

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA'S PUBLIC  
SERVICE**

**A STUDY ON PERFORMANCE INFORMATION USE**

**By**

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Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Dr. rer. pol.**

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I, **Abraham Rugo Muriu**, hereby affirm under oath that the information I have provided with regard to former participation in doctoral examination procedures is correct and that the work I have submitted, or major segments thereof, have not been submitted for the acquisition of an academic degree so far. I furthermore declare that I have complied with the German Research Foundation's Proposals for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice, that I wrote the dissertation on my own and without outside help, that I did not use any other aids aside from those indicated in the source citations, and that I have identified works from which I have quoted directly or paraphrased passages as such. I allow the dissertation or body of writing submitted in lieu to be checked using the anti-plagiarism software.

Potsdam, July 7, 2017

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Affirmation and Assurance (Statement under Oath).....	ii
List of Tables.....	v
List of Figures .....	v
Acknowledgement.....	vi
Abstract .....	vii
Zusammenfassung.....	ix
CHAPTER 1: SETTING THE RESEARCH AGENDA .....	1
1.1 Focus on Performance of Public Organizations .....	1
1.2 Relevance of the Study.....	2
1.3 Research Objective and Question.....	4
1.4 Concepts .....	4
1.5 Outline of the Study.....	7
CHAPTER 2: STATE OF RESEARCH .....	9
2.1 Introduction.....	9
2.2 Theoretical Frames on Performance Management in the Public Sector.....	10
2.3 Performance Information Use in Public Sector Organizations.....	12
2.4 Factors Influencing Performance Information Use .....	17
2.5 Research Assumptions and Theoretical framework .....	25
CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	38
3.1 A Case Study Research Design .....	38
3.2 Case Selection and Unit of Analysis .....	39
3.3 Data Collection .....	41
3.4 Data Reliability and Validity.....	45
3.5 Data Analysis.....	45
3.6 Caveats of the Study .....	46
CHAPTER 4: CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA’S PUBLIC SERVICE .....	48
4.1 Political-Administrative Structure .....	48
4.2 Structure of Public Service .....	50

4.3 A Chronology of Performance Oriented Reforms in Kenya’s Public Service .....	51
4.4 Framework for Performance Management .....	70
CHAPTER 5: INTERROGATING USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION IN KENYA’S PUBLIC SERVICE .....	74
5.1 Source and Use of Performance Information .....	74
5.1.1 Sources of Performance Information .....	74
5.1.2 Uses of Performance Information .....	76
5.1.3 Discussion of Findings .....	83
5.2 Factors Influencing Managers’ Use of Performance Information .....	87
5.2.1 Political Will and Leadership .....	87
5.2.2 Organizational Capacity .....	93
5.2.3 Administrative Culture .....	104
5.2.4 Interests, Attitudes and Perceptions of Managers .....	107
5.2.5 Summative Discussion of Findings .....	110
CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION .....	114
6.1 How and why managers use performance information .....	114
6.2 Contribution of the Study & Areas for Further Research .....	123
6.3 Recommendations to Practitioners in Kenya and Developing Countries in General ....	124
REFERENCES .....	127
ABBREVIATIONS .....	138
APPENDICES .....	141
Annex I: Interview Protocol .....	141
Annex II: Research Permit .....	146
Annex III: List of Interviews Conducted & Documents Collected .....	149

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: Empirics on Factors Influencing Performance Information Use .....	19
Table 2: Expectations on Managers' use of Performance Information .....	28
Table 3: Expected findings on explanations of Performance Information Use.....	37
Table 4: Interviews at different levels of Management.....	42
Table 5: Classification of Documents Collected.....	43
Table 6: Organization of the National Government Executive .....	49
Table 7: Summary of Reform Efforts in Kenya's Public Service (1960s-2000s).....	53
Table 8: Phases of the Civil Service Reform Programme .....	61
Table 9: Summary of Performance Management Framework .....	71
Table 10: Location of Performance Management Coordination Secretariat.....	89
Table 11: Summary of Case Study Findings on Use of Performance Information.....	116
Table 12: Summary of Findings on Factors Influencing Use of Performance Information by Managers in Kenya.....	120
Table 13: Linking Explanatory Factors to forms of Performance Information Use .....	122

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1: Performance Management Process .....	13
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## Abstract

This study was inspired by the desire to contribute to literature on performance management from the context of a developing country. The guiding research questions were: *How do managers use performance information in decision making? Why do managers use performance information the way they do?* The study was based on theoretical strands of neo-patrimonialism and new institutionalism. The nature of the inquiry informed the choice of a qualitative case study research design. Data was assembled through face-to-face interviews, some observations, and collection of documents from managers at the levels of the directorate, division, and section/units. The managers who were the focus of this study are current or former staff members of the state departments in Kenya's national Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries as well as from departments responsible for coordination of performance related reforms.

The findings of this study show that performance information is regularly produced but its use by managers varies. Examples of use include preparing reports to external bodies, making decisions for resource re-allocation, making recommendations for rewards and sanctions, and policy advisory. On categorizing the forms of use as passive, purposeful, political or perverse, evidence shows that they overlap and that some of the forms are so closely related that it is difficult to separate them empirically.

On what can explain the forms of use established, four factors namely; political will and leadership; organizational capacity; administrative culture; and managers' interests and attitudes, were investigated. While acknowledging the interrelatedness and even overlapping of the factors, the study demonstrates that there is explanatory power to each though with varying depth and scope. The study thus concludes that: Inconsistent political will and leadership for performance management reforms explain forms of use that are passive, political and perverse. Low organizational capacity could best explain passive and some limited aspects of purposeful use. Informal, personal and competitive administrative culture is associated with purposeful use and mostly with political and perverse use. Limited interest and apprehensive attitude are best associated with passive use.

The study contributes to the literature particularly in how institutions in a context of neo-patrimonialism shape performance information use. It recommends that further research is necessary to establish how neo-patrimonialism positively affects performance oriented reforms. This is interesting in particular given the emerging thinking on pockets of effectiveness and developmental patrimonialism. This is important since it is expected that performance related reforms will continue to be advocated in developing countries in the foreseeable future.

## Zusammenfassung

Diese Studie wurde von dem Wunsch inspiriert einen Beitrag zu der Performance Management Literatur zu leisten und zwar aus dem Kontext eines Entwicklungslandes. Die Fragen, die diese Forschung geleitet haben waren: *Wie nutzen Manager Performance Information in der Entscheidungsfindung? Warum nutzen Manager Performance Informationen auf eine bestimmte Weise?* Die Studie basiert auf theoretischen Strömungen des Neo-Patrimonialismus und des Neo-Institutionalismus. Die Art der Untersuchung und Fragestellung verlangten nach einem qualitativen Forschungsdesign und einer Fallstudie. Die Datenerhebung stützte sich auf Interviews, Beobachtungen und Dokumente von 50 Managern auf Direktoratsebene, Abteilungsebene und Referatsebene. Die Manager, die im Fokus dieser Untersuchung standen, sind derzeitige und ehemalige Mitarbeiter in Kenias Ministerium für Landwirtschaft, Viehzucht und Fischerei, sowie der Abteilung zuständig für die Koordination von Performancebezogenen Reformen.

Die Ergebnisse dieser Studie zeigen, dass Performanceinformationen regelmäßig produziert, jedoch unterschiedlich genutzt werden. Die Erstellung von Berichten für externe Stellen, Entscheidungen zur Ressourcenverteilung, Empfehlungen für Belohnungen und Sanktionen, sowie für Richtlinien sind Beispiele für die Nutzung von Performanceinformationen. Eine Kategorisierung dieser Nutzungsarten in passiv, intendiert, politisch oder pervertiert, zeigt dass diese überlappen und zum Teil so sehr miteinander verbunden sind, dass sie nur sehr schwer empirisch zu trennen sind.

Hinsichtlich der Einflussfaktoren auf die Nutzung hat diese Studie vier Faktoren untersucht: Politischer Wille und Führungsverhalten; Kapazität der Organisation; administrative Kultur; Interessen und Einstellungen der Führungskräfte. Obwohl diese Faktoren zusammenhängen und sogar überlappen zeigt diese Studie, dass jeder einzelne Faktor Erklärungskraft besitzt, wenn auch zu unterschiedlichem Grad. Aus dieser Studie lässt sich folgern, dass inkonsistenter politischer Wille und Führungsverhalten in Bezug auf Reformen des Performance Managements passive, politische und pervertierte Formen der Nutzung erklären. Niedrige Kapazität der Organisation erklärt passive Nutzung sowie Teilaspekte von intendierter Nutzung. Eine

informale, persönliche und kompetitive Administrationskultur ist verknüpft mit intendierter Nutzung, hauptsächlich aber mit politischer und perverser Nutzung. Eingeschränktes Interesse und ablehnende Einstellung wird mit passiver Nutzung in Verbindung gebracht.

Diese Studie trägt zu Literatur bei, die sich damit befasst, inwieweit Institutionen in einem von Neo-Patrimonialismus geprägten Kontext die Nutzung von Performanceinformation beeinflusst. Weitere Forschung ist notwendig, um zu untersuchen wie Neo-Patrimonialismus performanceorientierte Reformen positiv beeinflusst. Dies ist besonders in Anbetracht von Nischen der Effektivität und Entwicklungspatrimonialismus bedeutsam. Dies ist besonders relevant, da davon ausgegangen werden kann, dass Performance-bezogene Reformen auch in Zukunft weiter in Entwicklungsländern verbreitet werden.

## CHAPTER 1: SETTING THE RESEARCH AGENDA

This chapter sets the research agenda by locating the study in the broader scholarship on performance management in public sector organizations. It is organized as follows:

- Section 1.1 locates performance information in the global performance movement
- Section 1.2 presents the relevance of the current study and how it hopes to contribute to the literature
- Section 1.3 states the objectives and guiding questions for the study
- Section 1.4 presents and defines the concepts used in the study
- Section 1.5 presents the outline of this dissertation report

### 1.1 Focus on Performance of Public Organizations

Modern day public administration is increasingly characterized by reform efforts focused on results. Though with different emphasis, governments across the world have in the last four decades adopted reforms geared toward improving their performance. This drive has been greatly facilitated by the New Public Management (NPM) type of reforms (Hammerschmid, Van de Walle, & Stimac, 2013; Hood, 1991; Proeller, 2007; van Thiel & Leeuw, 2002), with ‘standards and measures of performance’ as a key doctrinal aspect (Hood, 1991, p.4). It is this focus on performance that has seen performance management<sup>1</sup> become a key aspect of public administration and management across the world (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008; Halligan, 2009; Nielsen, 2013; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). This is alongside other aspects such as strategic management, financial management, and human resource management.

The ‘lifeblood’ of performance management is performance information (Moynihan, 2008). As a result, performance information use has increasingly received research focus in the last decade (Kroll, 2015; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010). Scholars have been seeking to establish why and how the information that is measured, analyzed and reported is used by decision makers in the public sector, and under what conditions such use occurs (R. Andrews, Boyne, & Walker, 2011; Behn,

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<sup>1</sup> Also called Managing for Results or Results-Based Management.

2003; Hammerschmid et al., 2013; Kroll, 2012; Kroll & Vogel, 2014; LÆgreid, Roness, & Rubecksen, 2006; Moynihan, 2007; Moynihan & Ingraham, 2004; Moynihan & Pandey, 2004, 2010; Pollitt, 2006). It is believed that understanding the use of performance information is helpful to the theorization and facilitation of this organizational behavior (Kroll, 2015).

## **1.2 Relevance of the Study**

Having worked in public policy research and analysis in Kenya for about eight years advocating for use of evidence in decision-making, I was puzzled as to whether the managers within the government ministries ever used the information measured and reported. This is particularly because, since 2004, Kenya's national government formally introduced performance oriented reforms with a goal to improve the delivery of public services (Government of Kenya, 2003; Kobia & Mohammed, 2006; Obongo, 2009). This then motivated me to undertake the current study with a goal to better understand and contribute to literature on performance management from the perspective of a developing country. Its relevance and hence contribution is hereafter presented.

First and central to this study is its empirical relevance. Most of what is known about performance information use in the public sector is based on studies undertaken in countries within the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). These countries that are mostly in the global North and West have achieved certain levels of social, political and administrative development as well as implemented performance oriented reforms for over three decades (Schick, 1998). Further, most of these countries undertook the reforms voluntarily though as a fashion under the new public management type of reforms (Hood & Dixon, 2015). In the case of developing countries mostly in Africa, Asia, and South America, performance oriented reforms have had a shorter life span and mostly adopted (sometimes involuntarily) as part of conditions for accessing development aid (Ondeng, 2008; World Bank, 2008).

For instance in Kenya, Results Based Management (RBM) was adopted in 2004 out of the need by the then new government to improve services but partly out of necessity to gain support from development partners (Government of Kenya, 2003; Office of the Prime Minister, 2010).

There are context specific differences between a developed and a developing country. A key difference is in what has been termed as a neo-patrimonial state in developing countries where the line between personal wealth and public resources is grayed (Kelsall, 2011). Neo-patrimonialism is expected to shape internal administrative processes and hence affect how reforms related to performance measurement and management play out. A manifestation would be on the organizational culture and the environment that manager's work in, the capacity of public organizations to deliver on their mandates, and the leadership incentive for reforms. As such a study in this context will be of value to scholarship.

The second relevance relates to the method of research. The study is also relevant as it employs a qualitative approach through a case study. Most of the studies undertaken in this field have applied quantitative methods of inquiry (Kroll, 2015). While important, quantitative measures are limited in providing an in-depth description of relationships between variables. It takes a qualitative study to establish detailed descriptions and explanations. In a context that has hardly had a similar study conducted, a qualitative study enables me to explore the various factors at play and thus set the stage for follow-up quantitative studies.

Its third relevance relates to public sector reform practice. The study is relevant to practitioners, both public servants (especially reform champions<sup>2</sup>) and the management consultants who design and implement reform programs. It is also of relevance to the international development agencies that promote and fund public management reforms. They would benefit to know what factors affect the desired behavior and how to best cultivate the conditions that would lead to it. Given the independence of the study, it would speak well to the different audiences by providing a balanced picture.

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<sup>2</sup> Reform champions is a term used to refer to select public servants at different levels of the administration who are specially trained and facilitated to lead the reform processes within the administration. See a report on reform champions training programme in Kenya (Ministry of Devolution and Planning, 2013; Office of the Prime Minister, 2010)

### **1.3 Research Objective and Question**

While there is a notable scholarly focus on the use of performance information in public organizations, it strikes that the focus is still biased towards OECD countries (Kroll, 2015; Van Dooren, 2006). This is of concern for as noted above, performance-oriented reforms have taken place across the world and particularly in developing countries (Kelsall, 2013; Schick, 1998). In this later context, managers in public organizations are faced with different constraints and incentives in implementing performance management reforms (Booth & Cammack, 2013; Conyers, 2007; Kelsall, 2013). Thus, one would expect that their use of performance information would be explained by factors that are either different or differently structured than those from the OECD context. This then is the focus of my study.

The study has two main objectives. The first is to establish how managers in Kenya's public service use performance information in the decision making processes. Kenya, a country considered as developing (United Nations, 2004), has implemented performance oriented reforms since 2004 and hence provides a good case for the study. The second is to explore the factors that can explain their use of performance information use. To this end, I undertake a qualitative case study from the viewpoint of middle-level managers in the national government of Kenya. Given their supervisory and day to day administration work, middle-level managers have the responsibility to measure performance and advise or make decisions on what needs to be done. In so doing, it is expected that they would use performance information. I do not assess use by politicians and citizens (external stakeholders) as that would introduce externalities that are outside the focus of this study. Two interrelated research questions guide this study:

- i. *How* do managers use performance information in decision making?
- ii. *Why* do managers use performance information the way they do?

### **1.4 Concepts**

It is necessary to establish the understanding of the use of performance information as applied in this study. In an era of government by performance management (Moynihan & Pandey, 2005; Fryer, Antony, & Ogden, 2009; Halligan, 2009; Ingraham, Joyce, & Donahue, 2003; Kroll, 2012;



Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011; Talbot, 2005), measuring performance has become a central lever of public organizations (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008). This is because governments are increasingly under pressure to perform better and produce good results but with fewer resources. While measuring performance is important, it should not be an end in itself. The data collected, analyzed and reported yielding performance information should be used so as to improve the outcomes of the service being assessed. Broadly conceived, performance management is the type of management that “incorporates and uses performance information in decision making” (Van Dooren, Bouckaert, & Halligan, 2015: 20). What has led to its popular adoption is the claims for positive outcomes, also called doctrine, that Moynihan (2008, Location 184 of 3502 Kindle Edition) has argued “is based on the logic that creation, diffusion, and the use of performance information will foster better decision making in government, leading to dividends in terms of political and public accountability, efficiency, and budget decisions”. No public official can argue that these are not desirable outcomes of adopting a system but what warrants further investigation is whether the adoption is just a symbolic gesture, to be seen to be doing something or a genuine intention to change the form and structure of the public service for better service delivery. One can argue that the reason why performance management reforms are likely to continue in developing countries into the foreseeable future is their appeal to managers, politicians, and citizens as well as their support and emphasis on by development partners.

In this study, performance management is considered as the process characterized by setting goals through a strategic planning, measuring indicators during implementation and using the obtained information to make decisions on service delivery. Worth noting is that given the centrality of performance information in performance management, a study on the use of performance information is of essence a study on the adoption and implementation of performance management in an organization. This study applies this understanding for Kenya’s public service.

What then is meant by performance information? A straightforward description of performance information is that it is the end result of a performance measurement process (Van Dooren, Bouckaert, & Halligan, 2010; Van Dooren et al., 2015). This assumes that such information is obtained only through formally established mechanisms and is quantitative in nature. In a similar

vein, Kroll (2012, p. 4-5) advances that there are two key characteristics of such information namely that it should first “capture dimensions beyond simple inputs” and secondly it is “collected and reported in a systematic way”. The first characteristic speaks to the content; that performance information is about outputs, outcomes and where possible even the impact of policy programs undertaken by public agencies. The second speaks to how it is collected which includes traditional quantitative measurement systems such as surveys as well as qualitative means including focus group discussions and interviews with experts (Van Dooren et al., 2015). The above describes what has been labeled as routine performance information (Kroll, 2013, 2015). This is the information that is collected and reported in a systematic way as a logical follow-up of performance indicators established ex-ante. Another type that is increasingly recognized is the non-routine performance information (Kroll, 2013, 2015; Van Dooren et al., 2015). Such information is from the internal or external sources that are largely operating within trust relationships. In Kenya, and hence for this study, performance information is that information on outputs and outcomes of public services, goods, and works. It thus excludes measures on inputs and processes. It is mostly that which is collected systematically as part of the regular reporting on performance contracting and staff performance appraisal system (Government of the Republic of Kenya, 2015; Public Service Commission, 2015b). It may also be from other sources such as customer satisfaction surveys and external feedback on service delivery which is regularly sought for. This study proceeds with an appreciation that performance information can be both quantitative and qualitative and can be obtained from routine and non-routine sources.

While performance information is the central claim of the doctrine of performance management, for it to make a difference it is argued that managers need to be given greater autonomy to control resources such as budgets and human capital. On their part managers should provide greater accountability through quantifiable results (Ammons & Roenigk, 2015; Moynihan, 2008). The said results should be reported at outputs and outcomes level and not on inputs and processes as is the case in traditional public administration. The former is considered as the main purpose of providing public services. To track progress towards this desired end, public organizations establish measuring systems. The result is increasing amounts of performance information that managers have to make sense of and determine their appropriate use. Use of performance

information has been categorized in various ways including purposeful, political, passive, and perverse (Moynihan, 2009; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010). Purposeful use is the desired behavior. Scholars have theorized and tested factors – environmental, organizational and individual – that facilitate this behavior (see Kroll, 2015; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Taylor, 2011).

Through this study, I seek to advance the understanding of some of the explanatory factors in the use of performance information deemed relevant to the context of the case being investigated. The study builds on similar studies in other jurisdictions and aims to provide a more contextual understanding of the organizational behavior of performance information use (Cameron, 2015; Kroll, 2012, 2015; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Ni Putu, Van Helden, & Tillema, 2013; Nielsen, 2013; Van Dooren, 2006).

## **1.5 Outline of the Study**

To locate and justify this study within the existing literature, Chapter Two reviews the state of the research. In it, I argue that while we have some extensive knowledge on how managers use performance information, it is mostly based on studies in the OECD context. This justifies a study in a different context, of which I choose a developing country. I draw what I expect to be different in such a context and how that is expected to influence the use of performance information and performance management broadly.

In Chapter Three, I present the research methodology. I describe and justify the case selected and describe how I went about collecting and analyzing the data. I close with a reflection on some of the limitations of the study.

Chapter Four provides the context of performance information as part of the broader performance management reforms in Kenya. It describes the structure of government and a chronology of the political economy issues relating to performance oriented reforms since Kenya's independence in 1963. It closes with a description of the current framework of performance management and thus locating the place of performance information.

Having set the context, Chapter Five delves into the empirical findings on how managers' source for and use performance information as reported by them. This is followed by a detailed presentation and discussion on the factors that could explain the managers' behavior.

Chapter six concludes the study. It reflects back on the research objectives and assumptions set before. The studies contribution is discussed and areas of further research suggested. It closes with thoughts on the study's implications for practice.

## CHAPTER 2: STATE OF RESEARCH

This chapter reviews the state of research and lays down the theoretical framework that this study builds on. It is organized as follows:

- Section 2.1 introduces how the review was done
- Section 2.2 highlights the broad theoretical frames relating to performance management
- Section 2.3 focuses on the performance information use
- Section 2.4 presents state of research on factors influencing manager's use of performance information
- Section 2.5 closes with a focus on research assumptions for the current study

### 2.1 Introduction

The essence of this review of the literature is to be able to position my study in the context of previous work and especially to identify the knowledge gaps – theoretical and empirical – that the study attempts to contribute to. Inspired by Kroll's (2015, p. 460) thought when he writes that, "For a research field to mature, it needs reviews summarizing the current state of inquiry on which further research can be built.", I undertake an in-depth and critical review of the literature available on performance measurement and information use in the public sector. It has been developed through a study of books, thesis reports, and especially peer-reviewed journal<sup>3</sup> articles published in the period 2000-2016 that have performance information use as a key (dependent) variable. The year 2000 is considered the time when evaluations on NPM-type of reforms were being brought out in the pioneer countries and promoted in the developing countries (Van Dooren, 2006). Thus most empirical studies were done after this year. The period also corresponds with that of explicit performance-based management reforms in Kenya's public sector and would thus capture the global thinking around which Kenya adopted the reforms.

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<sup>3</sup> These are journals in the field of Public Administration. They include Public Administration Review, Public Administration, Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory, Public Money and Management, Public Performance and Management Review

## 2.2 Theoretical Frames on Performance Management in the Public Sector

Studying the literature reveals several theoretical frames that have been drawn on to explain performance and its management. These have been in the understanding of middle-range theories (Merton, 1949, 2007) that “operate in a limited domain.....and vary somewhat in their range of application” (Bryman, 2012, p. 22). Such theories “lie between the minor but necessary working hypotheses that evolve in abundance during the day to day research and the all-inclusive systematic efforts to develop a unified theory that will explain all the observed uniformities of social behavior, social organization and social change” (Merton, 1949:39). As such they are “intermediate to general theories of social systems which are too remote from particular classes of social behavior, organization, and change to account for what is observed and to those detailed orderly descriptions of particulars that are not generalized at all” (*ibid*, p. 39). Thus, they facilitate empirical inquiry by enabling researchers to define their variables that are observable while appreciating the scope conditions of the phenomenon under study. Four relevant theoretical frames are here considered.

The first set of theories relate to public choice and institutional economics (Niskanen, 1971). Since they address the dynamics of public agencies, these theories are argued to be the “strongest candidates for addressing performance” (Talbot, 2005, p. 509). Public choice theorists argue that the causes of lack of efficiency and effectiveness in public services is threefold, namely, “monopolistic structure of public service markets; the absence of valid indicators of organizational performance; and the large size of many government agencies’ (Boyne, Farrell, Law, Powell, & Walker, 2003, p. 6). The proposed remedy is more competition, collecting performance information, and breaking the large organizations to small, specific purpose units. The expected result is “higher efficiency and stronger responsiveness to public demands” (*ibid*, p. 11). Performance information is particularly important in the reduction of the asymmetry that favors the bureaucrats (agents) over the politicians (principals) to whom they should account.

