not adequately involve local communities and other key stakeholders in the planning, implementation, and evaluation processes. This lack of engagement can lead to projects that are not aligned with local needs and priorities, resulting in poor outcomes (Kiologwe *et al.*, 2022). The top-down approaches often alienate beneficiaries, leading to resistance and lack of participation. The approach disconnects project goals and community needs, leading to low adoption rates and ultimately project failure (Eicken *et al.*, 2021).

Consequences of lack of stakeholders' engagement: Projects often struggle with low participation rates when stakeholders are not engaged, leading to poor implementation and support for project activities (Osman, 2017; Luyet *et al.*, 2012). This can lead to misallocation of resources in areas that do not address the most pressing community needs (Osman, 2017). The potential lack of engagement triggers misunderstandings and conflicts among stakeholders, which hampers project progress and can create long-lasting divisions within communities (Dooms, 2019). As such, projects that fail to engage stakeholders are less likely to be sustainable after external funding has ended. It is important to note that community buy-in is critical for ensuring that benefits continue beyond the project's lifespan (Poulsen *et al.*, 2014).

Strategies to Enhance Stakeholder Engagement: Inclusive planning processes are crucial. Implementers should adopt inclusive planning methods that involve community members, local leaders, and other stakeholders from the outset to ensure alignment with local needs (Osman, 2017). This must align with proper and regular communications to allow for ongoing dialogue and feedback, fostering trust and collaboration among all parties involved. Moreover, implementing mechanisms for stakeholders to provide feedback throughout the project lifecycle helps to identify

issues early and allows for timely adjustments (Sanyaolu, 2023).

Poor Planning and Implementation: Poor planning and implementation are critical factors that contribute to the failure of developmental projects in Tanzania. When projects are inadequately planned or poorly executed, they often fail to meet their objectives, leading to wasted resources and unmet community needs. Slaeat (2024) indicates that factors such as unrealistic timelines, poorly defined objectives, and inadequate resource assessments often led to delays and missed targets. Projects that lack thorough baseline assessments are particularly prone to failure, as they do not account for local conditions and needs.

Consequences of poor planning and implementation: Poor planning and implementation often trigger budget overruns because projects attempt to compensate for initial miscalculations. This can divert funds from other critical areas and impact overall project viability (Slaeat (2024). It also leads to significant delays, because projects struggle to meet deadlines due to unforeseen complications. These delays can lead to loss of stakeholder confidence and decreased community support (Bloomfield, 2006). When projects fail to deliver as per their promises due to poor planning and implementation, stakeholder trust erodes (Bloomfield, 2006; Sleat 2024). This loss of trust has long-term repercussions for future initiatives in the community (Bloomfield, 2006). Moreover, such projects more often fail to achieve sustainable outcomes. Without adequate follow-up and support, the benefits of the project may dissipate quickly after completion (Ika and Pinto, 2022).

Strategies for Improving Planning and Implementation: Conducting thorough needs assessments before project initiation helps to ensure that objectives are aligned with community priorities. This is in line with developing a realistic budget that considers potential challenges and includes contingencies to enhance project sustainability and effectiveness (Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016). The planning and implementation processes become more effective through involving community members and other stakeholders in the planning process to provide valuable insights and foster ownership, leading to more successful implementation (Kerzner, 2025). This is complemented by robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks allowing for real-time feedback and adjustments, ensuring that projects remain on track and can adapt to changing circumstances.

Inadequate Resources: Inadequate resources — whether financial, human, or material — are significant barriers to the success of both developmental and research projects in Tanzania. Limited resources hinder project implementation, leading to sub-optimal outcomes, and ultimately result in project failure (TASAF, 2013; Ministry of Finance and Planning, 2016). Most initiatives are underfunded, leading to compromised quality and effectiveness. Projects that fail to secure sufficient budgets for implementation, monitoring, and evaluation struggle to achieve the desired outcomes.