Second are what Bouckaert and Halligan (2008, p. 53) have termed as “performance-based theories”. These theories argue for the place of certain conditions that would lead to better performance. Three such mechanisms have been advanced (*ibid*, p.53-60). One assumption is that

increasing pressure on public actors improves performance. Second is the assumption that restricting organizations towards more specialized units' leads to improved performance. Lastly, is the assumption that engaging with citizens as customers in the process of service delivery improves performance. The main concern with these assumptions is what the optimal level of each should be for the desired performance to be achieved. This remains to be explored empirically.

Thirdly are contingency-based theories that seek to explain performance based on aspects of service delivery or the level of government involved. Performance is thus contingent on variables such as “size of the public sector organization, budgetary size, political salience, complexity of its environment, level of government...and constrained and enhanced resource availability” (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008, p. 65).

Fourth, and of relevance to this study, is new institutional theory that is appropriate for studies that cut across political science, sociology, and management fields (M. Andrews, 2013). Institutions – the rules, norms, values, and practices – shape how organizations operate. They define what incentives members of the organizations have to behave in certain ways (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). Institutional theorists advance that by changing the rules of the game, then organizations can be strengthened to perform better. This is because it is the rules of the game that determine the “size, scope, operation and influence of government” Andrews (2013, Kindle Location 227).

New-institutional theories entail economic, sociological, and historical branches (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Hall & Taylor, 1996; March & Olsen, 1989; Meyer & Rowan, 1977). The economic variant is rational choice-based and is related to Public Choice and New Institutional Economics. It advances that people with their self-interest within a context of organizational interest can have a shared performance focus. Specifically, this theoretical frame deals with “transactions, organizational design, goals, and information” all of which can be seen as the “hardware” of organizations ((Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008, p. 62). Within the general framework of rational choice-based theories, have emerged more specific theories such as transaction cost economics theory and agency theory.

The other variant of neo-institutionalism is sociological institutionalism that has to do with values, beliefs, norms, and culture of organizations. It is thus concerned with the ‘software’ of organizations. These values and cultures have the capacity to “shape the behavior of individual and organizational actors” (*ibid*, p. 61). DiMaggio and Powell’s (1983) work seeks to explain that as organizations adopt certain reforms, they are guided by certain underlying drives that make them more similar in seeking to change them. This is through three isomorphic processes – coercive, mimetic, and normative. In this sense, institutions constrain behavior change. Lastly from historical institutionalism that argues that organizations have a past and it matters for the present and future. Bouckaert and Halligan (2008, p. 62) observe that “choice of patterns and trajectories is limited and constrained by past decisions, inertia, customs, and practices”. As such both, the economic and sociological strands of neo-institutionalism are imbued in a certain historical past. In relation to performance, this theory argues that one cannot understand the path that performance oriented reforms take without a closer study of the historical development of public organizations.

### **2.3 Performance Information Use in Public Sector Organizations**

Performance information use is expected as the logical step after the information has been collected, analyzed, and reported. Performance information and its capacity to improve decision making and accountability in public organizations is considered a key assumption in the performance management doctrine (Ammons & Roenigk, 2015; Moynihan, 2008). For this potential to be exploited the information needs to be measured and used appropriately. While the most common users of performance information are managers in the public sector, other users include the politicians to whom they are accountable and the citizens to whom the public services are delivered and who finance the services (Van de Walle & Van Dooren, 2008).

Use is expected to occur when performance information is incorporated and applied in decision-making processes (see Figure 1). According to Bouckaert and Halligan (2008, p.28) incorporation is “intentionally importing performance-related data in documents and procedures with the potential and purpose of using them”. For managers to access the information, incorporation has



to be into management systems through instruments such as ‘target systems, reporting systems, performance contracts, performance budgets, balanced scorecards....and at the individual level through target agreements, performance appraisals and performance-related-pay’ (Hammerschmid et al., 2013, P. 1). The potential aspect of information that should be incorporated implies that not all that is measured can be incorporated and even used. This could be related to the concept of the usefulness of information (Weiss, 1979). Use is expected to follow from incorporation but while it is a necessary condition, it is not sufficient for use to occur (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008). It is possible to conceptualize that information is used or not used as obtained, but there is an appreciation that this is far from reality (Van Dooren et al., 2015). In practice performance information is commonly interpreted before being used, a phenomenon termed as ‘soft’ use. On the other hand, where the information directly informs a decision has been termed as ‘hard’ use (ibid, p. 122).

**Figure 1: Performance Management Process**



*Source: Author creation based on (Bouckaert & Halligan, 2008; Van Dooren et al., 2010, 2015)*

*Types/Dimensions of Use*

Different categorizations of use have been advanced. Van Dooren (2006, p. 37-38) lists over forty potential uses of performance information (see also Van Dooren et al., 2015). Earlier, Behn (2003) had advanced eight uses namely to evaluate, control, budget, motivate, promote, celebrate, learn, and improve. Even then he argues that the ultimate use was to improve performance with other uses making that possible. Moynihan (2009) suggested four dimensions (4P’s) of use namely, purposive, passive, political, and perverse. The desired behavior is purposeful performance information use which Kroll and Vogel (2014, p. 976 ) define as “the making of better-informed management decisions based on performance data”. It entails “using performance information to improve services through better-informed decisions, goal-based learning, or sanctioning and rewarding” (Kroll, 2015 p. 461-462). As the desired use and the common goal of

performance measurement reforms, purposeful use has thus received greatest attention in past research (Kroll, 2015).

Further, Van Dooren, Bouckaert, and Halligan (2015, p. 119-121) advance three main purposeful or functional uses of performance information which are “to learn, to steer and control, and, to give account”. The former two uses are internal while the latter is external which agrees with Hammerschmid, Van De Walle and Stimac (Hammerschmid et al., 2013) who advances that use can be internal or external. In the latter’s work, internal uses included assessing reaching of targets, monitoring the performance of subordinates and fostering learning while external uses include communicating what the organization does for citizens and engaging with external stakeholders (*ibid*, p. 5). On a similar thread, one then observes that all but one of Behn’s (2003) proposed uses of performance information (to promote) can be termed as purposeful.

While the evidence for purposeful use remains scarce, a key use reported is in decision making within the organization. This could be on budget allocation (Moynihan, 2008), planning, and implementation direction of the organization. In an early study de Lancer Julnes and Holzer (2001), find evidence of use observing that only a few of the state and local governments that measure performance actually use the information in decision-making. Ammons and Riverbark (2008, p. 312) find that project data is used in “establishing performance targets, contracting decisions and management, program evaluation and budget reviews”. In a cross-country study, Hammerschmid, et al (2013, p. 4) find that managers used information more for internal purposes such as “to know whether they had reached their targets and to identify problems needing attention” than for external purposes such as engaging with stakeholders or communicating their achievements. In his work in Germany, Kroll (2012, 2013) in line with other research (see Moynihan, Pandey, & Wright, 2012a; Van Dooren et al., 2010) finds that there is evidence of managers using information in learning, steering and control, and accountability. These are discussed hereafter.

Learning entails establishing ways of improving policy or management (Van Dooren et al., 2015). Performance information, in this case, plays the role of establishing what is working or not working and why/why not. A common assumption of performance-based management reforms is

that decision makers will learn from performance information and hence enhance what is working and correct what is not working. Common applications are “learning circles and peer reviews that make use of performance data” (ibid, p. 120). Learning hence does with looking at the past to improve the future. In fact, learning is said to have occurred where past experiences translate to future improvements. Learning is thus futuristic. Learning can be single looped or double looped (Argyris & Schon, 1996). Single loop learning has to do with the basic organizational process but does not affect the underlying theory and values. As for double-loop learning, it “results in a change of values of theory-in-use, as well as in its strategies and assumptions” (ibid, p. 21). Applying this learning to performance management means revisiting “organizational mission, goals, and strategies on a regular basis” (Moynihan, 2005, p. 204). Based on the literature on organizational learning, Moynihan (Moynihan, 2005, 2008) has advanced the need for routines (learning forums) that “consider and discuss data” and not just those that “collect and disseminate data” (Moynihan, 2005, p. 211).

Steering and control have a focus on the present with a goal to ensure that everything is on track. Common applications are “management scorecards that monitor the performance of the organization and policy monitors that track changes in a policy field” (Van Dooren et al., 2015, p. 121). Of concern is how performance information gets applied in day to day management. Is it part of reports during weekly or monthly meetings? Do managers use it in allocating resources? Advising high offices on the course of action?

Accountability entails providing evidence to higher level officials, mostly politicians, as to what results have been achieved or not achieved, the resources utilized and the reasons for any variance. A recent focus of accountability is on results and not just proper use of resources (Jones & Kettl, 2003). The focus is on the past which has to be explained to the account holder who may impose sanctions (Van Dooren et al., 2015). Common examples are citizens service charters, annual reporting, and ranking of service providers by performance levels. As such accountability has to do with communicating to the outside stakeholders. Accountability can be seen from a narrow or broader view (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008). In the narrow sense, accountability simply means reporting performance. In such sense, performance measurement is simply for compliance and officials see it as additional work to them. Such measurement is rather minimalist

only covering inputs and outputs. A broader view of accountability goes beyond performance reporting to include “dimensions of service efficiency, quality, and effectiveness” (*ibid*, p. 314). The focus is thus on outcomes of service delivery. As such managers seek the dual goal of achieving higher outcomes and providing evidence of the same. It is in the broader view of accountability that managers are likely to incorporate performance measures into management systems and subsequently use them (*ibid*).

There is also theorization and evidence that performance information is used in other ways than purposeful. First is passive use (Moynihan, 2009) that simply involves complying with the requirements of the government policy to report and disseminate performance information. No effort thereafter is made to utilize the information. Passive engagement of performance data could be as a result of disillusionment with past reform efforts that may have yielded nothing much (Radin, 2006). Second is political use (Moynihan, 2009) where managers ‘promote’ (Behn, 2003, p. 591) their work to internal and external stakeholders such as “politicians, citizens or journalists”. Dysfunctional or perverse use has also been observed (Bevan & Hood, 2006; Cameron, 2015; Hood, 2006; Kelman & Friedman, 2009). This is where behaviors such as cheating, cherry-picking and gaming characterize the utilization of performance data.

#### *A case for Non-use*

While the use of performance information by managers is a desirable practice, it is not always the case. Managers work in public organizations that are often dysfunctional and do not facilitate the use of performance information. One wonders, why the public organizations would invest in producing lots of information and then fail to use it. While non-use could be because there is no information since the organization does not measure it, more often non-use occurs where information is available and has even been incorporated in management systems (Van Dooren et al., 2015). The non-use of formal or routine information cannot qualify as total non-use as routine information is but one source of information among many. Ter Bogt, (2004) illustrates this with his conclusion that the Dutch aldermen made use of information obtained through “informal, verbal consultations and meetings with top managers....they much less frequently used formal,

written information in budgets, annual reports, and interim reports, and other sources of formal and informal information” (p. 241).

It could as well be that use is loosely coupled (or even decoupled) from the rational system and happens in other spaces of the organization. Decoupling of performance indicators and goals can be an effective “strategy of seeking legitimacy of multiple constituencies” (Van Dooren et al, 2015, p.157). This is especially the case in the modern governance landscape where legitimacy is rather difficult to obtain given the myriad of stakeholders and the differences in their expectations. It is in this thread that symbolic use has been distinguished from functional use (Ni Putu et al., 2013). Symbolic use is where compliance is the only objective while functional has a similar meaning to purposeful use.

Using middle range theories (Merton, 1949), Van Dooren, et al (2015) propose four potential reasons why performance information is not used in the public sector. First is that the information is of insufficient quality. Non-use could be because the information is untruthful or has no utility value. Secondly, non-use can be due to psychological barriers which “limit human information processing capabilities” (ibid, p.160). This is best explained by Hebert Simon’s theories of bounded rationality (Simon, 1972). A decision maker’s “rationality is bounded by incomplete information, insufficient processing capacities and the pervasive impact of uncertainty” (Van Dooren et al., 2015:161). Thirdly, non-use can be due to cultural barriers. This is especially where performance measurement processes are at odds with the culture of the place hence making use minimal. Fourthly, non-use can be a factor of institutions. Institutions are driven by factors that derive from either normative or regulatory frame (March & Olsen, 1986). Depending on how well the institutions are developed, they will either be constrained or facilitated to use information.

## **2.4 Factors Influencing Performance Information Use**

Of greater interest to management scholarship is what conditions or factors influence the use of performance information. This has been the focus of a considerable number of previous researches. These factors have been variously categorized as both internal and external

(Hammerschmid et al., 2013), and, demand and supply (Van Dooren, 2006). A more widely used categorization is organizational, environmental, and individual (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001; Kroll, 2012, 2015; Moynihan & Ingraham, 2004; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Taylor, 2011). A standout observation is that factors that foster the favorable behavior of purposeful information use have received a greater share of the research focus (Kroll, 2015). Table 1 below provides the empirics of key organizational, environmental, and individual factors, the main studies that have looked at them, how they have been operationalized and what the main findings were.

In one of the earliest studies on utilization of performance measures (information) in the public sector, de Lancer Julnes and Holzer (2001) applied a model of adoption and implementation. On one hand, adoption relates to, how extensively output, outcome, and efficiency measures have been developed for programs in the public sector. On the other hand, implementation relates to the frequency of use of output, outcome, and efficiency measures. They draw attention to key factors that affect adoption and implementation of performance measures in two broad categories: Rational/technocratic framework and the political/cultural framework. The former framework entails resources, information, goal orientation, and external requirements. The political/cultural framework entails internal interest groups, external interest groups, and unions, and risk taking and attitudes. This is informed by an appreciation that use of performance measures is “a change process that is influenced by both rational and political factors’ (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001: 697). The study found that while the rational/technocratic factors were responsible for the adoption of performance measures, the political/cultural factors were responsible for implementation (actual use) of performance measures.

**Table 1: Empirics on Factors Influencing Performance Information Use**

Category	Factor and main study (s)	Operationalization	Findings
<b>Organizational</b>	Maturity of the measurement system (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008; de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001; Ho, 2005; Kroll & Proeller, 2013)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Higher order measures by complex systems that match data to users especially managers</li> <li>Measurement of results at outcome level, customer satisfaction, efficiency and effectiveness</li> </ul>	The more complex the information produced the more it facilitates managerial usability such as learning and steering given their expertise but the harder it makes accountability due to information asymmetry given the generalist nature of politicians
	Leadership support (Boyne, Gould-Williams, Law, & Walker, 2004; Moynihan & Hawes, 2012; Moynihan & Ingraham, 2004),	Top leadership of the organization demonstrates interest in performance measures and achievement of results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use is enhanced where managers have a sense that their leaders are interested in performance management</li> <li>Where organizational leaders are hands-off then use is highly unlikely</li> </ul>
	Support capacity (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001; Moynihan & Hawes, 2012)	Resources, capabilities and technological capacity that enable performance measurement systems to work	Where the infrastructure for performance management including resources, technology, and dedicated technical persons are available then use occurs

Category	Factor and main study (s)	Operationalization	Findings
	Employee involvement/participation (Boyne et al., 2004)	Leadership involvement in evaluations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Employee participation enhances the use of performance information in evaluation</li> </ul>
	Information availability, data quality and usability (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010)	Efficiency measures taken in the organization in a timely way and linked to management processes	Data use is likely where measurement is an indispensable part of management and hence information is timely and relevant
	Organization size (Kroll, 2013; Melkers & Willoughby, 2005; Taylor, 2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National, state or city wide</li> <li>Number of employees</li> </ul>	Given the factors that facilitate use such as leadership support and innovative culture, the size of the organization does not matter
	Innovative culture (Moynihan, 2005; Moynihan, Pandey, & Wright, 2012b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dynamic and entrepreneurial culture</li> <li>Willingness to risk and try new things</li> <li>Emphasis on dialogue and discussion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An innovative or developmental culture facilitates information use as people are willing to risk and learn to improve</li> <li>By facilitating dialogue and learning and not just rewards and punishment an innovative culture enhances use of information as there is no fear of retribution when things go wrong</li> </ul>



Category	Factor and main study (s)	Operationalization	Findings
	Financial distress (Kroll, 2013; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State of available finances to the organization</li> </ul>	Organizations in financial distress do not use performance information much more than when in stable conditions
	Goal orientation/clarity (Moynihan et al., 2012b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Simplicity of departmental objectives to insiders and outsiders</li> </ul>	Clearly set goals and objectives to be achieved facilitates use by encouraging regular reviews of progress made
	Learning forums/routines (Moynihan, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Discussion and collective sense making of performance information</li> <li>Peer reviews of work outcomes</li> </ul>	By providing regular mechanisms for collectively sense making of performance information, learning routines make it possible for use to be institutionalized
	Organization Culture (Kroll, 2012; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Taylor, 2011)	Rational, hierarchical, group and developmental culture	Use of information occurs where the organizational culture supports performance management
<b>Environmental</b>	Stakeholder involvement (Moynihan & Pandey, 2004; Ni Putu et al., 2013)	Engagement and support of performance measures by elected officials and citizens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances performance information use by creating pressure for use</li> <li>Stakeholders do also play an advocacy role by providing additional support and explanations that make use plausible</li> </ul>

Category	Factor and main study (s)	Operationalization	Findings
	Political competition (Askim, 2007; Melkers & Willoughby, 2005)	Number of parties represented in the parliament	Political competition leads to use but when other factors are considered the effect of political completion diminishes
	General political support (Moynihan et al., 2012b)	Expression of confidence by the elected officials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Where managers have an assurance that politicians will not negatively act when performance reports are not so good then they use it</li> <li>• By reducing blame-avoidance political support directs energy to beneficial work</li> </ul>
	Heterogeneity/fragmentation (Moynihan & Hawes, 2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heterogeneity of the demand side (citizen and political groups) vs. Homogeneity</li> </ul>	In heterogeneous/fragmented environment managers use information more as they have to explain their actions to different stakeholders whose interests and demands vary
<b>Individual</b>	Attitude toward performance management (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008; Kroll, 2012; Taylor, 2011)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sense of value on performance measurement</li> <li>• Enthusiasm on performance measures</li> <li>• Cynicism</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers need to be enthusiastic, interested and have a positive attitude to performance measurement for them use performance information</li> <li>• Cynicism leads to low use of performance information</li> </ul>

Category	Factor and main study (s)	Operationalization	Findings
	Pro-social motivation (Kroll & Vogel, 2014; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Moynihan et al., 2012b)	Attached value to making contribution to society	Managers who are motivated to see changes for good in society will use information to assess their progress on social impact
	Networking behavior (Moynihan & Hawes, 2012)	Formal and informal interactions among decision makers and relevant stakeholders	Managers who regularly exchange and compare notes with their peers in other organizations or external actors use performance information
	Familiarity with performance measures (Melkers & Willoughby, 2005)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of skills and length of time working on performance measures</li> </ul>	When other factors are considered the effect of familiarity with performance measures diminishes

*Source: Author compilation inspired by Kroll (2015)*

Assessing performance measurement in the Flemish public sector Van Dooren (2006) used the supply and demand framework. He uses supply and demand of performance information as the dependent variable that is affected by certain causes and conditions that in turn lead to consequences and effects. Supply is administrative in nature while demand is political though not always as sometimes both supply and demand happen within the administrative framework. Moynihan and Pandey (2010) while advancing that why public managers use performance information is the big question of performance management, conceptualize performance information use as organizational behavior and test a number of factors that influence this behavior using data from US local governments. Kroll (2012) followed a similar line of inquiry of behavior perspective and tested why managers use performance information using data from local governments in Germany. In Australia, Taylor (2011) assessed the factors influencing the use of performance information in the internal decision making of organizations. In line with other past studies, she looked at the individual, structural and technical factors, cultural influences and external influences.

A notable aspect of the studies reviewed in Table 1 is that they have been in the context of OECD world. This also agrees with Kroll's (2015) systematic review of empirical work on purposeful performance information use which found that most of the studies (16 of the 25 studies reviewed) were from the United States of America. The rest were from Germany (3), Australia (2), Sweden (1), Wales (1), Norway (1), and Taiwan (1). This relates to observations of other scholars (Kroll, 2012; Van Dooren, 2006) who find that research in this field has been greatly in the western hemisphere. The reasons are understandable given that it's in these country's that the performance related reforms began under what has come to be acknowledged as New Public Management (NPM)(Hood, 1991). This is the focus of the next section (2.5) which will demonstrate that there is a need for studies in other contexts which have implemented similar reforms but are characterized by different incentives and constraints. A developing country context provides this variance and especially one that has implemented performance oriented reforms for a period of time.

## 2.5 Theoretical Framework and Research Assumptions

This section identifies the knowledge gap that this study attempts to address. It then develops a set of general research assumptions that guide the exploratory investigation in Kenya.

As already noted much of what is known empirically on how and why managers' use performance information is based on studies (mainly quantitative) done in the OECD countries (Kroll, 2012; Ni Putu et al., 2013; Van Dooren, 2006). In these countries, performance driven reforms have been undertaken for over several decades in a context of fairly stable political and administrative systems (Hood & Dixon, 2015). Mostly related to NPM, these reforms entailed efforts to make public organizations more efficient using private sector benchmarks (Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 2000; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2011). The adoption of NPM was on the premise that Governments could achieve more and cost less (Hood & Dixon, 2015). Hood (1991, p. 4-5) identified seven doctrinal aspects that underpinned NPM. First was a hands-on management style where the managers have a free hand to manage the processes of government. The second was explicit standards and measures of performance where the goals to be achieved are clearly stated. The third was an increased emphasis on output controls where resource allocation, rewards and sanctions are linked to targets. Focus on results and not procedures. The fourth was the breaking up of large public entities into specialized and corporate units delivering specific products. The fifth was an emphasis on application of private sector management styles in the public sector. Sixth was a focus on a greater competition through contracts and public tendering. The seventh and last doctrine was a focus on greater discipline in resource use through among others cutting direct costs and limiting compliance costs to business. Overall, NPM emphasized an orientation to put citizen or customer as the focus of public service and in so doing account for results (Jansen, 2008). These aspects of NPM underscore the importance of performance information as a means to "set targets in management contracts, to focus on efficiency, to compare the targets and actual performance and to emphasize outputs" (Jansen, 2008, p. 169). The contract like reforms worked to the extent they did in the OECD world as certain conditions such as robust markets and mechanisms of enforcing rules (Schick, 1998) as well as "predictable resourcing and regulation of staff behavior"(Manning, 2001, p. 303).

Developing countries, many of which have implemented the NPM type of reforms, have not had such conditions well established. They are often characterized by low organizational capacity, high level of informality, low level of engagement of different stakeholders, and high levels of corruption, patronage, and rent-seeking (Booth & Cammack, 2013; Hornsby, 2012; Ni Putu, Van Helden, & Tillema, 2007; Schick, 1998). The underlying characteristic of political economies in these countries is what is termed as neo-patrimonialism (Booth & Golooba-mutebi, 2011; Kelsall, 2011, 2013). This comes from Max Weber's concept of patrimonialism in which authority is based on ties of *personal* loyalty between a leader and his administrative staff (Weber, 1947). As such, in a neo-patrimonial state "the basic authority system is combined with, or exists behind some formal, impersonal elements of governance, like a legal system that demarcates the public and private domain" (Kelsall, 2011, p. 77 citing Chabal & Daloz, 1999). Thus the line between what is public and private is rather blurred. One can argue that while Neo-patrimonialism as a form authority is not necessarily bad, its practice without a strong ethical culture leads to a way of life in public organizations that are characterized by informality, patronage and the attendant corruption. This allows the political elites to acquire and distribute "material resources and perks.... as though they were *their* private property and/or *that of their* staff" (Kelsall, 2011, p. 77, Italics added). As such neo-patrimonialism shapes, the space managers and their staff operate in and to a large extent conditions how they behave, their interests and attitude to public sector management. This would have implications on how and what reforms and changes the managers pursue and the intensity with which they pursue it. For instance, while systems of measuring performance would be designed, informality would mean that measurement is not strictly followed through consistently and hence the resulting data may be unreliable.

Kenya is a developing country whose public governance shares these characteristics. Hornsby (2012, Kindle Locations 22034-22035) in his concise history of independent Kenya concludes that "Kenya is a true neo-patrimonial state ... in which bureaucratic process and norms compete with and coexist with personal authority and prebendalism." As such there exists a notable "second state of clientelism, corruption, and connections, fuelled by poverty and politics,

entwined with and running beneath the formal processes of government.” (*Ibid*, Kindle Location 21925-21926). Yet it is in (because of) this contextual state that most of the performance oriented reforms have been implemented. This is by trying to sever the “personalistic bonds between rulers as patrons and the staff as clients through contractual and impersonal structures” (Kelsall, 2011, p. 77). Such reforms seek to establish controls to internal management processes such as on public finance and administration. This is then followed (sometimes accompanied) by “cutting-edge mechanisms like performance management and devolved organizational structures, all slated to improve efficiency” (Andrews, 2013, Kindle Locations 373-376). While most of the reforms have been adopted mostly as conditions for accessing development aid in form of grants, loans, and accompanying technical assistance (Ondeng, 2008; World Bank, 2008), it is hoped that by having good governance, the country would improve in their delivery of public services (Mugore, 2015). This is obviously a very ambitious aspiration that remains difficult (if not impossible) to achieve (Booth & Cammack, 2013, p.1).

The above discussion already points to the potential difficulty of introducing reforms that are aimed at ensuring transparency, efficiency, and accountability in the delivery of public services. For instance, informality may mean that while new ideas are never openly opposed, they are only adopted superficially and never followed through. They are however kept close to be reverted to when there is need to show that something is being done.

The rest of this section delves into what this may mean to how manager’s in Kenya use performance information and the factors that can explain that behavior. In so doing I elaborate the research assumptions and expectations for the current case study.

### *Use of Performance Information by Managers in Kenya’s Public Service*

Building on past studies and with respect to the contextual aspects of Kenya discussed above I expected that manager’s source for performance information through informal channels. On performance information use, following the dimensions of purposeful, passive, political or pervasive use (Moynihan, 2009), I expected that there will be evidence of purposeful, passive,

political, and perverse use. To further investigate purposeful use, I adopted three forms that have been used in past studies, namely learning, steering and control, and accountability. I expected that manager's use of performance information is more on giving account to external agencies and in day-to-day administration (steering and control) and less on learning. On passive use, I investigated to what extent the managers engage with performance information for compliance. This is where they act to be seen to be doing something but with limited internal effect. I expected that this would be the default behavior either because the information is not available on time or the managers do not think it makes any difference to use it. I expected greater political use for in a competitive and constrained environment, managers have to self-promote. Promotion in an environment with limited enforcement of rules and laws would inevitably include manipulation of the results. As such, perverse use would be expected.

Table 2 provides what I expected to observe empirically on each of the dimensions. Where there is purposeful use established, I assessed whether such purposeful use was in learning, steering, and control, or accountability (Van Dooren, Bouckaert and Halligan 2010, 2015).

**Table 2: Expectations on Managers' use of Performance Information**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Expected manifestation</b>
<b>Purposeful</b>	Managers use the information as intended to review service quality, costs for continuous improvement through learning, steering, and control, accounting
<b>Passive</b>	Performance information is just for compliance and no effort made to use it.
<b>Political</b>	Performance information is used selectively to support in advocacy and promote ones work especially for resource allocation and rewards.
<b>Perverse</b>	Information is collected and used for the unintended purposes. This may include gaming, cheating and cherry picking and hoarding of information for personal gain.

*Source: Author construction based on Moynihan (2009)*

*Explaining Manager's Use of Performance Information in Kenya*



Having made a case for how I expected managers to access and use performance information, the next big concern was on what factors would explain their behavior. In this section, I present and discuss my assumptions on what I imagined the factors to be. Based on the arguments relating to context set in the beginning of this section, I identified four factors that the study explored. These are political will and leadership; organizational capacity; administrative culture; and managers' interests, attitudes, and perceptions.

#### **i. Political Will and Leadership**

The interest in and support for change by those in leadership is what has been termed as political will (Post, Salmon, & Raile, 2004). By their interests, demands, and support, politicians and their senior executives determine what kind of reforms get undertaken, the level of importance accorded and consequently which resources –technical, human or financial – are directed to performance reforms. It is the basis of service provision and the mechanism that allocates resources hence generating incentives and disincentives for performance. However, politics can also make performance information of little good, especially where “strong political preferences” exist (Moynihan, 2008, Location 193 of 3502 of Kindle Edition). In such a case, performance information is just but one, and maybe not the most, influential basis for decision making when compared to “partisan goals, ideological biases, stakeholder pressure, and constituent needs” (ibid).

Taylor (2011) argues that politicians and organizational members are stakeholders whose support is critical for performance information use. Here, stakeholders refer to key actors in a political economy of a country's public administration. Internally, it includes the public officials and the senior executives while externally it will include the citizens, the private sector, and international development partners. The last category is especially important in influencing reform narratives in developing countries. Politicians can be viewed sitting between the internal and external stakeholders. The involvement of stakeholders is argued to create the necessary pressure for the supply and demand of public accountability hence improvement of services. Of concern is who is involved? What are their interests? What power do they wield in the process?

In a strong neo-patrimonial context, a low level and asymmetrical engagement by different stakeholders is expected (Ni Putu et al., 2007). Stakeholder involvement becomes a tool for politicians and senior executives to advance their power and influence. Politicians, by virtue of their middle position between internal and external stakeholders, are rather important as they dictate the incentives and channels of obtaining legitimacy some of which may not depend on performance. Politicians want to be associated with success but may blame failure on the bureaucrats. Such an environment can mean that managers remain skeptical about what would be their fate, especially where they are not politically correct. Politicians determine whose voice is heard and whose is not. Of course, this would mean that the more powerful stakeholders get heard. In a developing country context, it is more often that the international development partners such as funding agencies and non-governmental organizations have a voice given their power of the purse (Ni Putu et al., 2007; Ondeng, 2008). It is for this that the role of politicians and senior executives comes to the fore. They engage with the external stakeholders and direct the internal stakeholders.

This political support has been found to be important (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001). Taylor (2011, p. 1320) notes that with “strong political support, managers are likely to become more confident about obtaining the resources and the flexibility to adopt and implement performance measurement in their agencies”. By their leadership especially in designing incentives, politicians and senior executives signal what is important and hence reinforce or curtail certain behavior. Since managers are also leaders to their respective administrative units, their use of performance information becomes a reaction to the prevailing political climate. Thus, use is enhanced where managers have a sense that their leaders are interested in performance management but highly unlikely where organizational leaders are hands-off (Boyne et al., 2004; Moynihan & Hawes, 2012; Moynihan & Ingraham, 2004). Interest and engagement of the politicians create pressure for the information to be used (Ni Putu et al., 2013). In that context, managers have an assurance that the politicians and senior leaders will not negatively act when the reports are not so good and thus they can confidently use it purposefully (Moynihan et al.,

2012b). Otherwise, they are likely to do the bare minimum or worse of, game and cheat to avoid being blamed for poor performance.

From the foregoing, I expected that in the case of Kenya, while the politicians and senior officials do actually demand that the public servants perform better, they do not provide sufficient and consistent support, and are uninterested in pursuing performance oriented reforms. That this interest has a short time horizon depending on the prevailing political agendas would also manifest in the fact that the demands placed on public service keep shifting from time to time. I expected that the lack of or limited support from the senior government officials would then explain passive use as managers can justify non-action for lack of resources. Where managers are under pressure to show progress then they may result to gaming and cheating by exaggerating what has been done.

## **ii. Organizational Capacity**

Capacity here refers to the ability of an organization to identify problems, develop solutions and then mobilize and utilize resources towards them. Resources include financial, human, physical and informational (Ingraham, Joyce, & Donahue, 2003, p.15). In government, capacity refers to the ability of the administration to formulate and implement policies. This entails defining what needs a society has, what solutions (in terms of public goods and services) should be provided and the actual provision (World Bank, 2004). Broadly then, capacity is “the basic ability of governments to fulfill the responsibilities of democratic governance...to use public resources wisely and to target them to the desired objective....to manage programs and people effectively ... and to evaluate or assess whether goals are being met” (Ingraham, 2007, Kindle location 81-83). The extent to which such organizations have and can apply their capacity would thus determine whether they perform well or not. The capacity of public organizations has been found to be an important organizational factor in influencing measurement and use of performance information in the OECD countries (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001; Moynihan & Hawes, 2012). These studies find that where the infrastructure for performance management including resources, technology, and dedicated technical persons are available then use occurs.

In this study, the focus is on the capacity of public organizations in a developing country context. From available literature and personal experience, public organizations in that context have limited capacity characterized by “weaknesses in regulatory practice, a low level of public accountability, administrative inefficiencies, limited human resources, a lack of facilities, and insufficient funding” (Ni Putu et al., 2007, p.196 ). Hornsby (2012) writing on Kenya’s history observes that public policies have either been poorly designed or implemented. He concludes that a key factor negating the effectiveness of the public service has been “*the limited capacity* of the bureaucracy to execute policy.” (*Ibid*, Kindle Locations 21932-21936, Italics in original). A similar observation had earlier been made by Olowu who in his background paper for the sixth Commonwealth forum for heads of African Public service observed that performance management had been derailed by “lack of a common vision or lack of communication of a leadership vision to the organization; non-alignment of people strategies to organizational strategy; managers focusing on short-term issues rather than long-term issues; and failure of organizations to link budgets to strategy” (Commonwealth Secretariat, 2009, p.5).

In the Kenyan case, I expected that the public administration has low organizational capacity. Low capacity in terms of human and technical resources would affect the quality and credibility of performance information available. This is by affecting the timeliness and integrity with which the data is collected and reported on, how it is managed, stored and retrieved for future reference, and who has access to it when need be. As a result, the ability of managers to access and use performance information would be constrained. Purposeful use would be minimized and give way to more perverse use.

### **iii. Administrative Culture**

Culture entails beliefs, values, and norms that guide the day to day practice of persons in a given setting. Schein defines culture as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions learned by a group as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, which has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.” (Schein, 2004, p. 17). It is the shared “set of norms and behavioral expectations characterizing a corporate identity” (Grindle, 1997). In this

understanding, administrative culture refers to that “culture of participants whose activities are restricted to the administrative environment” (Sharma, 2002, p. 65), and is associated with the norms and values esteemed in public organizations (Jamil, Askvik, & Hossain, 2013). It is at the root of why public organizations operate the way they do. In fact, it is this appreciation that has seen culture as the target of most public sector reform efforts. It is inevitable then that a study of administrative culture is, in essence, a study of the organizational culture of the respective entity. In this dissertation, I employ the terms administrative culture and organizational culture interchangeably.

Management scholars highlight that organizational culture has a functional value and has “become an object of management just like strategy and structure” (Schedler & Proeller, 2007, p. 189). The value of culture has also made it the focus of reforms, in the belief that if the culture is changed then public organizations can become more effective and efficient. Of interest to this study is the influence of organizational culture on the use of performance information which has been the subject of past studies (de Lancer Julnes & Holzer, 2001; Landuyt & Moynihan, 2009; Melkers & Willoughby, 2005; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010; Taylor, 2014). For instance, Landuyt and Moynihan (2009, p. 1097) find that while the use of information in organization learning can be facilitated by formal requirements “they need appropriate cultural characteristics to succeed”. Culture is theorized and found to facilitate the demand side of performance information, especially where it has a developmental drive that allows openness, risk taking, innovation and learning (Moynihan & Pandey, 2010, p. 855). De Lancer Julnes and Holzer (2001) found that for information to be implemented (used), the political and cultural factors played a greater role than rational ones. This is especially due to the risk-taking involved. These studies appreciate the value of culture and it is on this basis I am interested in establishing the role it would play in a different context.

From an institutional theory, perspective culture helps explain how behavior (in this case of measuring and using performance information) is shaped by the formal and informal rules in an organization. Schedler and Proeller advance that “*institutions* have a major impact on social and political outcomes as they predetermine available options for the behavior of the actors within

the organization” (2007, p. 193, italics added). From the historical strand of neo-institutionalism, culture is path-dependant, thus the beliefs, identities, and routines are determined by past events. The sociological perspective views culture as “an institution.... the norms, routines, rules and cognitive scripts, symbol systems, and moral framing” (*ibid*, p. 198). It’s in this understanding then that administrative culture becomes a key area of study when thinking about how performance oriented reforms get taken up.

Such reforms are expected to succeed if they alter certain beliefs and values and instill the desired ones such as the use of performance information in decision making. However, it is the very different cultures especially in developing countries which can lead to failure of the reforms to make an impact (Economic Commission for Africa, 2003; Schick, 1998). This is because organizational culture as an intrinsic aspect creates a known comfort and certainty. Thus changes may be resisted and life continues on a *business as usual* path. Where it is inevitable, public servants may creatively find a way to deal with the reforms without necessarily changing their way of doing things. This is often the case where single loop learning takes place such that some new practices are adopted but the underlying values and principles remain the same (Van Dooren et al., 2015).

Informality, personal connections, and patronage characterize the administrative culture in public organizations where neo-patrimonialism is the dominant form of authority structure. This is what Hornsby has described of Kenya’s public service as a system characterized by “the dominance of *patron–clientelism* and the personalization (and ethnicization) of decision-making” (Hornsby, 2012, Kindle Locations 21932-21934, Italics in original). Informality entails the running of things in spite of what the laws and other statutes require. On paper, everything runs according to the rules but in practice the situation is different. Thus informality “results in a gap between the formal goals, policies and authority structure of an organization, which are laid down in official documents, and its actual day-to-day decisions and activities” (Ni Putu et al., 2007, p.198). For instance, it may as well be that public officers are recruited not on the basis of their competence but rather on who they are connected to (Schick, 1998). Schick observes that “informality is as much a matter of culture as of practice; it defines social roles, relationships, and legitimate and

expected behavior, and it persists even when the underlying conditions that gave rise to it vanish” (Ibid, p. 129). Further, it is a mixed blessing that “on the one hand, it cuts through red tape, unresponsive bureaucracies, and bad policies; on the other hand, it opens the door to (and sometimes institutionalizes) corruption and inefficiency.” (*ibid*, p. 128). Patronage thrives on this informal system as elites can reward and distribute economic and other rents to their clients in order to expand and strengthen their influence.

Corruption, the use, abuse and misuse of public resources for private gain, is then pursued to sustain these patronage practices and networks. Corruption entails taking advantage of one’s access to information, privileged resources, and discretion in decision making. In relation to decision making, corruption means that the public goals and purposes play second to personal interests. It is worth distinguishing between high-level or also termed grand corruption from low-level bureaucratic corruption (Ni Putu et al., 2007). High-level corruption involves large sizes of resources and is often by senior officials. This, for instance, includes scams involving the procurement of capital services such as infrastructure development. Bureaucratic corruption involves the extortion of bribes in exchange for public goods and services by street level bureaucrats. This is claimed to be sustained by a patronage system where the street level official receives and shares part of the proceeds with a senior official (most often their supervisor), failure to which they could easily lose their position in favor of a more ‘cooperative’ person. Low-level corruption is commonplace in most developing countries and has the effect of increasing the cost of delivering public goods and services.

In Kenya’s public service corruption and “commercialisation of the state” (Hornsby, 2012, Kindle Locations 21935-21936) have become rampant and almost expected behavior (D’Arcy & Cornell, 2016; Okall, 2015; Wrong, 2009). The argument is that the elites of different ethnic and hence political groupings mobilize people (mostly from their ethnic communities) to claim and ‘eat’ their part of the ‘national cake’(D’Arcy & Cornell, 2016; Wrong, 2009). This entrenched ethnic patronage system and rent seeking leaves limited space for objective service delivery and any effort to improve performance is thus curtailed. It affects the incentives that public servants have to seek innovation and implement performance reforms.

Therefore I expected to find evidence of an administrative culture characterized by informality, personalization of public processes, patronage, and corruption. Such a culture would limit the implementation and application of performance information especially due to silo operations and secrecy. That is where sharing of information is highly selective and suspicion thrives. Hence public servants have no incentives to measure and use performance information in a purposeful sense. I thus expected to find that the organizational culture has remained unchanged and hence managers use information not to improve performance but to navigate around the formal requirements.

#### **iv. Interests, Attitudes, and Perceptions of Managers**

Very closely related to (could be as a result of) administrative culture is the interests, attitudes, and perceptions of managers towards performance management. Managers are influenced by their own interests and attitudes which dictate how they perceive performance oriented reforms. In this study, I am interested in how the attitudes, perceptions, and interests of managers play out in their use of performance information. This can be seen as the software that facilitates or constrains performance information use. Past studies have looked at this manager specific factor (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008; Kroll, 2012; Taylor, 2011). They find that managers need to be enthusiastic, interested and have a positive attitude to performance measurement for them to use performance information. Kroll found that managers who reported a cynical attitude to performance management were also low on their use of performance information (Kroll, 2012).

In the context of personal and informal relationships, the interests and perceptions are expected to be shaped to view performance management differently. Such is what I expected to be obtained in Kenya. For instance, given that performance management reforms have been implemented in a top-down structure and managers have to do it, I expected that they have limited (if any) interest in it. Their attitude would be 'negative' and they would perceive it as a system that does not help them advance their interests. Perceiving it as an extra burden to their work they would only implement it, to be seen to be doing something but with no deep



commitment to change things. As a result, their use of performance information would be passive.

Having described the assumptions for my current study, Table 3 provides a summary of the expected findings in Kenya on the four factors.

**Table 3: Expected findings on explanations of Performance Information Use**

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Expected finding</b>
<b>Political will and leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Politicians and senior executives’ interest in and demand for performance is not followed by support</li> <li>• Passive, political and perverse use of performance information would be expected</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weak organizational capacity constrains managers’ ability to measure and use information</li> <li>• Purposeful and perverse use of performance information would be expected</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An informal, personalized and patronage culture that leads to use of information where it is convenient</li> <li>• Political and perverse use of performance information would be expected</li> </ul>
<b>Interests, Attitudes, and Perceptions of Managers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers are somewhat cynical about performance measurement and perceive it as an extra burden</li> <li>• Passive use expected</li> </ul>

## CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I describe the method and process I followed in collecting the data in Kenya. The chapter is structured as follows:

- Section 3.1 justifies the research design adopted for the study
- Section 3.2 describes the case selected and unit of analysis
- Section 3.3 describes the data collected and the process followed
- Section 3.4 is on reliability and validity of the data collected
- Section 3.5 describes how data was analyzed
- Section 3.6 closes with a discussion and response to some of the study's limitations

### 3.1 A Case Study Research Design

This study applies an explorative case study research design. This takes a pragmatic approach (Punch, 2014) where the focus is an attempt to answer the research questions identified in chapter 1. As such, I seek not to show causality between a set of variables but rather explain potential relationships between them. Hence the basis for a qualitative methodological choice is three-fold.

First, it is inductive as I explore from the research data towards a reflection on theory. The research question is how and why a certain phenomenon manifests in a specific context as it does. This necessitates a case study for, as Yin (2003, 2014, p.1) advances, “case studies are the preferred strategy when ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions are being posed, and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context”. Notably, most of what is known about the use of performance information have been based on quantitative studies and there is a scarcity of qualitative studies. For instance, of the studies on performance information use reviewed in Table 2.1, only three were case studies i.e. Ammons and Rivenbark (2008), Kroll and Proeller (2013), and Moynihan (2005). While surveys enable the observation of a characteristic across many cases, it cannot explain why the observations are that way. It thus takes case studies which are qualitative in nature to explain the reasons behind the observations (Yin, 2003, 2014). Further, a qualitative study helps to elaborate on different dimensions of a

single variable. It is for this reason that this study uses a qualitative method of inquiry through a case study.

Secondly, the study is interpretive as I try to create an understanding of the real world from the perspective of those who live in it (Bryman, 2012). In this case, it is by the managers who are expected to use performance information in decision making. A case study design is also valuable in areas where the concepts are not well defined especially due to the dearth of research in the area. This is particularly important when the number of persons who can authoritatively provide the information is small. It is for this reason that I chose qualitative case analysis given the early stage of studying the issue in question in Kenya. A qualitative study is helpful to investigate the causal factors that are at work, thereafter a quantitative study can systematically look at specific factors (Leonard, 1988, 1991). In this vein, a case study would be of value where a study does not seek to falsify an already advanced hypothesis but rather to build contextual information.

Thirdly, and specifically to the Kenyan context, the internal operations and performance of government is considered a confidential matter and handled as such. In addition, issues are handled in a rather informal way and therefore accessing information requires an initial time investment in building trust relationships. Being an outsider to the system, I needed a method that would gain me access directly to the respective officers. This was informed by a pilot study conducted earlier for this dissertation, where I established that the kind of information sought could not be obtained through surveys, but through interviews, observations, and document analysis.

### **3.2 Case Selection and Unit of Analysis**

Interested in studying performance information use in a context outside the OECD countries led me to select a country that has undertaken performance oriented reforms over a period of time to provide traction in the data available. To ensure ease of access, I chose a country I had a fair knowledge of in terms of its system of administration and also one that uses English as the official language of communication. The case selected was Kenya.

Kenya is a country located in the east of Africa. It borders Uganda to the West, South Sudan and Ethiopia to the North, Somalia to the East, and Tanzania to the South West. Its coast is on the Indian Ocean and provides an important port of entry and exit into mainland eastern Africa. Its population is estimated at 45 Million people<sup>4</sup> (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2015). It has a fairly young population as those below 35<sup>5</sup> years of age is about 70 %. Until 1963, it was a colony of the British.

For purposes of data collection, I chose the three state departments of Kenya's national Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries Development. In addition, I also targeted cross-cutting departments that coordinate different aspects of performance management in Kenya. I consider the ministry a typical case within Kenya's public sector. I choose the state departments from one sector as that makes it possible to investigate the factors under consideration across departments. While cross-sectoral comparison would be desirable, past studies show that there is clear differentiation in performance between sectors and organizations (Askim, 2007; Hammerschmid et al., 2013). The unit of analysis is middle-level managers in the ministry as well as those working in special purpose performance management coordination units.

The national government of Kenya is organized around Executive Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). Each has a mandate to deliver certain public goods, works, and/or services. The case ministry is in the economic sector and provides services that include research, training, and development of mechanisms that support the increased production of food towards a food secure country. The broad sector contributes about 25 per cent to the GDP (Republic of Kenya, 2015) and accounts for over 60 percent of formal and informal employment (Republic of Kenya, 2013). It further provides 75 percent of raw materials that feed into the industrial production in Kenya (ibid, p. 51). As such it is a critical sector that government invests in. The Kenya Vision 2030 provides for agriculture as a key economic pillar for the country. Given the number of people, many of whom are in rural areas, who depend on the sector, it also holds a key weight on

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<sup>4</sup> The last national census was in 2009 and it established that Kenya's population is growing at an average of 1 million per year.

<sup>5</sup> The Constitution of Kenya provides this as the cut off age for youth. See Article 260

the legitimacy of the government including its re-electability. Thus given its significance, the successive governments have focused on improving the services rendered. Through the ministry, the national government facilitates production and marketing of products in the sector through capacity building, provision of technical services, research, and maintenance of standards. The sector's role has implications for national security and thus the more incentive for government's involvement in its performance. The services rendered are thus critical but equally difficult to quantify.