Consequences of inadequate resources: Projects often struggle to meet their objectives when resources are lacking. Inadequate funding and materials lead to substandard outputs that do not meet the needs of the community (TASAF, 2013). Apart from that, resource shortages cause significant delays in project timelines. In other words, when materials or funds are not available, projects may stall, leading to missed deadlines and prolonged implementation periods (Bloomfield, 2006). There is confidence that communities tend to lose trust in development initiatives if projects are consistently underfunded and fail to deliver expected benefits. This loss of trust hinders future projects and reduces community engagement (Arkoful *et al.*, 2023). The outcomes become unsustainable in scarce resource environments and the project often fails to achieve sustainability. Without proper funding for maintenance and support, the benefits of a project are likely to disappear shortly after completion.

Typical examples include the failure of establishing the capacities of local government authorities for vulnerability monitoring/adaptation planning in pilot sites due to limited budget and staffing constraints in the project “Implementation of Concrete Adaptation Measures to Reduce Vulnerability of Livelihoods and Economy on Coastal Communities of Tanzania”. The project failed to design and approve the EBICAM due to limited time and resources made available. Another project “Developing Core Capacity to Address Adaptation to Climate Change in Productive Coastal Zones of Tanzania,” failed to implement the rehabilitation of 660m of collapsed seawall along the Southern bank - a highly vulnerable area with approximately 800 residents due to cost factors. CLUVA project lacked data, which was a hindrance to its sustainability, indicating that in order to enhance resilience in Africa Urban areas to climate change - data and information gaps need to be addressed.

Strategies to Address Resource Limitations: Development of realistic budgets that accurately reflect the financial requirements of the projects helps to ensure adequate funding is secured. This includes considering potential risks and setting aside contingency funds. Together with that, investing in training and capacity-building initiatives enhances effective human resources, leading to more effective project management and implementation, improving overall project outcomes (Lumato and Issa, 2023). Partnerships and collaborations amongst local organizations, government agencies, and international donors help to mobilize additional resources. Collaborative approaches can enhance resource availability and project sustainability (World Bank, 2014). Moreover, ensuring that projects are planned with a long-term perspective helps secure ongoing resources for maintenance and support, ultimately leading to more sustainable outcomes (World Bank, 2014).

Political Instability and Corruption: Political instability and corruption are significant challenges that undermine the success of developmental projects in Tanzania (Rahman, 2022). These factors create an environment of uncertainty, erode trust, and can lead to misallocation of resources, ultimately hindering project implementation and outcomes. Corruption and political instability often led to lack of support from local authorities. This environment creates barriers to effective project execution, as trust in governance diminished and community participation waned.

Consequences of Political Instability and Corruption: Political instability can lead to abrupt changes in policies and regulations, creating an unpredictable environment for project implementation. Sudden shifts can disrupt ongoing projects and deter potential investments. During the periods of political turmoil, resources may be diverted from developmental projects to address immediate political concerns, such as security or crisis management. This shift can result in funding shortfalls and stalled projects (Kabaka, 2023). Political instability often results in decreased confidence from both local and foreign investors. When investors perceive a high level of risk, they may withdraw or withhold funding for critical projects, leading to further delays and failures (TASAF, 2013). Furthermore, political unrest leads to community displacement, forcing projects to halt or change course. Conflicts arising from political instability can also create divisions within communities, making collaborative project implementation difficult (Arkoful *et al.*, 2023).

On the other hand, corruption often results in the misallocation of resources, where the funds intended for developmental projects are siphoned off for personal gains. This leads to insufficient funding for critical project components, ultimately compromising their success (Rahman, 2022). It encourages the use of substandard materials and practices in project implementation. When contracts are awarded based on favoritism rather than merit, the quality of work is adversely affected, resulting in projects that do not meet community needs or standards (World Bank, 2017). In so doing, corruption undermines trust between communities and project implementers. When community members perceive those resources are being mismanaged or wasted, their willingness to engage in and support projects diminishes. Moreover, it leads to inflated project costs, because funds will be diverted away from their intended purposes. This can result in project delays and additional resources must be sought to compensate for lost funds (Bloomfield, 2006). This, aligns with bureaucratic legal procedures that hamper project success. For instance, delayed legal registration process, affect the progress of creating district community-based organization networks required to enhance public engagement in adaptation initiatives, in the project named “Implementation of Concrete Adaptation Measures to Reduce Vulnerability of Livelihoods and Economy on Coastal communities of Tanzania”