From the above considerations, the ministry provides a general case to assess the use of performance information in Kenya's public service. In line with the research question of how managers use performance information in decision-making as well as the factors that influence such use, I collected data from managers in mid-level management. This is because it is at this level that the day to day running of the ministry programs takes place. Given my interest in the cultural and infrastructural factors that affect the use of performance information as well as the political interest, demand, and support that characterizes the context, the manager's experiences need to be succinctly captured in their natural environment. Thus the managers at different levels are the units of analysis.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

Studies investigating managers' use of performance information have relied on managers' self-reporting (Hammerschmid et al., 2013; Kroll, 2012; Moynihan & Pandey, 2010). Some of the studies' focus has been to understand how performance management works, what kind of information managers collect and why they use it, levels of discretion by individual managers in choosing what to measure and how to use it (Fryer, Antony, & Ogden, 2009). In an effort to establish findings that can be generalized, most studies on performance information use have applied quantitative methods executed through surveys of managers and some interviews. Given that the phenomenon under study cannot be directly observed as it is a mental and cognitive process, scholars use the self-reporting of managers (Kroll, 2012; Van Dooren, 2006). I adopted this approach by interviewing the managers. The focus was with heads of directorates, divisions, and sections whose duty it is to ensure services are delivered and have to apply all resources,

including information for the same. The managers at each level (or their formal deputies) in the state departments were interviewed to get their perspectives. Two main instruments of inquiry were employed, interviews, and document collection. Both were undertaken at the same time with follow-up where required.

As one of the most common methods of data collection tools in qualitative research, an interview is an effective “way of accessing people’s perceptions, meanings, definitions of situations, and constructions of reality” (Punch, 2014, p. 144). Since I was interested in hearing the manager’s perspective on performance management in their own words, I opted to heavily rely on face-to-face interviews. Using a semi-structured interview protocol (See [Annex I](#)), I carried out in-depth interviews that allowed key actors in government and the specific departments to express how information use occurred in their sections and what factors were at play. This means that the case is captured in the voice of the managers. Interviewing managers in their work settings also enabled some aspects of observation as to where their offices are located and whom they interact with. In total, I interviewed 50 persons with management and supervisory roles in the state departments following replication logic so that similar questions were asked to managers at the same level. That is at three levels of the ministry, namely Heads of Directorates, Heads of Divisions, and Heads of Units/Sections. These were managers dealing with the technical aspects of the ministry which altogether is the service delivery work. Table 4 provides the number of interviewees at each level of management that data was collected from. [Annex III](#) provides more details on the interviewees.

**Table 4: Interviews at different levels of Management**

<b>Position/Level or equivalent</b>	<b>Number of Interviewees</b>
Director	17
Head of Division	20
Head of Section/Unit	13
<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>

Document collection was chosen to provide an extra source of information that could help authenticate and triangulate the verbal sources of information. Documents are also valuable where interviewees cannot recollect actual event details from the past. Performance management reforms entail the tracking of results through various reports some of which are published and others that are for internal use. In my case, most of the documents were not publicly available. I thus asked for relevant documents from each of the interviewees. That included performance contracts and work plans, program reports, performance evaluation reports, minutes of meetings, and briefing notes to senior executives in the ministry. A total of Seventy Nine (79) documents of different types were collected as shown in Table 5. Annex III provides more details on the documents collected.

**Table 5: Classification of Documents Collected**

<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Number of Documents</b>
Work plans and Performance Contracts	8
Minutes of meetings	12
Performance evaluation Reports	24
Program Reports	26
Briefing Notes	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>

*Process of Data Collection*

Data collection was organized in two phases as described hereafter. The first phase was for six weeks in July-August of 2016, the objective was two-fold. First, to interview officials (current and past) who played a generalist role of coordinating different aspects of performance management in Kenya and the reform initiatives pursued. I interviewed 15 persons in this phase with each interview lasting 30-45 minutes with one exception that lasted 12 minutes. Each of the interviews was recorded and later transcribed verbatim. For identification of further interviewees, I used a snowballing technique in which interviewees suggested who else I should talk too. The second objective of this phase was to make inroads into the specific case sites and

hence be able to plan an appropriate approach for conducting the phase two interviews. This included following up on the research permit (see [Annex II](#) for a copy of the permit) at the National Council of Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) which was necessary for an introduction to interview partners. Although I had applied and paid online as instructed, I had to go to the NACOSTI offices in person and make a follow-up. In total, the process took four weeks. Once I had the permit, I wrote to the accounting officer (the Principal Secretary) of each of the three state departments targeted requesting their permission to interview and obtain relevant documents from the respective offices and officers. In this letter, I listed all the offices and officers I planned to talk too. This was important as officers are always hesitant to talk to an ‘outsider’ especially researchers unless they were sure that there was support from ‘above’. I delivered the introduction letters to the offices of the Principal Secretaries in person.

The second phase of the study lasted five weeks in September-October 2016. It was focused on technical managers at the three state departments. I had only received feedback from the principal secretary of one state department, approving my request. I thus had to personally follow up (by going to the respective offices) with the other two at the start of the data collection. This already gave me some ideas of the informality involved in official processes, notwithstanding the service delivery charters that clearly show how much time such a process should take. Upon approval by the respective principal secretaries, the next step was seeking the contacts (office location, email addresses and phone numbers of the target officers). This was to prove a task too complicated than I had imagined or planned for. Finally, I managed to contact a total of 45 persons (15 in each state department) and interviewed 35 who accepted and were available. Two declined to be interviewed despite being in the very positions I was seeking opinions from. Three were not available and hence asked me to interview their deputies. One never showed up even after giving me an appointment. The rest never responded to emails or phone calls as to their availability and were thus deemed to have declined. Some just went silent after several phone calls of exploring the best times to meet. A general observation is that the number of women in the management positions is relatively small as of the 50 persons interviewed only 13 were female.



### **3.4 Data Reliability and Validity**

A key concern in empirical research is the validity of data. Qualitative researchers have employed a number of instruments and procedures to ascertain that the collected data is reliable and valid. While interviews with experts in the field have a potential to enrich the research, they can also create bias. This is because respondents will always want to present themselves in the best light possible. Qualitative researchers thus employ other methods of triangulation (Bryman, 2012; Punch, 2014). To verify the data, I relied on the documents and interviews with managers at different levels and with different roles. This provided second and third voices on the same issue. Distance with the respondents was maintained by ensuring that contact with them was for the sole purpose of setting up or conducting an interview.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Analysis of the data was guided by the main concepts investigated. I applied a dual mechanism in analyzing the data. That is manual analysis as well as the use of a software. First I conducted a manual assessment of the interview transcripts and collected documents to get a better feel of the data and organize it around the main themes. The primary focus was on interview data. This enabled me to be as close as possible to the data. Whereas I had specific concepts I was investigating, I also analyzed the data inductively to see what else it would reveal in relation to the research question.

This was hence the second step in which I used NVivo (Version 11) software for qualitative data analysis. The use of software had two advantages. It enabled me to better organize the data (Transcripts and documents) in one place and be able to link the information they contained. It further facilitated coding data on the provided frame of analysis in a way that the manual process could not have done. Through several rounds of coding, the researcher can move from specific statements of the respondents to general theoretical and empirical findings (Gioia, Corley, & Hamilton, 2012). This back and forth process between manual and software supported analysis helped to interrogate all aspects of the data. The results of this process are the content of chapters four and five.

### 3.6 Caveats of the Study

This study while using the methods of inquiry that are most effective for the aspects under study acknowledges certain limitations. The first has to do with interviews. Interviews, especially on a subject considered confidential among government officials, require some level of trust which is rather difficult to develop within the limited time of conducting data collection. Even then, there is the challenge of social desirability, where respondents seek to state only that which casts them and the organization in good light. This means that some respondents choose to stick to the official script and not state their own perspectives. I experienced this in a number of interviews albeit with varying magnitudes.

To manage trust concerns, I relied on snowballing where I asked past interviewees to introduce me to their colleagues by way of calling or taking me to their offices. In most cases, my referents gave me the contact of their colleagues instructing me to let them know who had referred me. Further having a copy of the research permit and the authorization letter from the respective Principal Secretary increased the willingness of the managers to be interviewed. This worked rather well.

A second limitation refers to the documents obtained from the resource persons during the various interviews. While not all interviewees provided documentary evidence, some of what was availed could not be verified in terms of validity. The reason was that most of the documents were only available with the specific officers responsible with occasional copies sent to the central registries of the respective state departments. I could not access the registries thus have had to work without those documents.

Thirdly is the limitation of generalization. Since the study covers the national public service in Kenya, it would be difficult to generalize the findings to other developing countries. However reading the studies available on performance related reforms in developing countries, the findings are more or less the same (Ni Putu et al., 2007, 2013; Schick, 1998).

A final limitation relates to the state of the interviewees. At the time of collecting the data, the ministry officials were still coming to terms with the devolution of functions that saw most of the work they did before transferred to county governments (decentralized units). This may have affected their morale and hence objectivity in discussing performance in the public service as many felt devolution had left them with no meaningful work.

## **CHAPTER 4: CONTEXT OF PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA'S PUBLIC SERVICE**

In this chapter, I present the context and details of the performance management in Kenya's public service. I deem it as necessary for an appreciation of the space in which managers engage with performance information which is the concern of Chapter 5. The information is based on secondary sources of data and where necessary primary sources from the interviews and documents collected. The chapter is organized as follows:

- In Section 4.1 the political-administrative structure of Kenya is presented
- Section 4.2 presents the structure of Kenya's public service
- Section 4.3 details a chronology of the performance oriented reforms in independent Kenya (1963 to date)
- Section 4.4 presents the current framework of performance management hence locating the context of performance information

### **4.1 Political-Administrative Structure**

Having been colonized by the British until 1963, Kenya's political and administrative system developed on the Westminster model of governance (Hornsby, 2012). Its first constitution was a federal system with powers shared between a national government and seven provinces. The national government was responsible for sharing financial resources to the provincial levels. The arrangement was short-lived as barely a year later (i.e. in 1964) the bi-cameral system was abolished through a constitutional change. The country reverted to a centralized government led by the president who was the head of state and government. The country had a *de facto* one-party state government from 1969-1982 and a *de jure* one-party state from 1982-1991 (Cottrell & Ghai, 2007; Department of Political Science and Public Administration, 2003; Hornsby, 2012). Continued and wide-scale demand for liberal politics saw the country revert to a multi-party system of state politics in 1991 when Article 2 of the constitution was amended (*ibid*).

The multi-party system under the old constitution lasted for about 2 decades. In 2010, Kenyans approved a new constitution that spelled a new dawn for a constitutional democracy with a devolved government. A key driver for the constitutional reforms, according to the chairman of the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC), was that the “the country’s problems were seen to arise from bad and oppressive governance, and lack of respect for the separation of powers and the rule of law. The agenda was defined in terms of democratization, protection of human rights of individuals and groups, devolution of powers, and social justice.” (Cottrell & Ghai, 2007, p. 3).

At the national level, the president and deputy president are directly elected and form the government by appointing the Cabinet Secretaries (CS) and Principal Secretaries (PS) for the different state departments. They are responsible for managing the functioning of the public service. Table 6 provides a brief review of the organization of the national government executive and especially the mode of appointment and role of the various offices.

**Table 6: Organization of the National Government Executive**

Level	Head and mode of Appointment	Role of heads at the various levels
National Government Cabinet	President and Deputy President who is popularly elected every five years and forms the government	Decides and directs all policy implementation
Ministry	Cabinet Secretaries appointed by the President with approval of the National Assembly	Responsible for policy formulation and ensuring that the government commitments for the sector are being fulfilled.
State Department	Principal Secretaries (PS) appointed by the president with the approval of Parliament. Recruitment process facilitated by the Public Service Commission (PSC)	Accounting officers of the state departments. Responsible for policy formulation, implementation, and reporting.
Directorate	Headed by Directors recruited and	Technical heads in the state

	appointed by the Public Service Commission	departments
State Corporations (also called Parastatals)	Have Boards whose members are appointed by the cabinet secretary of the responsible ministry. The Boards recruit the Chief Executive Officer	Handle specific tasks delegated to them by the 'parent' ministry. Have varying powers as allowed by the cabinet secretary.
Division	Headed by a head of Division appointed by the Public Service Commission	Responsible for more specialized functions within the directorates.
Sections/Units	Headed by a head of section/unit	Responsible for specific functions within the division

*Source: Authors reconstruction from field documents and interviews*

## 4.2 Structure of Public Service

The public service, (also referred to as civil service)<sup>6</sup>, is a central part of Kenya's political and administrative system. Broadly, it comprises of all persons employed by the government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) at national and county levels. This naturally extends to those persons working in state-owned enterprises though the differentiation in terms and conditions of service is significant. Kenya's public service has developed in tandem with the other aspects of Kenyan public governance structure. Starting from a foreign dominated system at independence in 1963 to the fairly developed and modernized system that it is today. A notable trend is that beyond just serving to deliver the aspirations of the Kenyan people, the public service has also been a mechanism used by the political elites to exert their influence among the different communities through appointments and employment opportunities, distribution of rents and ultimate entrenchment of their power (Hornsby, 2012).

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<sup>6</sup> In Kenya as in many other countries the distinction between the civil service and the public service is hard to establish. It is however notable that civil service was the term used until 2002 and thereafter the term used has been public service. While in some civil service refers to the core employees in the central government ministries and departments in other it includes those working in state corporations which are only part of public service.

Currently, the framework for public service is inbuilt in the Constitution of Kenya (Republic of Kenya, 2010). While Article 10 sets the national values and principles that guide public governance and service, it is Chapter 13 that addresses the key aspects of public service both at the national and county levels. It sets the values and principles of public service that include the observance of “high standards of professional ethics; efficient, effective and economic resources; and responsive, prompt, effective, impartial and equitable provision of services” (*Ibid*, Art. 232 (1) a-c).

The organization responsible for the civil servants, the Public Service Commission, is one of the oldest independent institutions since it was established in 1954 (Public Service Commission of Kenya, 2016). There are other bodies that deal with different categories of public servants such as the Teachers Service Commission (Art. 237), the National Police Service Commission (NPSC), the Parliamentary Service Commission (PSC), and the Judicial Service Commission (JSC). As for the county governments, each must establish its own public service within a framework of “uniform norms and standards” (Art. 235). A specific act of parliament provides for the establishment of the County Public Service Board (CPSB) to manage all aspects of county public service (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

#### **4.3 A Chronology of Performance Oriented Reforms in Kenya’s Public Service**

The journey towards an efficient and effective public service has been one of searching and trying, willingly or under coercion, different reform initiatives. These reforms have not all been internally initiated and driven as some have been part of conditions for obtaining development support from the developed countries and their financing institutions (World Bank, 2008). There have been constant reviews and changes with a hope of finding an optimal way of doing things. These changes have at times been so numerous that before a new system can be embraced another one is being initiated. This has been further complicated by the fact that with the 5-year election cycles, every new government (even by the same political actors) tries new approaches or simply drops what had been initiated before (Interview 005 & 006). To provide a better grip of the context, this section undertakes a chronological review organized around the five decades of Kenya’s independence. An overview is provided in Table 7.

### *The First Decade: 1960's*

This decade was preceded by a colonial period where the public service was organized around maintaining law and order for the advancement of the interests of the British settler community (Hornsby, 2012; Leonard, 1991; Public Service Structure and Remuneration Commission, 1971). Save for lower cadre jobs, there were no Africans in middle and senior managerial positions within the civil service. The interest of Africans until late 1950's was rarely a matter of public policy. While there was agitation for Africans to be represented and involved in public life, that was deemed a threat to the colonial authority and was silenced with detention without trial and any other coercive means deemed necessary by the colonial officials. The agitation of Africans and indeed the changing perceptions on colonialism led to increasing pressure on the British government to give independence to its colonies in the late 1950's to early 1960's. Kenya was among the last British colonies to obtain independence in 1963 due to what historian Charles Hornsby (2015, Kindle Locations 1184-1185) has termed, "a legacy of European settlement, powerful European interests and the Mau Mau war of 1952-6."

The independent government of 1962 was that of Kenya African National Union (KANU) with Jomo Kenyatta as prime minister and later as president in 1963. The rallying call was developing the country for Kenyans and by Kenyans with a specific focus on the eradication of poverty, disease, and illiteracy. Thus, upon independence, the Kenyatta government started off a process of Africanizing the administration. This meant ensuring that gradually the core public service was occupied by Kenyans and that there was a transfer of skills to this new personnel. There were two main levels of public service – national and local. The former was organized around ministries and departments of the national government and then later under local authorities. Taking over from the colonial structure, the local authorities had a significant number of functions. However, during the transition, their roles had been re-organized and their capacity weakened over time. This necessitated an inquiry.



**Table 7: Summary of Reform Efforts in Kenya's Public Service (1960s-2000s)**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Key issues faced by the public service</b>	<b>Reform initiatives</b>	<b>Reference Documents</b>
1960's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transition from Colonial to indigenous administration</li> <li>• Extending services to all parts of the Republic especially in the former native reserves where Africans were concentrated</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Africanization of the civil service</li> <li>• Training a professional cadre of staff</li> <li>• Strengthening the provincial administration for coordination of public service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sessional Paper No.10 of 1965 on African Socialism and its implications for planning in Kenya</li> <li>• Report of the Local Government Commission of Inquiry of 1966</li> </ul>
1970's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• External pressures on the economy e.g. Coffee boom and burst in 1973-77; Oil price increases crises in 1973/74; collapse of the East African Community in 1976/77</li> <li>• Notable decline or failure to develop the competencies in the public service</li> <li>• Increasing mixing of private business and public office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of a code of ethics to control abuse of public office</li> <li>• Review of the structure of the public service and the remuneration of the staff to curb petty corruption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Commission of Inquiry on Public Service Structure and Remuneration of 1971</li> <li>• Sessional Paper No. 5 of 1974</li> </ul>

1980's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Non-performing state corporations</li> <li>• Need to contain the wage bill</li> <li>• International trend of early NPM type of reforms that demanded liberalization of the economy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structural adjustments Programme</li> <li>• Freezing of employment in the public service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Report of the Civil Service Review Committee 1979-1980</li> <li>• Sessional Paper No. 1 of 1986 on Economic Management for Renewed Growth</li> <li>• Parastatal Reform Strategy Paper, 1989-1991</li> </ul>
1990's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dealing with the aftermath of SAPs</li> <li>• Good governance</li> <li>• Multi-party politics by law</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Service Reform Program aimed at cost containment, performance improvement, and sustaining gains</li> <li>• Reduction of civil service numbers through voluntary early retirement scheme and retrenchment</li> <li>• Privatization of state enterprises and trade liberalization</li> <li>• Performance contracting in state corporations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Civil Service Reform Strategy and Action Plan of 1992</li> </ul>

<p>2000's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Millennium Development Goals and Good governance focus in public sector</li> <li>• A non-performing economy and run down public sector</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction of wide-ranging public sector reforms e.g. performance contracting, rapid results approach, service charters, one stop <i>Huduma (service)</i> centers</li> <li>• Upscaling from civil service reforms to public sector reforms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation 2003-2007</li> <li>• Kenya Vision 2030</li> <li>• First (2008-2012) &amp; Second (2013-2017) Medium Term Implementation Plans of Kenya Vision 2030</li> <li>• Constitution of Kenya of 2010</li> </ul>
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*Source: Author's reconstruction based on available documents (Government of Kenya, 2003; Government of the Republic of Kenya, 1965, 1967, 2013; Obongo, 2009; Republic of Kenya, 2008a)*

In March 1966, President Jomo Kenyatta formed a commission to inquire into the local government system particularly the role, structure and relevance of local authorities (The Local Government Commission of Inquiry, 1966). While they looked at the local government in general, the commission also focused on the human resource and public service component. The commission deliberated and presented its report on the seventh day of September 1966. It found that local authorities were not only facing resource constraints but also had limited staffing and many of whom were poorly trained. The Commission recommended an immediate process of capacity building and matched with commensurate responsibilities in their respective local authorities. Not so long after the government established the public service salaries review commission that tabled its report in 1967 (Government of the Republic of Kenya, 1967). Its recommendations were adopted by the government through the Sessional Paper no. 10 of 1967 whose main aim was to harmonize the terms and conditions of staff in the public service (*ibid*).

#### *The Second Decade: 1970's*

After much pushing and pulling, the early 1970's were years of relative calm in Kenyan history. Historian Charles Hornsby (2015) has termed the period 1970-1974 as the 'golden years'. Appreciating that the reforms of the first decade had barely scratched the surface of entrenching an effective public service, President Kenyatta established in January 1970 the Public Service Structure and Remuneration Commission with a mandate "to examine and investigate into matters affecting the Structure and Remuneration of the Public Services including the daily paid workers, teachers, local Government staff, Police and Prisons, Judiciary and Statutory Boards, but excluding the Armed Forces and expatriate officers" (Public Service Structure and Remuneration Commission, 1971, p. iii). The commission was required to make recommendations while paying special attention to:-

- (a) The need to establish a structure and coordinated authority for the Civil Service which meets the requirements of an effective machinery of Government;
- (b) The need to improve efficiency and economy in administration;

- (c) The need to devise salary structures for the Public Services consonant with the capacity of the country to pay, but paying particular attention to each of the services; and
- (d) The need to devise new conditions of service appropriate to each of the Public Services.

The Commission commonly referred to as the ‘Ndegwa Commission’ after the name of its chairman Mr. D.N. Ndegwa had a high political weight necessary to speak to the issues of the public service of the day since its chairman not only held a very senior government position<sup>7</sup> but was personally a confidant of the president. The commission had six months to report on its findings as it was coming at a critical time when the government was trying to gain legitimacy after a long protraction from the Independence promises. The commission applied itself and delivered its report on May of 1971 (almost a year past its initial deadline of June 1970). The 300-page report went into great detail of what had happened to each of the areas of inquiry since independence and what needed to be done moving forward. It made a raft of recommendations covering civil service responsibilities and ethics; grading, salaries and other terms and conditions of service; structure and management of the civil service; and training. On performance improvement, it recommended that,

- “The present system of Annual Confidential Reports should be abolished and replaced by a modern system of performance appraisal” (par. 175-177);
- More regular informal staff meetings should be held to encourage two-way communications between management and employees (par. 183);
- Programs of Management by Objectives and Organizational Development should be introduced in the Civil Service in order to increase the effectiveness and improve the motivation of the Service (par. 202); and
- Further increases and harmonization of remuneration commensurate with the level of responsibility, and greater delegation of duties to officers below the permanent secretary was recommended” (Public Service Structure and Remuneration Commission, 1971, pg. 279-294).

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<sup>7</sup> He was at the time the governor of the Central Bank of Kenya

Worth highlighting was the commission's recommendation of a code of ethics and declaration of interests in private enterprise by public servants. However, it seems to have taken a rather soft, almost casual, stance on the key issue of integrity of the public service stating that it found nothing wrong with civil servants undertaking private business as long as this did not interfere with their public duty vide them observing a proposed code of ethics (ibid, par. 32, pg.14) . This leeway of allowing private business by public servants has haunted Kenya's public service to date as it effectively entrenched rent-seeking and corruption at all levels of the administration. Weak mechanisms of enforcing the code of ethics and changing styles virtual systems (mobile cash transfer etc) have complicated any attempt to monitor those going against the ethical stand.

On 22 August 1978, President Jomo Kenyatta died in his office in Mombasa. The vice president Daniel Arap Moi took over as per the constitution and later assumed office unopposed as president of Kenya. His ascension was opposed by many especially those from the former's ethnic community who saw him as a threat to their power and continued influence<sup>8</sup>. He thus faced a critical legitimacy concern which he addressed with, among others, seeking to win the civil service. To appease Kenyatta's supporters and seek greater legitimacy, he pledged to follow in the footsteps of his predecessor which in essence meant maintaining the status quo. In seeking how to engage the public service, President Moi established a committee chaired by Mr. S.N. Waruhiu (hereinafter referred to as the Waruhiu Committee) on 2<sup>nd</sup> of October 1979 to review the civil service. Its key mandate was to establish the extent to which the recommendations of the Ndegwa Commission of 1971 had been implemented. The committee, unlike a commission of inquiry, had limited power but a wide scope regarding what it was to achieve. The next section will discuss more on Waruhiu Committee's report as it holds great implications for what was to happen in the public service over the next three decades.

### *Third Decade: 1980's*

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<sup>8</sup> There was a move by mostly elite members of the Kikuyu community under the Change the Constitution movement that had worked tirelessly to bar the vice-president Moi from assuming the office of the president when the inevitable (death of the Jomo Kenyatta) happened. See chapter 6 of *Kenya: A History since independence* (Hornsby, 2012)

Independent Kenya entered the third decade with greater challenges that required a more robust public service. In this vein, the Waruhiu committee, after having its mandate expanded several times, presented its report in September 1980 with an indicting conclusion, “that in spite of the positive and far-reaching recommendations made by the Ndegwa Commission, its report was not fully appreciated and has therefore been widely maligned, distorted and in some aspects misrepresented ... the reaction of the Government to the Report was at best lukewarm.” (The Civil Service Review Committee, 1980, p. 7). That was to say that a whole decade of opportunity in addressing the recommendations of the Ndegwa Commission had been lost. Of interest to the performance of public service, the committee recommended more extensive use of computers to facilitate rapid processing and transmission of data; review of capabilities of each ministry to undertake its tasks; and initiation of a regular progress reporting system and convening of inter-ministerial meetings to appraise all development activities (*ibid*, par. 182). In what appears to be a move to remedy the damage caused by the Ndegwa Commission that allowed civil servants to engage in private business, the committee made hard sounding recommendations. In Paragraph 272 under what they termed “philosophy of the public service,” the committee proposed that:

- “All public officers be immediately required to declare their interests;
- All public officers be immediately required to resign from all directorships in any private and public companies unless they hold such directorships on behalf of the Government;
- Any public servant who is unwilling to declare his interests or to resign from directorships should be required to resign from the service immediately he indicates unwillingness to conform;
- Areas of investment in which members of the Public Service and their families can participate with the approval of the appropriate authority be clearly defined;
- Any public servant whose private interests extend beyond the areas recommended be given six months from the date of declaration during which time he should either conform to the new conditions or leave the service; and,
- An appropriate authority is established to approve investments by public servants and to keep a record of all such investments which should be reviewed annually.”

These were indeed strong recommendations, but as later discussions will show, nothing much was achieved as there has been no will to follow through enforcement of ethics especially where private (financial gain) is concerned.

Economically, the country entered the 1980's under severe strain following the oil prices shock of the late 1970's that left most economies strained. The boom and later burst of coffee and tea prices in the world market further worsened the situation given that these were Kenya's lead export commodities. Given that most enterprises and actors in Kenya were directly or indirectly owned by the state, the spiral effect was enormous. It was against this background that the Structural Adjustment Programs (SAP) were introduced which aimed at "lessening government control on the economy, recognizing and harnessing the potential of the private sector as the engine for growth, and staff retrenchment as a way of reducing the civil service wage bill" (World Vision Kenya, 2011, p.4). SAPs were conditionalities for continued development assistance from the Breton Woods institutions notably the World Bank (WB) and the International Monetary Fund (IMF)(Ondeng, 2008; World Bank, 2008).

#### *Fourth Decade: The 1990's*

Constrained by changes in the geopolitics<sup>9</sup>, President Moi accepted to liberalize the democratic space. This saw amendments in the constitution that made way for multi-party democracy (Cottrell & Ghai, 2007). These ended a decade-long oppression of opposing voices, especially in the civil society, academia, and media. The country went to the general elections in December 1992 with an air of anticipation for change at the top that would translate into better governance and improved services. This was never to be as President Moi, facing a highly divided opposition, won the general election (Fox, 1996)<sup>10</sup>. He thus continued his 14-year rule, but now

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<sup>9</sup> The cold war tensions had helped autocratic regimes and neo-patrimonial structures to stay in power as both the west and the east feared that such regimes would move to their opponents if destabilized. This was especially the fear of the west given their interest to manage the influence of communism. It's this conditions that saw Moi's autocracy survive the 1980's

<sup>10</sup> The election results were contested by the leading opposition Candidate Mr. Kenneth Matiba. The determination of the case was delayed and only delivered after about 4 years. The problem being that the law required the Mr. Matiba delivers the court sermon to president Moi in person who in the case was the accused.



within a multi-party context. Nothing much changed in the style of management of the public sector.

Kenya continued to implement the SAP's though they were achieving very little as they were externally engineered and did not consider the context of the civil service in Kenya. Instead of inspiring confidence and higher productivity, the reforms created fear and loss of morale especially due to the uncertainty of the jobs in the civil service. Continued decline in the public service led the Moi administration to design the Civil Service Reform (CSR) Programme in 1993. The reform program was informed by a study that revealed that the civil service was bloated and thus most resources were spent on the personnel and not on actual services being delivered (Interview 002). The CSR reform strategy document (1993 cited in Obongo, 2009 p. 69-70) thus noted,

“As the third decade of independence draws to a close, Kenyans are facing new challenges in economic management and public policy. Quality public services remain a priority, but cost considerations have become significantly more important. Not only must Kenyans needs be met, they must be met efficiently. Pervasive reform of the Civil Service is therefore required. In response to this imperative, a wide-ranging review of the structure and functions of the Civil Service has been conducted, and extensive recommendations and an action plan for reform have been developed.”

It was designed around three phases as shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: Phases of the Civil Service Reform Programme**

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Years</b>	<b>Focus of reforms</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
Phase 1	1993-1998	Cost containment	This period saw the implementation of retrenchment and Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme

Phase 2	1998-2001	Performance Improvement	There is little evidence to show that this was achieved
Phase 3	2002-2006	Refinement, Consolidation, and Sustenance of reform gains	This period coincided with a change of government and was substantially changed as discussed in the next sections

*Source: Obongo (2009); Remarks from Interview 002 & 004*

There is evidence that the first two phases did not achieve their objectives. For instance, cost containment through rationalization of staff numbers in the civil service did not achieve its targets as more teachers were employed and their salaries increased during the same period. This was because the KANU government, faced with an uncertain general election in 1997 wanted to get teachers<sup>11</sup> on their side. Further, while the salaries of the civil servants were a key part of the wage bill, other processes of ensuring efficiency in the use of funds were not addressed and thus minimal savings were done (Interview 002). Things continued to deteriorate including the economy whose performance went to an all-time low of negative growth (Government of Kenya, 2003).

### *The Fifth Decade: 2000's*

This section is unique for three reasons. First, it is a period of coalition governments. Second, it is the substantive period of wide scale internally driven performance oriented reforms. Thirdly, it covers a longer period (about 16 years) due to the intertwining of the actors and initiatives involved.

As the new millennium dawned especially with the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG's), Kenya was grappling with a barely functioning public service. The public anger and anxiety were rising. Hopelessness was high and the potential for conflict could not be undermined. In the year 2000, realizing the changing times and perhaps keen to end his

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<sup>11</sup> Teachers have played an elite role in most parts of Kenya, especially rural areas, they are thus very influential in determining the political decisions of their communities

presidency on a good note, President Moi made an attempt at the first ever coalition government. That saw KANU and Raila Odinga's National Democratic Party (NDP) merge into what became new KANU. Mr. Odinga was made the secretary-general of KANU and given a cabinet post as Minister for Energy. This did not last long for no sooner had the parties settled than the need to identify KANU's presidential flag bearer for the upcoming December 2002 general election became intense. To the dismay of the five main candidates, including long-serving Vice President the late George Saitoti, Raila Odinga, Musalia Mudavadi, Ronald Ngala and Kalonzo Musyoka, President Moi made a public endorsement of Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta as his preferred successor for the presidency. This precipitated great opposition by a large delegation led by the leading presidential contenders in KANU who left and formed the Rainbow Alliance (Hornsby, 2012).

All hope now seemed to hang upon the possible change of government if only the opposition would unite against Uhuru's candidacy (popularly called Moi's project). It was with this focus that Kenyans went to the general election in December of 2002. They overwhelmingly voted for the opposition coalition ushering a change of government from KANU to the National Alliance and Rainbow Coalition<sup>12</sup> (NARC), a united force of main opposition parties and politicians led by Mwai Kibaki<sup>13</sup>. As of 2002, the economic growth was at -0.2 percent (Government of Kenya, 2003). Services in most public institutions had deteriorated and there was widespread despair. It's in this state of despair that the country went to the general election in December 2002. The National Rainbow Coalition (NARC) led by Mwai Kibaki as the main opposition grouping facing the incumbent KANU, campaigned on a promise to rebuild Kenya. They offered to reverse the 40 years of mismanagement of the public sector.

Mwai Kibaki's NARC won the general elections having campaigned on a platform of change that inspired hope among many Kenyans. This effectively ended KANU's 40 years rule. In fact, the first NARC Minister for Planning and Development, Prof. Anyang Nyongo, in the preface of

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<sup>12</sup> The coalition was majorly of the National Alliance of Kenya led by Mwai Kibaki and Rainbow Coalition led by Raila and others who had left KANU after Moi endorsed Uhuru Kenyatta as the presidential candidate

<sup>13</sup> Mwai Kibaki had been a formidable leader of official position after emerging second in the 1997 presidential election. He was seasoned politician who had served as Minister of Finance in Kenyatta's government and as vice-president to Moi

the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC 2003-2007), observed that the past three decades had led Kenyans to the “abyss of underdevelopment and hopelessness ... poverty has increased, unemployment has become rampant, insecurity has visited almost every homestead, hunger is prevalent among the poor, the health condition of the people has declined significantly, while corruption and bad governance became entrenched as political oppression weighed heavily on the people” (Government of Kenya, 2003, p. v). It is this daunting state of affairs that the NARC government sought to address (Obongo, 2009). In publishing the ERSWEC 2003-2007, the government promised Kenyans “a better deal” (*ibid*, p.v).

A key conviction by the NARC government was that its change agenda as contained in ERSWEC 2003-2007 was most threatened by a dysfunctional public service unless they reformed it (Interview 004). In fact, Chapter 4 of the ERSWEC was dedicated to public sector reforms. Thus civil service was just but one component, albeit the main one. The other aspects were on reforms of local authorities, public enterprise reforms, regulatory reforms, reforms in statistical production and dissemination, and, competition law reforms. It took note that the previous decade had seen reforms undertaken to reduce the core public service from 272,000 in 1991 to 193,000 in 2002 through the Voluntary Early Retirement Scheme (VER), compulsory retrenchment and the impact of natural attrition due to the freezing of employment (Government of Kenya, 2003, p. 11). Little effect had been registered on the civil service which had now become “wasteful, inefficient...and a bottleneck to overall development of Kenya” (*ibid*, p. 11). It is on this basis that the NARC government committed to “accelerating the Public Service Reform to create a leaner, efficient, motivated and more productive Public Service that concentrates public finance and human resources on the delivery of core government services” (*ibid*, p. 11). The change of focus from civil service to the wider public service aimed at ensuring that the focus is not on “inputs and processes but on results and outcomes of public service” (Interview 002 & 004). Thus the language of results and performance became a part of public service in Kenya.

Specifically, the ERSWEC set to do the following in as far as improving performance of the public service was concerned;

- i. Accelerating the ongoing ministerial rationalization and developing strategic plans for ministries and department in order to allow for: proper utilization of resources on clearly identified core functions, determination of appropriate staffing levels, objective appraisal of staff, better and improved method of supervising staff based on achievement of set targets, among others.
- ii. Developing, introducing and institutionalizing performance-based management practices in the public service
- iii. Undertaking service delivery surveys in all ministries and departments and developing and installing service charters with clear service benchmarks and standards in order to enhance efficiency, transparency, and accountability in service delivery;
- iv. Carrying out an immediate and comprehensive benchmarking exercise to identify the minimum costs of delivering Government services and thus enable cost reductions in Government activities;
- v. Developing a clear recruitment and training policy aimed at ensuring proper supply and development of skills in the civil service and pegging promotion on both performance and training;
- vi. Putting all Permanent Secretaries (PS) and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) of parastatals on performance contracts; and
- vii. Establishment by June 2004 of a Permanent Public Sector Pay Review Board to ensure that from that point in time pay and benefits in the public service will be rationalized, market-oriented and performance based.

Following these commitments, discussions, and agreements were made at the cabinet (Document 7) and implementation commenced in 2004 with the introduction of Results Based Management (RBM) (Majeed, 2012; Obongo, 2009; Office of the Prime Minister, 2010). The government then argued that a results-based management system held the key to moving the focus of government officers to results of service delivery as indicated in high-quality outputs and

customer satisfaction. It was expected that the RBM would lead to a change of behavior in the public service, by creating an environment of *business unusual* (Government of Kenya, 2003). This involved changing how the public service operated. Implementation of RBM was supported by development partners notably a basket fund managed by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Kenya Office and a World Bank Grant (Interview 003, 004 & 012).

The key instrument adopted for results based management was Performance Contracting (PC) (Kobia & Mohammed, 2006). While there had been earlier attempts at performance contracting as piloted in the Kenya Railways Corporation (KRC) and the National Cereals and Produce Board (NCPB) in 1989-1991<sup>14</sup> (Document 041), they failed due to among other reasons, the lack of ownership and political will to drive the process as well as limited performance incentive system (Kobia & Mohammed, 2006). Thus with hindsight, the NARC government re-introduced Performance Contracting (PC) with a pilot in 16 state corporations in 2004/2005. When it was found to be working, it was rolled to all public bodies at national and local levels (Interview 002 & 004). Since then, annual performance contracts and appraisals have been developed, implemented and reports done in over 300 Ministries, Departments and Agencies at national and, since 2014, at the county level.

Aware that a results focus was very new to Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), the government started with a Rapid Results Initiative (RRI) in which MDAs focused on delivering a specific bundle of public goods, services and/or works within 100 days (Korir, Rotich, & Bengat, 2015; Majeed, 2012). This would be followed by reviews to establish what worked and what did not. The goal was to orient a lethargic public service towards results and delivering on medium to long term targets (Interview 004 & 005). Despite all the challenges with maintaining the coalition together, the NARC government pursued improvements in the public service. In 2007, the Kenya government was given the United Nations Public Service Award as an indication of great improvements achieved.

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<sup>14</sup> According to Document 44 and Interview 002, this was provided for in the Parastatal Reform Strategy Paper of 1991

However, politically all was not well. A key commitment of the NARC government had been to finalize the constitutional review process that was ongoing under the Constitution of Kenya Review Commission (CKRC) chaired by Yash Pal Ghai (Cottrell & Ghai, 2007; Department of Political Science and Public Administration, 2003). The National Constitution Conference (NCC) debated and produced a draft in May 2004. The draft went through subsequent changes in the National Assembly (NA) and the State Law Office (SLO). It was presented for a national referendum in November 2005. There was widespread belief that the draft presented had been ‘watered down’ and would not assure Kenyans of the governance they desired (Cottrell & Ghai, 2007). This precipitated differences within the NARC government. Thus, emerged the ‘YES’ group led by President Kibaki that supported and campaigned for the draft to be approved, and the ‘NO’ group led by Raila Odinga that was against the draft and campaigned against its passing. The referendum disapproved the draft and that also marked the official end of the coalition as the splinter group went on to form an opposition political party named Orange<sup>15</sup> Democratic Movement. That marked the end of the “alliance of convenience” of NARC (Hornsby, 2012, Kindle Locations 18787-18788).

#### *Grand Coalition Government, 2008-2012*

Political instability persisted and tension was high when the December 2007 general election took place. Massive irregularities characterized the election and hence upon the announcement of the results, there was full-blown conflict between the ethnic communities that supported the two main presidential candidates. It left over 1,000 people dead and over 300,000 displaced from their homes (Murphy, Wray, & Ramirez-Barat, 2015). An agreement that was facilitated by the panel of eminent persons saw the amendment of the constitution that created the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). Thus entered a special period of a Grand Coalition Government (GCG) with the two principals Mwai Kibaki as president and Raila Odinga as Prime Minister. Other key officials were Kalonzo Musyoka as Vice President, Uhuru Kenyatta, and Musalia Mudavadi as the deputy prime ministers and William Ruto as Minister for Agriculture.

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<sup>15</sup> The NO vote was symbolized by an Orange while the YES vote was symbolized by a Banana in the referendum

Of interest is that supervision and coordination of the public service were assigned to the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM). That included all aspects of performance management that had hitherto been located in the cabinet office under the Office of the President (OP). Thus the Public Sector Reform and Development Secretariat (PSR&DS) and Performance Contracting Division (PCD) moved to the OPM (Interview 004). For efficiency, there was an attempt to merge them into one body named Public Sector Reform and Performance Contracting Division under the permanent secretary for reforms. However, the arrangement was short lived as after a while the division was split into the Performance Contracting Division (PCD) and the Public Sector Transformation Department (PSTD).

In advancing the reform efforts pursued under the ERSWEC 2003-2007, the Grand Coalition Government (GCG) launched the country's long-term development plan, Kenya Vision 2030 and its first 5-year Medium Term Implementation Plan (MTP-I) of 2008-2012 (Republic of Kenya, 2008a, 2008b). This took effect in July 2008. To accommodate the interests of the two principals, Kenya saw the formation of the largest cabinet ever of 42 ministers. Of interest was the formation of the ministry of public service that took over from the directorate of personnel management. The Office of the Prime Minister followed through with the publishing of performance evaluation reports. The office also facilitated an official mechanism for engaging with external stakeholders through what was called the prime minister round-tables (Interview 002).

#### *Jubilee Government, 2013-2017*

In March 2013, the Jubilee Coalition (JC) of Uhuru Kenyatta's The National Alliance Party (TNA) and William Ruto's United Republican Party (URP) won the presidential elections. The two effectively became Kenya's first President and Deputy President under the new Constitution (Republic of Kenya, 2010). They formed their cabinet of eighteen ministers in April 2013.

The function of public sector reforms and performance management which had hitherto been in the Office of the President in the NARC government (2003-2007) and Office of the Prime



Minister in the Grand Coalition Government (2008-2012), was moved to the Ministry of Devolution and Planning (MoDP) (Office of the President, 2013). Related aspects of performance management that were assigned to this ministry were,

- Public service human resources management and development;
- Research, development and service delivery innovations;
- Public sector transformation including operational standards and process re-engineering;
- National development planning;
- Monitoring and evaluation of economic trends and development; and
- Office of management, budget efficiency and monitoring (*ibid*, pg. 4-5).

From a power nexus viewpoint, the ministry appeared third in command just after the presidency and the ministry of the interior. But as will be discussed later, the reforms were not yet at a point to be managed by a ministry as they still needed political muscle to push through particularly under a new framework that had drastically reorganized functions and powers in the public service. As one official observed, a ministry unless that of finance, cannot enforce reforms in peer ministries. Orders have to come from higher authorities. Secondly, by the institutions responsible for performance management being in a ministry, they inevitably contribute to its performance and thus it becomes difficult to claim to evaluate all ministries on the same basis (Interview 009).

It is perhaps the realization of this limitation that has since seen the function of public service performance management and monitoring moved to the President's Delivery Unit (PDU) which is headed by the deputy to the chief of staff in the Presidency (The Presidency, 2016). However, the related functions on public sector reforms and transformation including operational standards and process re-engineering were assigned to the newly created Ministry of Public Service, Youth and Gender Affairs (*ibid*). These changes were effected in May 2016.<sup>16</sup> It was not possible within the short time between the changes and the period of my data collection, to tell what the impact of these changes have been but as one official observed, they may restore the political

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<sup>16</sup> At the time of conducting the interviews for this study, the officials of the Performance Contracting Division were in the process of moving to The Presidency.

commitment and force that such reforms require to succeed. Notable is that in the life of the Jubilee government (2013-to date), no annual performance evaluation reports have been published. Apart from the Performance Contracts of 2013/2014, there has not been any further signing of performance contracts between the president and cabinet secretaries. Instead, a new model has been attempted that entails a presidential summit. The reorganization of government in May 2016 saw the creation of the Office of Performance Management (The Presidency, 2016).

#### **4.4 Framework for Performance Management**

The above chronology of reforms leads me to establish what the current framework of performance management in Kenya is. As already observed, the NARC government developed the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC 2003-2007) (Government of Kenya, 2003). This escalated Civil Service Reforms (CSR) to Public Service Reforms (PSR) with a focus on Results Based Management (Interview 002). ERSWEC was not a legal document but rather a development blueprint. Thus, for the adoption of performance management, the cabinet made a decision that was communicated in a circular as a cabinet memo No. 4-106 of 24 September 2016 giving it the legal weight it needed to be implemented (Office of the Prime Minister, 2010). In so doing, the cabinet was driven by the realization that reforming the public service was the way to achieving the ERSWEC objectives (Interview 004). To ensure that the government's policy was actualized, the Public Sector Reform and Development Secretariat (PSR&DS) was established and located in the cabinet office under the head of the public service and secretary to the cabinet. All ministries, departments, and agencies were required to implement performance management starting with the development of strategic plans and accompanying annual performance contracts. Thus, through the first 10 years of implementing performance reforms, the main documentation of a policy framework has been cabinet circulars.

In 2010, after 6 years of implementing RBM and particularly performance contracting, a Panel of Experts (POE) was appointed to review it (Document 041). It found that setting of targets had not been well coordinated and that the PC process was not in tandem with the budget process hence impeding on performance improvement efforts. Thus in 2015, the government introduced

sector performance standards to guide the MDAs strategic plans, annual development plans and performance contracts (Republic of Kenya, 2015). The Sector performance standards provide the specific indicators that each MDA is to work towards achieving. Further, the MDAs are required to base their performance contracts on approved annual budgets (Government of the Republic of Kenya, 2015).

Performance contracting provides a mechanism for measuring performance. Monitoring and evaluation are expected based on the targets set in the signed contracts. MDAs are scored on how well they perform against their targets. The coordination of performance contracting is done by the Division of Performance Contracting (PCD) under the Public Sector Transformation Department (PSTD). PCD provides the guidelines, builds the capacity of the public officials and also monitors the implementation and governance of the performance contract. They are expected to provide their reports quarterly and annually within 2 weeks after the end of the quarter or year. Each directorate draws its work plan from that of the ministry and these deliverables form the work plan and thus targets for the director. The director cascades their work plan to heads of divisions under him or her.

The organizational targets are committed to the director through the annual performance contract, while the individual targets are committed through the performance appraisal system. The linking of the two tools, that is, Performance Contracts and Performance Appraisal, has been weak due to a historical process of piecemeal introduction of different aspects of performance management. The reports are to be submitted to a specified number of oversight insight institutions. Of interest and what is barely available is what goes on in the MDAs in as far as the implementation is concerned. In summary, the framework of performance management entails the following stages as shown in Table 9.

**Table 9: Summary of Performance Management Framework**

Stage/Level	Type of Document	Details	Actors
<b>National development</b>	Kenya Vision 2030 5-year Medium	National goals and aspirations at sectoral	State Department for Planning; National

<b>Planning</b>	Term Plan Sectoral Plans	level	Treasury
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	3-5 year strategic plans	Specific actions for the MDA in relation to sector and national objectives	Cabinet and Principal Secretaries; Central Planning Unit
<b>Annual Budgets and work plans</b>	Annual estimates of revenue and expenditure MDA annual work plan	Details of expected income and planned expenses	National Treasury and MDAs Finance Divisions Principal Secretaries
<b>Performance Contracting</b>	Performance Contract	Identifies key deliverables for the MDA based on resource availability	Performance Contracting Division; Cabinet and Principal Secretaries; Central Planning Units
<b>Individual Work Planning and Staff Performance Appraisal</b>	Individual work plans; Performance Appraisal forms	Cascades deliverables for each staff in line with the department's objectives; PAS forms provide mechanism of evaluating individuals	Line managers; Directorate of human resource management and development; and Public Service Commission

*Source: Authors reconstruction from the data collected*

As shown in Table 9 several actors are involved at different levels and stages of performance management. Two of them are worth discussing in further detail given their key role in the state departments. First is the Central Planning and Project Coordination Unit (CPU) that is in every state department and is headed by the chief economist seconded from the Department

responsible for planning and national development<sup>17</sup>. The mandates of the CPU include the following (Interview 27) and related matters,

- i. Strategic Planning, development planning for national, sectoral, and ministerial issues. Now there are no more development plans at the national level but instead, there are medium-term plans for implementing Kenya Vision 2030.
- ii. Data Management including collecting and publishing annual performance reports such as the Economic Review of Agriculture (ERA).
- iii. Budgeting especially in providing information for undertaken projects.
- iv. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of projects, programs, and PC targets. Key is reporting on Vision 2030 through ministerial Annual M&E Reports. M&E is through a desk review and field visits.
- v. Coordinating Performance Contracting by setting targets and tracking results for CS, PS, Directorates, and Projects.
- vi. Assist in policy formulation

The CPU plays the coordinating role to ensure that all reporting respects the earlier established plans and that the departments are reporting on all aspects. The performance information generated by the CPU is largely from reports received from directorates and special project leaders. It is to be utilized by senior officials in the state departments but that is rarely the case. There are currently 24 such projects and each has its own reporting structure (Interview 027). Second is the Directorate of Human Resource Management and Development (HRM&D) that handles individual performance by managing Staff Performance Appraisal System (SPAS) (Interview 028, 041 & 049). The HRM&D has officers from the ministry and commission responsible for human resources in the public service. The overall body here is the Public Service Commission that is established by Article 234 of the Constitution of Kenya. The public service commission delegates its powers to the cabinet secretary of each ministry (Public Service Commission, 2015a). Such powers include the setting up of the Ministerial Performance Management Committees that handle the review of all Performance Appraisal Reports and makes recommendations for each staff.