Strategies to Mitigate Political Instability and Corruption: Implementing strong governance frameworks and accountability mechanisms helps reduce corruption. Transparency in financial management and project oversight is essential for building trust and ensuring that resources are used effectively (World Bank 2017; Rahman *et al.*, 2022; Chaligha, 2014). Involving civil society organizations in project monitoring enhances accountability. Civil society can play a critical role in advocating for transparency and holding government and project implementers accountable (Ghaus-Pasha, 2005). Establishing a stable policy environment through dialogue and inclusive governance reduces the impact of political instability. Moreover, engaging multiple stakeholders in the policy-making process can promote a more stable and predictable environment for project implementation (Van den Hove, 2000). This is in line with encouraging active community participation in project planning and implementation to enhance oversight and reduce opportunities for corruption. When communities are involved, they are more likely to hold project implementers accountable (Mapunda, 2014; Naku *et al.*, 2021).

Limited Monitoring and Evaluation: Limited monitoring and evaluation mechanisms are critical factors contributing to the failure of developmental projects in Tanzania. Effective monitoring and evaluation are essential for assessing progress, ensuring accountability, and facilitating learning throughout the project lifecycle. Without robust monitoring and evaluation frameworks, projects may struggle to meet their objectives, leading to ineffective use of resources and missed opportunities for improvement. Most initiatives lack the necessary frameworks to evaluate their progress effectively, suggesting further that without ongoing assessment, projects struggle to adapt to changing circumstances and fail to identify shortcomings in implementation (Ika and Pinto, 2022).

Consequences of Limited Monitoring and Evaluation: Without proper monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, there is often a lack of accountability for project outcomes. This can lead to misuse of resources and failure to meet community expectations (Kayaga, 2015; Ika and Pinto, 2022). Inadequate monitoring and evaluation prevent accurate assessment of project performance, making it difficult to identify what works and what does not (Wachaiyu, 2016). This lack of insight can perpetuate ineffective practices in future projects. It also hinders the ability to adapt strategies in response to emerging challenges or changing conditions. Projects may continue to pursue ineffective approaches, wasting time and resources. Moreover, communities and stakeholders become less likely to engage with projects that lack transparency and accountability. When they see no evidence of results or responsiveness, their trust and participation diminish (Iddi and Nuhu, 2018; Manumbu, 2020).

Strategies to Enhance Monitoring and Evaluation: Developing comprehensive monitoring and evaluation frameworks at the project outset ensures that clear indicators and processes are in place for tracking progress and outcomes. This aligns with investing in training for project staff and stakeholders on monitoring and evaluation practices to enhance their ability to implement effective monitoring and evaluation systems. Engagement of community members in the process provides valuable insights and fosters ownership (TASAF, 2018). Community-based monitoring enhances accountability and ensures that local needs are prioritized (Manumbu, 2020; Iddi and Nuhu, 2018). Moreover, establishing regular review meetings and feedback loops allows for continuous assessment of project progress and enables timely adjustments to strategies (Lyneis and Ford, 2007).

Conclusion: The results of this systematic review have indicated that both successes and failures in developmental and research projects in Tanzania are influenced by a variety of interrelated factors. Key determinants of success include community engagement, effective governance, diverse funding sources, capacity building, and robust monitoring systems. In contrast, failures often arise from inadequate stakeholder involvement, poor planning, resource limitations, political instability, and insufficient evaluation frameworks. Understanding these dynamics is essential for informing future development efforts in Tanzania and ensuring more effective project outcomes.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest

Data availability: Data are available upon request from the Author

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