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<sup>17</sup> Currently it's the state department of planning. See Executive order No. 2 of May 2016

## **CHAPTER 5: INTERROGATING USE OF PERFORMANCE INFORMATION IN KENYA'S PUBLIC SERVICE**

This chapter presents and discusses the findings on the nature of performance information use and the factors that could explain it. This is based on the data collected and analyzed as described in Chapter Three and guided by the framework established in Section 2.5. Where necessary secondary data is used. It builds and continues on the foundational aspects established in Chapter Four. It is organized as follows:

- Section 5.1 details and discusses the findings on sources and uses of performance information.
- Section 5.2 presents and discusses the factors that could explain the observed uses of performance information.

### **5.1 Source and Use of Performance Information**

The focal phenomenon in this study is the performance information especially its source and uses. This was investigated through interviews with managers at different levels of the public service. It did emerge that there is an appreciation that performance information was that which entails outputs and outcomes of programs.

#### **5.1.1 Sources of Performance Information**

To understand how managers source for and access performance information, it is important to establish how they relate to the process of producing performance information. Recollection from the interviews reveals that managers have the following general responsibilities towards performance information,

- To ensure annual implementation work plans for the area under their supervision is prepared in a manner that it can be tracked with clear goals for each quarter

- To assign duties to officers under them ensuring that each commitment in the work plan is acted on by a specific officer
- To follow up, receive and collate the progress reports from their staff
- To verify through credible means, such as field visits, that the performance information provided to them is valid
- To chair the review meetings at section, division or directorate where discussions on the progress made and challenges faced take place
- To recommend and in some cases make decisions on what should be done in their areas using the information obtained from the process of implementing
- To appraise the performance of their staff at mid-year and annually. This is the process of Staff Performance Appraisal System (SPAS)

Sources of performance information were described variously. They were mainly from tracking based on the annual work plan and performance contracts at organizational (section, division, and directorate) level and work plan and performance appraisal at individual levels. Such formally established reporting channels are on quarterly and annual intervals. One manager indicated that “Quarterly progress reports are prepared by each officer and these form the basis of the end of year report. The information presented is validated through the evidence provided.” (Interview 030). This was a position upheld by several other managers (Interviews 033, 036, 040 & 044). Another source of information is verbal presentations in regular meetings at the section, but mostly at the division and directorate levels (Interview 033, 036, 045 & 047). Other meetings are scheduled one-on-one meetings between a manager and an officer, to report on progress or debrief on a field activity (Interview 042 & 045). For field activities, there is a mandatory requirement to prepare a back to office report that also includes the accounting for imprest<sup>18</sup> (Interview 33). Reports prepared for externally funded projects are sent to the funding bodies and only reported as updates in the regular meetings.

Managers mostly use informal channels such as phone calls, walk-ins, corridor catch ups, and adhoc meetings to access performance information. For calls, the managers noted that this is

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<sup>18</sup> This is the cash that is advanced to an officer for expenses while at work outside the usual workstation.

mostly used where the manager and the responsible officer know each other in person. This is particularly because such calls are through private numbers as in most cases, official lines installed in offices no longer work (Interview 026, 033, 036, & 038). One manager also observed that since she has to approve most activities of the officers under her, the daily files (the in-tray) provide her with an indication of what is going on and thus she can anticipate what should be in the reports (Interview 047). In one division the manager reported that they were using a WhatsApp group although this was more for sharing quick updates than for gathering information (Interview 036)

As such the key platforms for use of performance information is in meetings, both group and one on one. In these meetings, the progress reports are explicitly discussed and necessary decisions taken or recommended, though this is not always the case (Interview 030). It becomes clear that reading reports rarely happens, instead, face to face conversations whether in large group meetings, one-on-one meetings, calls and debriefs or walk-ins are used to convey the report contents by the person who prepared them. As a consequence, a manager's presence in meetings becomes a critical part of their information access and collation work. One officer observed thus, "If you are not (or not represented) in a meeting, it is sometimes very difficult to get accurate information regarding what was discussed." (Interview 014).

Management by presence and meetings is further reinforced when reports have to be verified. Verification of projects, many which are located away from the ministry headquarters, is through site visits where the managers can see for themselves and talk to beneficiaries of some of the programs. Important to note here is that verification of the information remains the weak part in the process of obtaining performance information. As one interviewee noted "Verification of the validity of reports is difficult as there is no clear system. There are also no resources allocated for field visits." (Interview 026) Thus the reports and evidence provided by officers are taken as provided (Interview 030).

### **5.1.2 Uses of Performance Information**



Producing performance information is not an end in and of itself if a service delivery improvement is the goal. That information has to be used in day-to-day decision making if it is to be considered to have been effective (Kroll, 2015). Unfortunately, the performance information is not always used and when used, it may not be as desired. In Kenya, the main reason for performance management is to facilitate the achievement of the aspirations entailed in the Kenya Vision 2030<sup>19</sup> whose implementation started in July 2008 (Kenya, 2008b). Performance management thus provides a mechanism for committing deliverables to specific departments and tracking the progress of implementation (Government of Kenya, 2003). These goals are cascaded through the strategic plans of the departments that show how they (departments) will seek to achieve the goals in the medium term (see section 4.4). Tracking is thus for the purpose of establishing what has been achieved. One thus expects that the performance information would be used to learn what is working or not, to enable decision making on how to progress especially on the day to day implementation and to give account to the higher authorities on how resources are being utilized. Of concern is what then happens after the reporting.

A starting point is an observation by one manager who had worked in a coordinating agency for 10 years and noted thus,

“You are dealing with performance information and what I want to tell you sincerely speaking I cannot say so much that information which is generated from the performance management actually informs the decision-making apparatus of the ministries mainly at the top level. Maybe it is used to inform the middle-level managers of say the project manager who wants to know why we didn’t achieve this target. You know what went wrong and so on...in other words we are still focusing on fault finding as opposed to achievements...because for me if you are asking why didn’t we meet this target? This is what went wrong. It should also have the honorary question what did we achieve? ” (Interview 004)

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<sup>19</sup> This was preceded by the Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation (ERSWEC) in the period 2003-2007.

This interview already located that use was going to be expected in the middle management levels. Further, that such use seems to be perceived by the punitive sense of what has failed rather than what has worked. Hereafter, I document my findings on the key ways the managers reported that they use the information including their reservations where registered. The uses were resource allocation, policy advisory, rewards and sanctions, and Reporting to external bodies in fulfillment of the requirements. Also, provides some evidence of non-use of performance information. The discussion section will then attempt to reflect them to theoretical categories as anticipated in section 2.5.

### *Resource (Re) Allocation*

Managers have to regularly (mostly monthly and quarterly) make decisions on where the resources - human, technical and financial - should be applied. For this, performance information becomes critical. Use in resource allocation was most aptly captured in the following statement,

“Use of information is informed by the targets set that guide the performance appraisal. The comparison is made between actual and targets and then decisions made on how to remedy or get an explanation. This is jointly done with officers for ownership. Key is in assessing resource allocation for future planning. Evaluate if the implementation is per target and on time.” (Interview 043).

In the mid-year reviews, a key aspect includes adjusting the targets. This is also affected by the review of budgets through the supplementary legislation. Changes required on performance targets for the year have to be accompanied by proper justification (Interview 034). Notable is that there are challenges especially with use in allocating financial resources since budgets are mostly incremental and based on historical costs and yet to fully embrace performance information (Interview 042 & 045). On a positive note, one director indicated that there was increasing use of performance information in determining budget allocations. The director has to justify the results. He was of the opinion that in his state department up to 50 per cent of allocation was based on past performance. The challenge is the long learning curve that by the

time finance officers understand a department's work it's time for them to move to another docket (Interview 046).

Decisions relating to personnel include re-assigning work to different officers. This has to be done in consultation with the respective officers and has to be in writing (Interview 020, 026, & 033). Such writing is only done by the director or principal secretary. Heads of division and sections can only make recommendations to which they attach the supporting documents (Interview 023 & 025). They (heads of divisions and sections) communicate verbally to the respective officers but binding positions come in writing. Where financial reallocation is concerned, such as moving of budget lines, the manager has to consult the finance office after which the director can make the necessary reallocations (Interview 30). Steering and control are more common in special projects as they have objectives that must be met within a specific timeframe and have dedicated budgets (Interview 027, 040, & 042). In projects, resources and especially finances are not constrained as many are funded by international development partners through off-budget channels. This certainty of financing and the narrow focus of expected results have made projects an increasing favorable mechanism for delivering services by the government (Interview 020 & 022).

A matter affecting resource allocation, especially human, is ad-hoc activities that emerge in the course of implementation. This is common when political decisions are made and have to be prioritized above all other work. These are assignments that had not been provided for in the work plan and thus would fall outside what officers get appraised on at the end of the year. When such ad-hoc activities occur too frequently, then there is disruption of work due to limited resources, especially on personnel (Interview 027 & 030).

### *Rewards and Sanctions*

A key aspect of performance management is that it should be accompanied by a mechanism rewarding performance and sanctioning non-performance (Government of the Republic of Kenya, 2015; Public Service Commission, 2015b, 2016). This is inbuilt in both the performance contracting framework and the staff performance appraisal system. On performance contracting,

since the results are organizational, so should the rewards and sanctions. The former (rewards for organizational success) has been easy to effect but the latter (sanctions) is difficult. This owes to the fact that while all people want to be associated and rewarded for success; no one wants to take responsibility for failure. Organization-wide rewards and sanctions were implemented in the initial years of performance management reforms. Most respondents at the ministry studied indicated how in 2006, they each got a 13<sup>th</sup> salary (bonus) after their ministry was ranked first in the evaluation of the implementation of the performance contracts of the 2005/2006 financial year. However, this rewarding practice seems to have ended after only two years of implementation (Interview 013 & 027). They speculated that this could have been due limited resources after the change of government in 2007/2008 that saw the expansion in the number of ministries.

On individual performance as evaluated through the PAS process, there are also expected rewards and sanctions. After managers have submitted the PAS reports they are compiled for review by the Ministerial Performance Management Committee (MPMC). The MPMC meets quarterly and considers the reports on individual performance and makes recommendations for promotion, further training or sanctions (Interview 028). Their recommendations are sent to the cabinet secretary and permanent secretary to make the necessary decisions (Interview 038). For job groups, H and below the promotions and sanctions are to be effected internally, but for job group J and above the recommendations are sent to the Public Service Commission. Notable is that there has not been any other form of rewards save for salary increase as a factor of promotion.

Indeed managers did indicate that the information is used when decisions on promotion are being made (Interview 008, 018, 019, 045). One manager emphasized that decisions on promotions are based on performance where those performing well are given available opportunities for promotion (Interview 019). Of course, there are other factors considered such as suitability, experience and years in service. In fact, an application for promotion must include an officer's performance appraisal reports for three consecutive previous years (Interview 028).

Use of PAS information is still suboptimal and while such information should form part of management discussions, it was not explicitly so (Interview 049). A key concern is that given the high stake of promotions, the information is often manipulated, subjective and thus not a true reflection of an officers progress (Interview 043). In addition, not all details are acted upon. For instance, PAS has a space for recommending staff for rewards and sanctions but this is not always utilized (Interview 020, 021, 033, & 039). It seems that only monetary aspects of the reward are considered and other means such as letters of commendation are not pursued either (Interview 031). This is with the exception of the presidential commendations and the public servant of the year award which only benefits very few people and mainly those at senior management levels across the government (Interview 038 & 050).

One manager observed that rewards and sanctions have been difficult to implement because for one to be rewarded they must have surpassed their targets (i.e. achieved more than 100 percent of targets) and yet this is always affected by other extraneous factors such as space of facilities, available resources, and the commitment of other stakeholders. This has the reverse effect of making sanctions difficult to implement (Interview 039 & 046). Also, for fear of reprisal, supervisors rarely appraise their juniors poorly (Interview 049). Even when there is ground to sanction, the process is complicated by the rules and regulations for disciplining an officer in the public service. It's very cumbersome to discipline an officer and thus only extreme cases such as total abdication of duty get acted upon (Interview 031, 032, 033, 038, & 040). Further, while such matters would be referred to the director for action, the powers to act are rather limited (Interview 042). Rewards through promotions depend on the availability of vacancies but delays have characterized this as the government had for a long time frozen employment. Thus when a vacancy opens up it is not necessarily filled up. Common practice is to appoint an officer in an acting capacity and this can last for months. In other cases, an officer moves to the higher position but stays on their current grade of employment (Interview 23 & 39). "The fact that there are no rewards for performance and no sanctions for poor performance demotivates the hard working people and creates no pressure on the lazy ones ... most hardworking staff are kept in the office while the lazy ones get opportunities to travel as their presence *in the office* makes no difference", observed another interviewee (Interview 048, italics added). In July 2016, the

Public Service Commission (PSC) published guidelines meant to facilitate the mainstreaming of rewards and sanctions in the public service based on the performance appraisal results (Public Service Commission, 2016). This is expected to make the process easier to implement (Interview 010).

### *Reporting to External Bodies*

An almost taken for granted form of use is that the performance information is used to prepare reports in accounting to external bodies on progress. This is mostly to parliament, development partners funding specific projects and recently to the Presidential Delivery Unit (PDU) (Interview 019, 027 & 042). Reports on projects to development partners follow strict templates and are mandatory. In some especially those funded by the World Bank an electronic system is used to prepare and submit the reports. External evaluators would then follow to verify the contents of the report (Interview 029). Reporting is also common in high and politically sensitive projects such as fertilizer subsidy project, strategic grain reserve and, recently, the crop and animal insurance projects. For such projects, the use of information is highly prioritized and in fact is an agenda item at the weekly meeting of the state departments (Interview 027)

Most reporting passes as an act in fulfilling the requirements. It serves a purpose though for, in an increasingly open environment (credit to computerization), managers need to be seen to be doing something. It is in this state that measuring and use of information are undertaken purely to comply with the requirements. Officers prepare work plans, performance contracts, and appraisal documents that they later don't follow or refer to (Interview 023 & 047). When the reports are prepared, they are sent to the relevant higher office and then filed away. Officers responsible for coordinating performance management, monitoring and evaluation in the state departments were unanimous that they prepared detailed reports on various projects but no one was interested (Interview 027, 040, & 048). One manager indicated that "sometimes officers only fill the PAS forms when there is an advertisement for a promotion that they are interested in applying for" (Interview 036). In such a state, reporting becomes an end in itself and thus the only achievement made is compliance.

### *Policy Advisory*

A key role of everyday work in the bureaucracy is to implement the policies of the government of the day. The expectation is that future decisions are based on past performance as per the available performance information. Managers indicated that the information is used to inform policy especially on key areas of service delivery (Interview 018, 019, 036, & 044). An example of use in policy advisory is where “food security information on stocks of maize is used to establish when to release strategic stocks, repositioning of stocks, and provision of relief to hunger stricken areas” (Interview 019). Other cases are where policy advice is required for county governments to take action such as where there are changing weather patterns that could affect crops and animals (Interview 032). Use in policy decisions is particularly common “when there are high political stakes involved such as in the case of large-scale subsidy projects” (Interview 027, *italics added*). Of significance is that the more specific a report is, the more likely its information will be used. This could explain the increasing relevance of service delivery packaged as specific projects (*ibid*).

### **5.1.3 Discussion of Findings**

The findings reported in the sections above (see 5.1.1 and 5.1.2) show that managers use performance information in various ways. In discussing the findings on managers’ use of performance information, I revert and relate them to the theoretical expectations developed in Table 2. They are informed by Moynihan’s (2009) in combination with Van Dooren et al. (2010, 2015) categorization of dimensions/types of performance information use i.e. passive, purposeful, political and perverse use. The categorizations are here used not in the strict sense as empirical evidence shows that they categories are not clear cut and often overlap.

#### *Passive Use*

The most basic form of use is termed passive as it entails only fulfilling the requirement to measure and report performance information (Moynihan, 2009). I had anticipated finding that performance information is just for compliance and no effort is made to use it. The findings

confirm that indeed information is reported and hence available when need be. Given the history of opaque government operations especially before the year 2003, the very availability of information is an encouraging finding. The findings also indicate that the exercises of reporting are done to achieve the least acceptable level of compliance and this raises questions as to the quality of the information and even the manager's commitment to any use in the future.

The passive use could be as a result of the hierarchical structure of the public service where decision making is reserved to those in the higher ranks. Listening to the managers, one notes that there is always hope that the senior officer will use the information. The buck-passing goes on to the level where the information is of limited value and may be impossible to use. Of course one cannot rule out tendencies of blame avoidance where managers would rather do nothing than taking the blame for things gone wrong. Another reason could be the very overlapping of reporting and opportunities for use. This is where the reporting takes so long to complete that by the time the reports are available the decisions such as budgeting or planning that they were meant to influence have already been made. Thus it is a good move but coming too late. Also where managers get the sense that effort to use information makes no difference then they are likely to handle it passively. Thus, they maintain the path of business as usual to avoid the disruptions that new ideas would bring to their work.

### *Purposeful Use*

The expected and indeed desired the use of performance information is what has been termed as purposeful use. This is the deliberate and planned utilization of the information to, among others, review service quality and assesses costs for service delivery. The information can be used to learn what works or not, steer and control the organization's programs and accounting for resource utilization. I find evidence of purposeful use especially in reporting to external bodies, policy advisory, resource allocation and rewarding. Purposeful use seems to be more prevalent in specific projects especially those that are externally funded. As within the core public services, use is more by chance than by design. The findings indicate that while information is used, it is not consistent. Such inconsistency could either be attributed to deliberate bias where use occurs



if it fits and is convenient to one's interests. The fact that there are traces of purposeful use such as when making decisions on next programs or in the promotion of staff is a positive move for it does indicate that such efforts can be incentivized and thus facilitated.

Purposeful use had been anticipated as happening through learning, steering and control, and accountability. Learning as a reflective process of looking at the past to inform the future can be single or double looped (Van Dooren et al., 2015). A single loop is where information is considered and utilized but does not go deeper into changing the values and way of life in the organization. The latter is the domain of double looped learning. From the evidence in this study, it does emerge that single looped learning is the kind of learning in practice. There is limited evidence of the existence of learning forums or any equivalent arrangements for managers and their staff to reflect on what the performance data means. What exists are opportunities for reviewing individual performance as part of the participatory aspects of the PAS process. This form of learning is what is evident in the performance appraisal process for rewards and sanctions but very limited in resource allocation. This is surprising as one would expect that there would be greater learning that is towards how resources are allocated especially in times of the ever increasing demands. As will be discussed in section 5.2, resource allocation has continued on the basis of historical costs and is thus incremental and not based on performance. In fact, when based on performance, it is often that resources are moved from well-performing programs and allocated to poorly performing ones or newly established ones. For instance, where an officer has performed well, they are often transferred to a poorly performing institution to 'revive it'.

Steering and control are expected for the day-to-day management. In this study, that would be in resource allocation and policy advisory. However, it has been noted that use in this sense is not consistent and even then, there is no firm evidence that the day-to-day work applies performance information. The work entailed collecting, collating, and reporting performance information which is a fairly cumbersome process meaning that it is rarely available for the day-to-day administration. As a daily process, steering and control habits becomes the case of fish in water; that is the last thing the managers notice. A lot is taken for granted and embedded in routines that

become hard to adjust to the mere presence of performance information.

Lastly, the use of performance information in giving account was observed. In a way, since both individual and organizational reports at different levels are prepared and submitted to the senior managers, an accounting obligation is met. At an individual level, every officer has to provide an account through written and verbal reports to their supervisors (managers), at the least during the quarterly performance appraisal, and this ensures that they are held accountable. At the organizational level, reports on performance contracting are prepared and sent to the relevant offices but it's not clear how this is used to hold them accountable. This is particularly so in the current state when the focus on performance contracting has been on the decline. It would thus appear that reporting is decoupled from the main processes of accountability which could then be done through budget controls. As the officers responsible did indicate, the evaluation reports are routinely filed and rarely looked at. Giving account raises focus on the mechanisms in place between the principals (politicians) and the agents (bureaucrats in the state departments). In this case, use of performance information would be prominent where the interests of the principals are aligned to what is planned and stated in the work plans.

### *Political Use*

In the political sense, performance information is used selectively to support in advocacy especially because the managers have discretion on what they measure. As shown in the findings, it is the responsibility of the officers to prepare their reports and in so doing show what they or their units have done in the period under review. This self-promotion means that they can shape the narrative of performance by what they choose to include or leave out in their written or verbal reports. In this unique context where informal systems underlie the formal system, ability to promote one's work and negotiate for resources becomes a critical competency requirement. Competition for limited resources and opportunities further increases the need to be politically savvy.

### *Perverse Use*

Perverse use occurs when managers engage in gaming and cheating. Information is collected and used for the intended purposes. This may include hoarding of information for personal gain. From the interviews, it emerged that gaming was most rife when the intended use was for individual rewards especially through promotions and other financial gains. PAS reports were noted to be normally manipulated to reflect well on a person's career advancement prospects. This does not rule out corrupt ways of gaining such rewards, especially where the officer is holding brief for higher political actors, and is a means for the capture and distribution of rents. This was expected where the line between public and private wealth is unclear as is the case in a neo-patrimonial state where rule of law is not enforced. In such a space where competition for power is rife, information becomes a source of power and whoever has a fair share of it can command allegiance even when they are not high up in the hierarchy. In cases where the gain is to avoid a sanction, the reports get accordingly manipulated to show that all is well.

## **5.2 Factors Influencing Managers' Use of Performance Information**

In this section, I present and discuss the findings on the factors that I anticipated could explain the use of performance information by managers in Kenya's public service (see [Section 2.5](#) and especially Table 3 for a detailed presentation of the research assumptions and expectations). The factors are political will and leadership; organizational capacity; administrative culture; and interests, attitudes and perceptions of managers.

### **5.2.1 Political Will and Leadership**

Scholars of public sector reforms are unanimous that leadership, especially by the political class, matters (De Lancer Julnes & Holzer 2001; Wang & Berman 2001; Moynihan 2006). When the politicians and senior executives are interested and have an internal drive to make a change then they will apply the various state resources and apparatus accordingly. There is evidence that the

central pillar explaining the direction of performance management in Kenya is the political will and leadership. As one manager observed,

“The fact that *in 2003* we had a new government coming on board..., then the Economic Recovery Strategy is adopted, and they are grappling with how to get it to deliver...and hence why Nyamweya’s<sup>20</sup> position was created. And looking at partners who are interested in supporting *such reforms*...so it was a case of Government will meeting with development partner’s interests.” (Interview 005, italics added).

As a matter of fact, RBM was adopted and made initial progress as it was based at the center of government, that is, the Office of the President. It was clear that there was political interest and a push from the highest office (of the President) and therefore things moved. Further, there was the availability of resources – financial and technical – through the basket fund managed by UNDP and World Bank Grant (Interview 002, 003 & 012). Nyamweya’s team leveraged on this support and political will because it was clear that “if you don’t have that perceived proximity to power, whether actual or real, then the people you are dealing with may not prioritize that and in any case there would be mixed messages of different urgent things coming up and this falls off by the way. It just doesn’t get done.” (Interview 005). Thus the civil servants were put on their toes. For instance, there were weekly reports by each officer that were due on Fridays. The compiled reports would be discussed and reviewed at the Monday meeting of the big five in the ministry namely the Permanent Secretary, Agriculture Secretary, and three directors, after which a report would be sent to the cabinet office (Interview 026). The demand for performance was supported through resource availability and incentives. Promotion of public servants was done, and terms of service improved. Workspaces, offices, and equipment were refurbished and modernized (Interview 038 & 045).

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<sup>20</sup> As presented earlier Joyce Nyamweya became a special Permanent Secretary in the office of the president whose responsibility was to facilitate Public Sector Reforms and Development. She reported to the Secretary to the Cabinet and Head of the Public Service.

Over the years such interest and support have been on the decline. For instance, in the last three years, the president has not released the Performance Evaluation Reports (PERs) and that has sent a message of little political interest in the performance evaluation (Interview 008). It is thus notable that commitment to performance focus is waning and not taken as seriously as was the case in the earlier periods (Interview 034). From a power nexus perspective, one also observes that coordination for performance related reforms has been moving further from the centre of power. See Table 10 for a depiction of the location of the coordination unit.

**Table 10: Location of Performance Management Coordination Secretariat**

<b>Period</b>	<b>Government</b>	<b>Location of Coordination Secretariat/Unit</b>
2003-2007	NARC Government	Office of the President
2008-2013	Grand Coalition Government	Office of the Prime Minister
2013-2015	Jubilee Alliance	Ministry of Devolution & Planning
2015-2016	Jubilee Alliance	Ministry of Public Service, Gender, and Youth Affairs
2016- up to date	Jubilee Alliance	Office of the President

*Source: Recollection from the data*

It is notable that the current government has already moved the coordination of performance reforms to different ministries two times. The move to a ministry (considered a downgrading of its importance) was a message that it was no longer an important political matter. However, after three years of administrative challenges, the Performance Contracting Division has now (2016) been moved back to the office of the president under a new name Office of Performance Management (Interview 010; The Presidency, 2016). This could have been in the realization that the reforms were not yet at a point to be managed administratively. In search of the reasoning behind these changes, one officer informed me that the current government has been using a different format of setting targets in what has come to be called ‘the presidential summits’ where

the key priority areas and performance targets are agreed on and then their implementation tracked by the Presidents Delivery Unit (PDU) (Interview 038).

Political interest in the sector studied and work of the state departments has been a mixed bag. The many reforms undertaken have been haphazard. The latest one of merging most state corporations under the Agriculture Food and Fisheries Authority (AFFA) is one such reform that according to two managers interviewed was not well thought out (Interview 020 & 023). It now undertakes work that should be undertaken in the ministry. Livestock did not accept the reform and now Fisheries are pulling out, leaving only Agriculture and Food (Interview 023). That said, political interest is growing on fisheries as it is seen as a strategic area of growth. There is even a new legal framework being developed named the Fisheries Management Bill 2016 (Interview 046). At the local level, this interest has been more disruptive especially in the fisheries subsector. Following devolution of government in 2013 the sub-sector has seen new actors at the county level who do not necessarily understand fisheries and thus do not enhance its management. In some cases, there are Members of County Assemblies (MCAs) who are former fishermen who want to protect their interests in the guise of representing their constituents. As such, exploitation is encouraged over conservation as they will not approve of any measures aimed at the long-term interests (Interview 044).

Politics and the private interests that go with it is at times also a cause of interference in service delivery. Some desired outputs are very political and thus hard to keep pace with. A case in point is the demand by politicians to have milk coolers<sup>21</sup> supplied to their areas even when the production does not justify such investments (Interview 032). A long-serving manager observed, “All politicians want is to be seen to be doing something for their constituents even when it makes little technical and economic sense” (Interview 037). In other cases, the politicians and their business partners seek to circumvent rules or interfere with the process of administration. Several examples were highlighted (Interview 037). First was a case in which meat imported from Brazil was denied access into the country yet some politicians were intervening to have it

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<sup>21</sup> In hot and humid areas, milk goes bad quickly before it's collected for delivery to the central processing centers. Thus milk coolers are supplied for a cluster of farmers to temporarily store it. Given the visibility of this good supplied (subsidized) by government it has become of great political importance.

allowed in. Given their power and access to the minister, they make their case more profoundly than a public servant further down the hierarchy. A second case is where in the year 2003, an officer in charge of public health in Nairobi province (now Nairobi City County) closed a famous meat market on health grounds. The traders complained to the minister and instead of the decision being sustained, the officer was transferred to a different workstation. The third case was where the same officer was involved in the work of reviving the failed Kenya Meat Commission (KMC) located in Machakos County and again allegations of political interference due to interests in the importation of meat products arose. The manager who shared the above examples concluded that “the link between policy and business creates a lot of conflicts that makes the work of civil servants rather difficult” (Interview 037).

### *Stakeholder Involvement*

Investigation on the extent to which there is engagement with the external stakeholders and particularly the citizens did not reveal any credible findings. Managers pointed that while there is a need for public engagement in the processes of service delivery; this was still being developed and was more the role of the local governments (Interview 006 & 027). Thus external pressure, especially from citizens, seems to be limited at the management levels of the ministry. This can be understood for the involvement of stakeholder also means an obligation to be transparent and accountable to them. In a neo-patrimonial context, this becomes difficult especially because information has to be kept confidential. The result is the selective engagement of stakeholders with the most powerful ones getting more footing. This is the case with international development partners, whose role is evident as they provide resources for most of the projects that are undertaken in the government (Interview 027). This power of the purse means that they can compel politicians and senior executives to pay attention to reforms, even if for the short term (Interview 008).

### *Incentives for Performance Management*

An expressed aspect of political will and leadership is the incentives the managers get to measure

and use performance information for improved performance. From the data collected the issue of incentives, appears to be one of inconsistency. As one manager observed, “Leadership matters but it’s the individuals who have to commit to doing something and this only happens when they have sufficient incentives” (Interview 026). At the start (around 2004-2005) of the performance oriented reforms, a key drive was to establish transparency and accountability especially among public servants on their work and use of public resources (Government of Kenya, 2003). Coming from a long period of secrecy and poor administration, there was a public outcry for a change and thus the NARC government was hard pressed to create a new norm (Interview 003, 014). In fact, the reform initiatives were packaged as “Results for Kenyans: *Huduma Bora Haki Yako (Good service is your right)*” (Document 051 & 053). This was modeled after the results for Canadians program (Interview 014)

According to one former senior executive in the NARC administration, the key incentive for performance oriented reforms was to create a sense of responsibility. He noted thus,

“The biggest incentive was, you see, any time you introduced new performance measures, they were not measurable and in order to measure, you had to find a way of cascading policy to the smallest unit. And that made everybody responsible. You see, as an accounting officer you want to know what everybody is doing, whether they have done it, what are the objectives you want to meet, and that is the reason performance was good in the sense that you were able to cascade much of the duties to the smallest unit.” (Interview 011).

Creating responsibility seems to have been in the spirit of NPM-type of reforms that insisted on giving managers the autonomy as long as they agreed to certain deliverables through a contract (Hood, 1991; Manning, 2001; Schick, 1998). To incentivize staff to this new way of doing things, terms and conditions of service were improved, promotions that had been pending for years were effected and work environments were improved (Hornsby, 2012). The improvement of salaries and systems of work was largely meant to reduce corruption. The greater focus on



capacity building through training, exposure visits abroad and the pursuit of graduate education was encouraged and has continued to be used as a way to incentivize managers and their staff (Interview 020). When there are resources available, then officers can be supported for further training especially in international places that provide exposure but mostly, the appeal is to officers' own motivation as a key incentive (Interview 045).

That said, there is an opinion that the incentives for performance are low and declining. An officer observed that the current government demands a lot of reporting through the Presidential Delivery Unit (PDU) but provides limited facilitation and incentives to officers (Interview 027). The framework for managers to incentivize their staff is lacking and all one can do is appeal to the staff to serve out of a desire to make their country better (Interview 021 & 042). That said, one manager noted that there are currently more opportunities for technical training given that there is less work at the national level since the implementation is at the county level (Interview 021). However, it did not emerge clearly the intended outcome of such technical training is for a staff that is fairly aged, almost retired, somehow demotivated, and far removed from the actual work of providing technical services in the sector. Of course, as one officer noted, the work at the national level has changed from implementation to facilitation through policy formulation, setting standards and monitoring national goals. These are not skills that staff were trained for and hence could justify advanced training (Interview 019).

### **5.2.2 Organizational Capacity**

The centrality of capacity to effectively follow through performance management reforms is indisputable. A key concern is in the quality, timeliness, and relevance of the capacity developed. Notable is that building capacity to implement and sustain the reforms is often not the only thing that governments burdened by service delivery have to worry about. Further, the long-term focus that capacity development entails is a challenge for governments that experience changes in rather short life cycles. There is such a quick turnover of initiatives and persons that barely anything gets established and institutional memory gets lost with every turn made (Interview 006). Learning of what (does not) work is thus compromised. This position is captured by the

remarks of one manager at the Public Sector Transformation Department (PSTD) who observed thus:

“We have not been able to really form the teams that I think is an ingredient of performance management, and this again is the dynamic nature of the public service, that these teams, my experience has shown that it takes roughly five years for them to chair and start working together and that is the time that they are usually again split through elections and new people coming in. That has been a challenge to us. The other one is where reforms for any new administration, starts as if it is something new. So you have to restart all over again” (Interview 006).

Capacity building was a component of the Results Based Management initiative (Document 027). There was training at the beginning of the reforms which seems to have been the ‘spray and pray’ type where masses of civil servants are sensitized on the reforms with the hope that they will follow through despite no meaningful and detailed skills developed. Thus notes one manager:

“Yes, we were trained. Several years back when it was being introduced, we were all trained. Then at the departmental level, we were trained on how to go about it. Because you must understand it fully as you cannot manage it if you don't understand it. Because it involves how to report a performance contract and how to help people understand how to work on their individual performance contracts” (Interview 001).

The trainings were and continue to be facilitated by the government training institute as was reported by a former officer at PSR&D, “to build the capacity of public servants who actually implemented RBM, the PSR&D Secretariat approached Kenya Institute of Administration (KIA) to give some officers to work on the Secretariat for purposes of building the capacity of the public service for reforms” (Interview 004). The Kenya School of Government (KSG) (that took

over from KIA) has continued to offer the demand driven performance management courses “offered annually but is not a must for all staff as it is not a pre-requisite for promotion, though it is at times used to make promotion decisions by the PSC.” (Interview 050). In tandem, some officers were identified and trained through the RBM Champions program that was facilitated by IDEA International (Interview 004)<sup>22</sup>.

Noting this general observation of capacity, I found four interrelated areas of capacity that have influenced performance information use. They are the capacity to set targets, track them and report; information management; the certainty of resources; and succession planning and management.

#### *Target Setting, Tracking, and Reporting*

First; is the capacity to set targets/indicators, track them during implementation and prepare high quality and timely reports. Targets are internally developed by the staff based on the mandates of departments and informed by prevailing circumstances and available resources as per the approved budget (Interview 026, 027). There has been a challenge in setting targets as there are no guiding standards (until 2015)<sup>23</sup>, thus the targets are at times not results based, are unrealistic or too simple (Interview 004, 030 and document 053). That is, they are still focused on inputs and processes such as how many farmers are to be trained or the number of persons to undergo capacity building in agri-business.

Reports are prepared on a quarterly basis and the last quarter also provides a cumulative record that becomes the annual report (Interview 021 & 039). Each officer prepares an own quarterly report based on one’s objectives. The supervisors (managers) then do a mid-year and annual review based on the SPAS commitments and individual work plans (Interview 032, 036, 042, & 045). Meetings are a common mechanism of tracking what is going on and are held at more frequent intervals such as weekly and monthly depending on the nature of work. Most meetings

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<sup>22</sup> The report for this program was documented by the Office of the Prime Minister in 2010 (Office of the Prime Minister, 2010)

<sup>23</sup> The Sector Performance Standards were introduced in 2015/2016 financial year to guide and harmonize target setting. See the document at (Republic of Kenya, 2015)

are at the directorate level as divisions and units are too small in some cases (Interview 022, 023, & 031). Another tracking tool is back-to-office reports and debriefs after field visits (this has been discussed as a core source of performance information in section 5.1) (Interview 042).

The main expectation is that each officer and docket monitors the implementation of the targets in the agreed annual work plan. That said, both reports and meetings are sometimes irregular (Interview 022). The practice of monitoring was noted to be weak. There is no culture of monitoring among technical officers as they consider it the work of the monitoring officers (Interview 027, 032, & 040). That monitoring and evaluation require immense resources – human, time and financial – makes it even a harder sell (Interview 020 & 027). Another manager thinks it is the lack of a legal and policy framework for monitoring and evaluation that creates lethargy among public servants (Interview 048)

Despite over ten years of working to digitize the government, the reporting processes are still mostly manual. This was expressed in detail by an officer at the Central Planning and Project Coordination Unit thus:

“Information collection is manual. The Project Management System (PMS) was an attempt to track the donor funded projects. Since each project has a coordinator and staff, the PMS was to enable each of the actors to see the progress. The coordinators could also assign roles and could query on progress. I am not sure how much of PMS is being used but there has been a challenge of human skills and technology. Lethargy among staff in using it has not made things any better. It is the same challenge that EPROMISE<sup>24</sup> at the national level has.” (Interview 027)

A similar observation was made by a long-serving manager who noted that “There is no online process for tracking results. During the ISO certification in 2008, the matter of tracking results was addressed but nothing much changed. The process is manual and the long bureaucracy

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<sup>24</sup> EPROMISE was an e-platform for tracking projects through the implementation cycle by linking it to budget expenditures on it. It was mooted in 2009 during the presentation of budget estimates speech in parliament.

before the reports can reach the ministry headquarters especially with devolution does not help” (Interview 026). This makes it cumbersome for managers especially with changing the mandate of the state departments from implementers to facilitators of service delivery as is the case after devolution of functions to county governments<sup>25</sup>. Tracking is not only manual at implementation level but also at coordination level for as an officer at the Performance Contracting Division noted, “Even with the performance contracting, the system is manual, where they (Independent External Evaluators) evaluate, collate all this information, and present it to us in form of a physical report.” (Interview 010). On tracking of individual performance, “the SPAS process is manual through the filling of the forms. There was an earlier attempt to automate the process but it never worked. From 2016/2017 PSC has reviewed the Performance Appraisal (PA) forms and made them simpler. PSC also plans to automate the PA process this year. Currently, officers are being sensitized on the new forms and automation processes. All training should be done by October 2016.” (Interview 049)

The fact that there is weak monitoring of implementation means that whatever gets into the reports may be wanting. In fact, an end term evaluation of the results for Kenyans lamented the weak monitoring of activities in the formative years of results base management (Document 053). As one manager observed “PAS has not been well implemented. It is done at the end of the year which is more of a reporting than a reflective review of work done. People get good grades even when there is little to show for it.” (Interview 034). Also due to the link of PAS scores to promotions, officers are rather sensitive with the scores given in the reviews. Thus “giving someone a bad score even when warranted is rare .... it would affect their promotion and yet non-performance is because they had no resources. The PAS scores rarely give a true picture as a result.” (Interview 036). Another indicated that “On PAS, the system is pegged on resources and determines one's promotion. So managers give their officers 100 %, though it is rarely the performance level...promotions are hard to get so no one wants to be blamed for stopping others.” (Interview 035). Scoring is made more difficult by the fact that the process is participatory and thus there has to be a discussion between the manager and the officer under

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<sup>25</sup> The delivery of public services was devolved by the constitution of Kenya enacted in 2010. Key is agriculture services that the departments studied were responsible for. They are thus now responsible for policy making, capacity building and maintenance of standards. See Schedule Four of the constitution.

review (Interview 045). The focus on “paperwork without a clear mechanism for verifying the actual work done is counterproductive as everything looks great on paper but on the ground, it is a different story” was the observation made in another interview (Interview 040).

### *Information Management*

Management of information especially sharing, storage and retrieval is the second key capacity issue related to performance information use. This was a matter raised in several interviews as a point of weakness. In an interview, a manager at the Public Sector Transformation Department (PSTD) observed that “documentation is a big challenge in government. What you'll find are either personal records by individuals who have got passion in collecting and keeping most of them. Most of them are unpublished.” (Interview 006). The Performance Evaluation Report (PER) that contain the details of the performance contracting in the previous year has to be released by the president and this has created a long procedure leading to delays. That means that reports that have not been released cannot be accessed even if they are finalized (Interview 008).

In the state departments information is kept mostly as hard copies in the registry and shelves/safes in different offices. The key reports produced in each directorate are stored in the director’s office and copies (especially soft ones) kept with their secretary. This is not in any organized format and depends on the organizational skills of the secretary/clerk<sup>26</sup> (Interview 034). Files are also kept in the registry though this has not been very functional (Interview 036). There are only manual subject files at the registry (Interview 019). A website is used for providing information to the outside public but its rarely updated (Interview 032). The process for fully digitalizing information management was noted as having been “rather slow” (Interview 040). There is a proposal to establish an Agricultural Statistics and Data Information Repository which has already started with the crop insurance project<sup>27</sup> that requires all details of each farmer to be captured in a central database (Interview 020). One manager argued that it is the lack of an

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<sup>26</sup> I experienced this firsthand when I was referred to a secretary of one of the managers to obtain some reports, as only her computer had the files. It was to take her 30 minutes as she searched folders and different external discs for where the files could have been kept. At the end she asked me to leave my email address and she would send me as soon as she got them. That never happened.

<sup>27</sup> As earlier noted, this is a key project of the Jubilee Government

information management policy and structure that had caused the state of mess that was obtaining. As will be later discussed the chaos seem to be by design and serves a particular purpose.

There is no central server and hence all computers are stand alone (Interview 032, 036, & 038). The Information and Communication Technology (ICT) departments have remained without substantive officers and also received minimal budgetary allocations (Interview 040). There is also a lot of information in the emails of individual officers, especially as attachments. “If someone took my computer today, I will not be able to work *as there is no backup*” exclaimed one manager (Interview 024, italics added). The reason for use of personal computers is that the office computers are dysfunctional and as a result, it is hard to track who has what (Interview 036). The general observation here is that information storage has been and remains very weak (Interview 014). Retrieval mechanisms are cumbersome. Some of the information is available on the website but there is no structured way of uploading some more. There is no structure for the collection of information for storage thus management is a big challenge (Interview 036, 048). Even if there was a functional ICT infrastructure, there is also notable resistance by some officers (especially the older ones who have never been trained on computer applications) to the use of computers thus their preference for hard copies (Interview 014 & 038).

The physical organization of information is quite wanting. For instance, I could not access several reports on performance contracting especially in the period 2004-2009 for, as I was informed, there was no one central place to get them. Not even the PCD registry which I visited had the documents. Of concern is the informal way in which important information is handled for as demonstrated by the observation of one manager following the moving<sup>28</sup> of their office:

“We were moved here by some youthful guys from the National Youth Service and a lot of our information has been scattered as we previously were under

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<sup>28</sup> With every move of a function in government...the officers and offices responsible are moved to the building where the ministry in charge is located. That has been the story of the Performance Contracting Division which moved from Ministry of Devolution in Harambee House to Ministry of Public Service in Teleposta Towers (where I did the interviews) and were now in the process of moving to Office of the President’s Delivery Unit in KICC. With each move, documents get lost or misplaced.

Ministry of Devolution but now we are back to the cabinet so those are some of the challenges with organizing our information. I don't know where the files are, I will have to check because as you see from that table across there, there was a pile of documents all the way to the top. They called some people to destroy it and actually I think they finished clearing them two weeks ago because they want to convert the space to an office...but there was a whole pile all the way here" (Interview 008).

At the state departments studied, the library and documentation centers were rarely used as they have mostly outdated documents (Interview 020). The Central Planning and Coordination Unit (CPU) in each of the three state departments of the ministry, though with a central mandate for collection and collating performance information in the ministry, were also lacking documents especially those that were more than 2-3 years old. This is because storage and retrieval of the information are the biggest challenges. At the transition to counties, some of the information got lost as some of the new officials discarded them thinking they were not of importance (Interview 032). Where a database exists for information storage and retrieval, as is the case at the directorate of fisheries, the challenge has been succession management with the movement of staff to the county level. At the time of data collection, two officers were dedicated to managing information database at the Directorate (Interview 042).

Related to information storage and retrieval systems is the means of sharing information. Sharing is mostly in meetings and by emails. Personal/private addresses are mostly used unlike the official emails (i.e. [@kilimo.go.ke](mailto:@kilimo.go.ke)) which are rarely used (Interview 019, 020, 034). Keeping a trail of information is thus difficult. Emails get poor feedback as some never read them and still ask for printed documents and verbal summaries. Meetings are preferred as officers only get to speak about what they have done and can share hard copies of reports if necessary. In meetings, issues can be raised and discussed with all relevant officers. Decisions are then communicated through the minutes of meetings followed by internal memos (Interview 027, 037, 043). In other times, phone calls and short text messaging services such as WhatsApp are used to share information especially for quick updates (Interview 036).



One challenge is that officers keep most information to themselves and only share it selectively. Sharing of information although required within official relations is at an officer's discretion which they exercise selectively. Most officers are not willing to share information for two reasons. First, it's a powerful asset that keeps them indispensable. Secondly, some may have nothing to show for their work and hence do not want to be seen in a bad light (Interview 048, 050).

### *Certainty of Resources*

A third and critical capacity issue is that of resources, especially financial and human, their quantity, certainty, and capability. These are the resources that come from the annual budget of the Government of Kenya and the International development partners (also called donor agencies). An overall note here is that although a performance management approach requires flexibility to facilitate innovation, government resource allocation is still incremental and historically based thus restrictive. This limits the room for innovation which is only pursued through special purpose projects mostly funded by international development partners (Interview 029).

Apart from constraining innovation and exploration of new ideas, inadequate or untimely availability of resources leads to poor or non-implementation of plans. Regular delays in the release of cash from the Exchequer have been affecting service delivery. For instance, as of October 2016, the exchequer was yet to release resources for the first quarter (July-September) which was over and the progress reports due (Interview 014, 015, 020, 036, 037 & 040). In other instances resources are provided for only parts of a program e.g. a program promoting a certain technology that improves productivity but is not accompanied by resources for marketing hence the total objectives cannot be achieved (Interview 018). In other cases, finances are allocated and approved but then what is availed during implementation is less than expected. This uncertainty affects planning and ultimate outputs (Interview 043 & 044). For instance, in one project of building a training institute, one hundred million shillings was approved but only twenty million was availed as the rest was reallocated to another project (Interview 023, 032, & 034). Limited

resources not only affect implementation but as earlier noted, they also affect tracking especially where field visits are required for the validation of reports (Interview 028). It affects morale as officers cannot implement much leave alone surpass their targets (Interview 030). This means that their measurement is affected. Mostly, it is activities in the first quarter that are affected by resource flow hence depend on development partners' funding. The second quarter has limited constraints when cash flow regularizes while third and especially fourth quarters often have more resources than the ability to absorb them (Interview 047).

As for projects funded by development partners, especially those with off-budget support resource uncertainty is minimized due to dedicated budgets. As a result, projects have an assured resource flow that ensures that activities are done within time. Projects have a further incentive as they provide staff working in them with extra allowances. They are thus preferred though at times to the detriment of normal services (Interview 029).

On human resources, over and above the certainty concern is their capability. In many cases, personnel is available but they do not have the requisite capacity. As noted earlier, capacity building was integrated into the performance management reforms the goal has been more of as a compliance step for promotion than for imparting the necessary skills. A key concern has been the number of external consultants involved in the performance management reforms without clear mechanisms of skill transfer to the civil servants. Thus, when the consultants leave, there is no one to continue with the work established (Document 053). In other cases, only one or several officers have the necessary capabilities to manage the reforms. In the event they are transferred to a different ministry as is the case for generalist positions especially in finance, human resource management, and planning, then programs are affected. For instance, one manager lamented how a key reform process stalled in 2009 when the officer leading it was transferred to a different ministry (Interview 044 and Document 066). This is further reinforced by what is discussed in the next section as an informal and personal culture where competition for limited opportunities curtails team development, competence sharing and empowering.

### *Succession Planning and Management*

A starting observation here is that a majority of the officials interviewed were advanced in age have been in the service for about 20 years. Most of them, especially at the director and head of division level, were on their way out of the service having almost attained the retirement age of 60 years. I took note of this especially among those I interviewed. Several explained that the reason was the freezing of employment as part of phase one of the civil service reforms in the 1990's (See the discussion on civil service reforms in section 4.2) and the asymmetrical movement of promotions.

The process of recruitment is worth reflecting on here. Fresh graduates being recruited in the public service start at the level of agricultural (fisheries or livestock) officer which is a field position. Thus the officer would be located (especially before devolution, when all the officers interviewed, were recruited) in a rural workstation. Over the years, one gets in-service training and some pursue graduate degrees at masters or doctoral level. They get promoted as vacancies arise and by the time they make it to the ministry headquarters in Nairobi they are generally among the elite in their work but also advanced in age. Hence while the work is in the field, the most experienced officers are in Nairobi away from the places where their expertise matters most (Interview 020). It also means that the officers are at the sunset stages of their career lives with little energy to give to innovation or trying new ways of doing things. That they are not so keen on changes in the way of doing things is thus no surprise especially since there are limited interests. Thus the effectiveness of a performance approach to management is affected negatively (Interview 033).

Given the above scenario, succession planning and management should be a core priority but as clearly indicated below, it is not. As observed one manager at director level, "a huge bulk of us (employed in 1984) will retire in 2019 and it is not clear how we will be replaced" (Interviewee 021). That officers spend their lives operating in a constrained environment and seeking upward mobility means that succession planning is never a pressing priority. As I observed, this was a matter that while acknowledged was not a very comfortable one for most managers to talk about. One senior manager who is approaching retirement age observed thus on poor succession planning:

“While there is disquiet, it is never openly verbalized. Succession planning is very poor and many officers are leaving without a planned replacement especially at senior management level where most of the old people are. This is also the case at lower levels of extension officers who are not being replaced yet farmers still need the services.” (Interview 020)

Related is the notable stagnation and poor career advancement prospects especially due to slow promotions and that has caused low morale among staff (Interview 020, 023, 045 & Document 066). “There have been no promotions since 2009 thus those who are supposed to be taking over from the retirees are still many scales below. Current rationalization of the public sector is creating more uncertainty” observed one manager (Interview 023). As such aging population and poor succession planning are not helping the motivation levels for performance. A culture of short-term focus and last minute action further grounds the succession planning. These cultural aspects are discussed in the next set of findings.

### **5.2.3 Administrative Culture**

As presented in the research assumptions (see Section 2.5) administrative culture entails the values and beliefs held by and that guide those people working in public organizations. In Kenya’s public service, the generally notable culture is one of informality, personal connections, and competition towards the advancement of personal interests. Part of the reason can be traced to the historical development of the Kenyan state as discussed in [Section 4.3](#). For instance, the provision allowing public servants to engage in private business seems to have been an acknowledgment that the government was either not willing or could not afford to compensate its employees well (see section 4.3 on the discussion of the recommendations of the Ndegwa Commission). The implicit message then is that each person has to fight for the few opportunities available.

Changing this culture, especially the negative aspects, has and remains to be a big challenge.

Indeed, one officer of a reform coordination unit observed: “I would say the culture stood a limited chance of change, we are not there yet but the fact that we have people now complaining about performance contracting, it means they are paying attention” (Interview 005). This is not surprising for, in a context imbued by limited space for growth and hence intense competition for available opportunities, information including that on performance becomes a critical asset for advancement (Interview 050). “There is no culture of results. Performance and results in public service are largely an individuals’ own initiative”, insisted one manager (Interview 026). Information, even when not used, is often kept for the opportune time when an officer needs to make her or his case which may include negotiating a promotion. Of course, this could be the basis for corruption as official information is utilized for private benefit. As such those who cannot engage in this intense competition, choose to lay back, doing only what is necessary to get by and keep their jobs (Interview 014).

In this context, reform efforts are implemented but not linked to each other especially across divisions. As one manager observed,

“You have a situation where everyone is working hard but there is no collective action being pursued. That is, one person’s output is not becoming another’s input. Every person is focused on what ‘I do’ and not what ‘we do’ as evaluation is individual especially in relation to promotions. There is thus lots of duplicated efforts and coordination challenge in the sector” (Interview 032).

This results in silos that create boundaries between different officers and sections of the same directorate. The competitive culture is observed in the very intense ‘silo’ system that hinders progressive efforts of collaboration that are critical for performance improvement (Interview 010 & 014). The silo system and mentality adopted in the operation of government as well as absolute secrecy has been a big challenge (Interview 003). This extended to even how the performance management reforms were introduced for as an officer who worked at the PSR&D observed “one would imagine automatically that performance contracting, because it is an institutional mechanism for checking performance, would be linked to the performance appraisal

system which is an individual mechanism for checking performance” (Interview 005) but that has not been the case to date. PC and PAS have operated as two separate processes and many times working parallel to each other. Attempts to bring them together in 2008 lasted barely one year and by 2009 they were separate as PCD dealing with Performance Contracts, Directorate of Personnel Management (DPM) and later Public Service Commission dealing with PAS and the Public Sector Transformation department dealing with aspects of business process re-engineering (Document 041 & 053).

From the foregoing, it is thus no surprise that institutionalization and ownership of performance management have been rather weak. One officer noted that performance contracting as a part of performance management was never fully realized (Interview 002). Another observed that,

“We didn’t build sustainable institutions like the structures that I talk about now. I mean the Ministerial Monitoring Units (MMUs) and the reform champions have not stood the test of time...a bit of the work that was done was eroded and that’s the biggest failure *of the performance management reforms*” (Interview 005, italics added).

Another former officer of the Public Sector Reform and Development Secretariat noted,

“We think that ownership of reforms has not really percolated to the beneficiaries, especially the Ministries Departments and Agencies (MDAs). Many have still not owned these reforms much as they practice them. They have this attitude that reform belongs to some secretariat”<sup>29</sup> (Interview 006).

An obvious change reported was that the practice of officers being absent from their offices has drastically reduced. Initially, most officers would report, hang their coats to show that they were present and then go to attend to their private work (Interview 028). In one state department, I also observed a signup book at the entrance that each staff was required to fill when reporting

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<sup>29</sup> This attitude was displayed when several interviewees especially specialist managers were inquisitive as to why I was interviewing them on performance yet that was the work of officers responsible for planning, monitoring and evaluation, and human resource management.

and leaving from work. However, although absenteeism has drastically reduced, it may not mean that the staff has become more productive. This can be explained by technological advancement especially penetration of the internet, mobile phones, and mobile cash transfer services<sup>30</sup>. This implies that officers can transact all their private businesses without the need to leave their desks.

#### **5.2.4 Interests, Attitudes and Perceptions of Managers**

Related to administrative culture is the interests, attitudes, and perceptions of individual managers towards performance management. Scholarship on management recognizes the centrality of the manager. The managers have interests and attitudes that shape how they perceive the value of performance information and what priority they give it. Performance information that is produced is expected to be used by individual managers whether acting alone or collectively with other managers or their officers. Past studies have addressed several individual factors that impact on the use of performance information. They include job experience, familiarity with performance measures, position in the administration (high-level management), higher educational level, the gender of the officer, attitude toward performance management, pro-social motivation, networking behavior, and age of the officer (Kroll, 2015). In this study I set to establish how the individual managers in a developing country public administration context relate to performance information, its value, importance and thus the incentives they have to use the information. Specifically, I investigated their interests, attitudes, and perceptions towards performance information.

As for their attitude and perception to performance information, it is notable that managers remain somewhat lukewarm about performance management as it introduced a totally different way of doing things. Thus, some had “Fear of change and modernization especially with the use of information technology. Some officials were outright arrogant and *had a form of turf mentality* that no one from outside should tell them what to do. The old guard could not let go of their ways of doing things” (Interview 003, italics added). Piloting the performance contracting

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<sup>30</sup> During the data collection, I was severally interrupted by an incoming call and from the discussion, mostly held in local ethnic language, the discussion would be of a private nature and would end with the words “let me finish this meeting and I will send you the money or further details”.

showed that there was a significant improvement in the pilot organizations and these caused a shift especially among senior civil servants. They changed their attitude and this had a trickle-down effect on the administration as it was clear that improvements were possible (Interview 004 & 008).

Performance appraisal was not initially embraced by officers but they warmed up to it after sometime especially after realizing that it was linked to their upward mobility (promotions). This could be due to the fact that the performance management reforms were implemented top-down without consultation, awareness creation or sufficient capacity building (Interview 020). Another reason given was that prior to 2006 when the appraisal was made participatory, it was a highly confidential process and was sometimes used punitively by supervisors. It, therefore, received little acceptance when it was revised and made an open system with consultations between supervisors and staff. Notably, while some officers seem to accept feedback from the PAS process and use it to improve; there are still others who have not embraced it thus causing lags in implementation (Interview 041 & 047). A human resource officer lamented about the tedious work of mobilizing officers to conduct the PA reviews and prepare the reports (Interview 049). In practice while PAS reports should be done on the quarterly and annual basis, some of the officers only fill the PAS form when they have to apply for a promotion as it is a requirement (Interview 049). The resistance is also due to the perception by staff in technical departments of performance management and especially performance appraisal as work of the Human Resources department and thus of little value to them (Interview 028).

Uncertainty caused by devolution at the national level<sup>31</sup> has further affected the managers' attitudes towards performance measurement. Devolution of functions has led to a review of organizational structure and rationalization of staffing in the state departments. While that was expected, the unsystematic way with which it has been carried out, has raised concerns. For instance, "In 2013, one state department expected to have 4 directorates, then 3 were approved and now (2016) the proposal is to cut them to 2 directorates thus leading to no clear system of

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<sup>31</sup> Following devolution, ministries at the national level were hesitant to move let go of the functions and staff to the counties. There has been growing concern that the national government is overstaffed hence the move to undertake a staff rationalization process. Ofcourse its motives and goals are held in suspicion by the ministry staff who think it is just a way of finding fault to purge them off the public service.



work”(Interview 023). I observed certain officers whose titles and actual positions differed. For instance, two heads of division informed me that theirs were initially directorates but had been downgraded to divisions in the restructuring (Interview 021 & 044). Further, the differences in remuneration between public officials even at the same rank of work creates disharmony (Interview 045)<sup>32</sup>.

Further, the fact that the recommendations from performance appraisal are not followed through, especially on promotions as it is claimed that there are no vacancies hence no way of fast tracking hardworking officers, has negatively affected staff commitment to performance measurement (Interview 020). The reporting process is perceived as a bother as nothing comes out of it and yet it takes a lot of time to prepare the reports. Officers wonder what the gain in doing the reports is (Interview 039). Hence there is lethargy among staff regarding its use as many see it as a bother. This is demonstrated by excessive delays in preparing and submitting PAS reports. For instance, one Human Resource manager lamented, “We are in October and some officers are yet to submit their forms which were due on June 30” (Interview 038). The challenge seems to start even earlier as the targets are not followed through. As one manager reported, “People forget them as soon as the planning retreat is over *and thus life continues in a business as usual mode*” (Interview 043, italics added).

It is not all gloom as one interviewee noted that “PAS made people wake up. Now people have a sense of duty, work extra and even late when duty calls.” (Interview 037). Capacity building, albeit slowly has over time created some level of ownership. Experience is that when people have targets, there is a keenness to achieve them so that they score highly (Interview 039). This position was shared by another manager who observed that “PAS is a good tool. It is god sent for any manager, but only if well implemented. It has the potential to change the country.” (Interview 038). Since no officer wants to be negatively evaluated, they do their best to achieve their targets. Officers have an internal drive to achieve what they commit to in their work plan and PAS form. The challenge is thus when the resources are not availed in good quantity and in time hence affecting morale (Interview 024, 031, 040)

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<sup>32</sup> A key mandate of the Salaries and Remuneration Commission has been to review and recommend harmonised terms for all public servants. The work on the same was ongoing at the time of data collection.

### 5.2.5 Summative Discussion of Findings

In this section, I discuss the findings presented above (Section 5.2) of the factors that can explain the observed uses of performance information (Section 5.1). An overall observation is that these factors are interrelated and in some aspects empirically difficult to separate. For instance, the low organizational capacity could be as a result of little support by the politicians and senior executives to build solid systems given their short-term focus and competing interests. An informal culture and one that encourages personalization of public process and patronage means that managers, even the ones with the best intentions, have their interests focused on survival and will not prioritize using performance information. From the research assumptions, a neo-patrimonial context was expected to create an environment not conducive for performance information use. This is because while the formal processes provide certain regulations and expectations, the daily operations are based on informal and personal connections that run beneath the formal system. As shown the findings indicate that indeed information is used in different forms.

The study findings do show that progress and reversal in performance reforms are closely linked to the interests and support of the political class and senior officials. That political will is low and leadership for performance not evident means that managers adopt a wait-and-see attitude. Where political demands, some of which do not even make technical sense, are not matched with support in form of resources and incentives to the managers and their staff to enable implementation then it sends a message of non-commitment. As a result, passive use becomes the norm where reports are prepared but never utilized. Managers engage in the minimal effort necessary for their career survival. Further, since they have to regularly accommodate ad-hoc activities that are politically driven and many a time not in their plans, they can justify their inability to implement the plans.

As expected where leaders have limited interest, then they do not put the necessary resources to build the organizational capacity. Yet, performance information use requires that certain capacity is developed within the organization. In most cases, the development of the capacities and

capabilities is a key element, often a foundational one, of the management reform. At a general level, as with any reform, it takes the time to build, get buy-in and develop the necessary capacity and capability to sustain reforms. In Kenya's public service, while I established that there were efforts to build capacity, the organization capacity is still low. The four aspects of capacity that were found, indicated that organizational capacity is an intricate part of the public sector. The approach to its development has thus to be based on a long-term focus and not the one off, touch-and-go design programs as evidenced in this study.

The low state of capacity would explain why the managers' use of performance information is often passive and when purposeful it is minimal and inconsistent. This agrees with the work of De Lancer Julnes and Holzer (2001) and Mohnihan and Hawes (2012) who found that use of performance information was facilitated by the availability of resources, technology, and dedicated technical persons. Capacity affects the timeliness within which the managers can access the information and how credible the information is. That target setting is often not realistic and is done more to fulfill requirements suggests that there is no motivation to follow through with it. These findings agree with the findings of studies by Ni Putu et al (2013) in Indonesia, Cameron (2015) in South Africa and Hornsby (2012) in Kenya who find that public administrations in developing countries have limited capacity to design and implement management reforms. Schick (1998) had cautioned developing countries on taking a large scale performance reforms base on this very concern that certain capacity needed to be developed in their administrations.

As presented in the findings, it is also possible that the fairly short lifespan of reform menus, due to the short and sometimes unpredictable cycles of the governments that introduce them, can explain why efforts of building the organizational capacity through reforms barely make a difference. These findings also point to the place of political will where the government leaders have an incentive to place their efforts and resources in building the capacity of their organizations. Where the prevailing culture encourages the maintenance of informal and patronage networks it is unlikely that the politicians would prioritize capacity development. In fact, it's the weak capacity that they need to maintain these patronage networks. This agrees with

the thinking advanced earlier on how neo-patrimonialism affects the institutions of governance by enhancing informality and hence unpredictability (Kelsall, 2013).

In a strong neo-patrimonial state a cultural space characterized by informal, competitive, silo operations, and secretive relationships between staff and units was expected. That is where sharing of information is highly selective and suspicion thrives. In such a culture, public servants have no incentives to measure and use performance information in a purposeful sense. Indeed the findings do confirm that the dominant administrative culture has facilitated political and perverse use. This is where managers selectively use information or exaggerate the information to create an impression of progress. That the culture almost suggests that ‘you cannot get to the top by following procedures’, then managers have to depend on advocacy through informal channels many which rely on personal contacts. Of a surprise is that the evidence suggests that actually, it’s the competition for survival by managers that can actually explain purposeful use. For instance, it’s their personal desire to see their work succeed (which then can form the basis for promoting their work) that would explain why they use of performance information to advise on policy, resource allocation and prepare accountability reports regularly.

I had assumed that the historical developments of the public service had engrained certain beliefs, norms, and rules of the game that would be retrogressive to a performance and results culture. One such expectation was a culture of corruption and patronage. Efforts to find evidence of corruption were futile. However, as the evidence suggests, it’s clear that there is the secretive and selective use of information and this could be for the very purpose that it facilitates other motives. As I document, developments in money transactions using mobile phones has ensured that officers can conduct their private businesses without leaving their desks. Suffice to say then that these observations on the prevailing administrative culture are reinforced by a neo-patrimonial state where public service is a platform to distribute rents and seek patronage.

That interaction is rather informal means that the formal mechanisms are only used when and if necessary. While the implicit expectation by reformers is that performance management would change the way of doing things based on the argument that what gets measured gets done, in this case, performance management gets rationalized and made to fit in the existing cultural

framework. It is, therefore, no surprise that despite the rallying call of *business unusual* under the ERS 2003-2007, the operating mode has remained business as usual. This is not new as studies have shown the power of dominant cultures. Schick (1999) had warned that certain cultural sets need to have been in place for the management by performance measures to make sense. He went ahead to advise that developing countries should not adopt the New Zealand type of reforms given their differing administrative cultures.

Whether managers feel that the performance measurement system is beneficial to their work has been found to be a critical determinant of how they relate to the performance information (Ammons & Rivenbark, 2008; Kroll, 2012; Taylor, 2011). Given a state of unpredictability, low incentives, and political drive, it is, therefore, no surprise that managers have remained rather apprehensive of performance management. Notable is that interests and attitudes have been changing to accept performance measurement, especially at the individual level. While at first officers resisted the system especially of individual performance appraisal they later accepted it in realizing that it was linked to their individual promotions. There are limited incentives and even when available they are inconsistent. Thus the individual motivation is affected. That at the management level are persons who are fairly advanced in age, many of whom are about to retire could explain the low motivation to pursue new ideas and thus preference is for the known path. As evidence, the fact that managers are rarely consulted in the design and implementation of the performance reforms could explain why they have limited interests. As such this attitude could explain why their use of performance information is passive. This agrees with Kroll's (2012) work who found that managers who were cynical about performance measurement were also not likely to use performance information.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

This chapter draws conclusions from the case study and is organized as follows:

- Section 6.1 summarizes and draws conclusions on how managers use performance information with an attempt to relate them to the explanatory factors investigated.
- Section 6.2 reflects on the studies' contribution to the literature by relating it to the relevance anticipated in section 1.2. It then suggests areas of further research.
- Section 6.3 closes with thoughts on the implications of and recommendations from the case study for practice.

### **6.1 How and why managers use performance information**

A core motivation of this study was to explore how and why managers use performance information in Kenya's Public service. The justification was that Kenya, being a developing country, the context of its public administration differs from that in OECD countries. This difference, I have argued is imbued in the neo-patrimonial frame that shapes the institutions of governance. To establish the empirics of my inquiry, I conducted a qualitative case study aimed at exploring how managers use performance information and what factors can explain why they use it in the observed ways. These two main objectives of leading to a how and why question informed the choice of a case study research design. I interviewed, made some observations and collected relevant documents from managers at the levels of the directorate, division, and section/units of three state departments in the national Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries.

The study has demonstrated (especially Chapter 4) that the performance of Kenya's public service, whether intended or unintended, has been a running theme of the various reforms and renewal attempts. Of this performance information as a form of evidence has been central. This has been informed by the changing demands placed on the service. While at Independence the demand was to Africanize the administration and build local capacity, the current push seems to be to deliver services in an increasingly technologically driven society that is well aware of its

rights and obligations. This is further reinforced by a highly ambitious constitutional framework that spells the rights, including those on public services that the citizens have.

On the first objective (see [Section 5.1](#)) of how managers use performance information, the study provides evidence that performance information is regularly produced although its use by managers varies (See Table 11 below for a summary of the findings on Uses of Performance Information). Performance information is mostly from the regular reporting from the Performance Contracting (PC) process that tracks organizational performance and Staff Performance Appraisal System (PAS) that tracks individual performance. Their use takes different forms some of which agree with the theoretical expectations advanced earlier. The desired and observed (albeit with various limitations) form of use of performance is purposeful or deliberate as demonstrated in resource allocation, rewarding of staff and preparing accountability reports to external bodies. There is also evidence that use of information is often passive or sometimes information is not even used at all (though this was not the focus of the study). A case in point is budget decisions which rely more on historical costs and are thus incremental. Political and perverse use is established especially where the information is used to self-promote with the expectation of rewards such as promotions.

It is difficult to make a call as to which form of use, passive, purposeful, political or perverse is dominant as I find snippets of evidence for each. Further, while I was desirous to use the above categories strictly, I find evidence that suggests that they are not clear cut categories. They overlap and that some of the forms are so closely related that it is difficult to separate them empirically. For instance, gaming and cheating which are perverse forms of use are often engaged in the context of political use where managers have to promote, advocate their work and make a case for resource allocation and promotions or avoidance of sanctions. Examples have been provided including that while managers consider performance information when preparing reports to external bodies, making decisions for resource re-allocation or making recommendations for rewards, they are not consistent.

**Table 11: Summary of Case Study Findings on Use of Performance Information**

<b>Categories of Use</b>	<b>Expected manifestation</b>	<b>Case Study Findings in Kenya</b>	<b>Some examples from the data</b>
<b>Passive</b>	Performance information is just for compliance and no effort made to use it.	Information is reported in the required format in fulfillment of the requirements but never used in decision making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports are prepared, sent to respective offices and filed.</li> <li>• Resource allocation, especially budgeting, does not refer to performance information as it relies on historical costs (inputs)</li> </ul>
<b>Purposeful</b>	Managers use the information as intended to review service quality, costs for continuous improvement through learning, steering and control accounting	Purposeful use common in specific projects. In regular services use is by chance rather than by design and even then, is not consistent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers use information to advise on policy on food security and input subsidy programs</li> <li>• Information used to reallocate resources based on implementation trends</li> <li>• Information used (though not consistently) to determine rewards and sanctions</li> <li>• Reporting to external bodies e.g. parliament and development partners</li> </ul>
<b>Political</b>	Performance information is used selectively to support in advocacy and promoting one's work especially since	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Managers use information to make their cases and this helps move things due to the underlying informal level of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is used to make a case for justifying a promotion</li> <li>• Information used to promote the performance of a</li> </ul>



	managers have discretion on what they measure.	decision making	project to those financing and to parliament for resource allocation
<b>Perverse</b>	Information is collected and used for the unintended purposes. This includes gaming, cheating, and hoarding of information for personal gain.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information is manipulated to show impressive performance</li> <li>• Selective use in an environment characterized by search for personal gain leads to cheating and hoarding of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supervisors rate their staff at 100 percent as no one wants to be seen to stand in the way of the other's progress</li> <li>• Numbers are manipulated and used selectively for personal benefit</li> </ul>

*Source: Authors empirical findings based on expectations established in Table 2*

It suffices to conclude that managers' use of performance information, while evident, is inconsistent with the categories theorized. Thus the use of performance information in Kenya's public service can best be conceptualized in three forms. First is *passive*, while noting that drawing the line between passive and non-use has been equally empirically difficult to draw. Second is *purposeful use*. I find that in the context of informal and personalized processes, purposeful use occurs but is irregular. Noteworthy is that while the declared objective is often purposeful, political and perverse use happens in tandem and often beneath it. Thirdly is *political and perverse use* as I find that advocacy in a context of personalization and commercialization of public space inevitably involves the political and perverse use of information. This is the categorization used in Table 13 on linking the explanatory factors to forms of use.

On the second objective exploring what can explain the forms of use established, four factors namely; political will and leadership, organizational capacity, administrative culture, and managers' interests and attitudes were investigated (see [Section 5.2](#)). Table 12 provides a summary of the findings on these factors. While acknowledging the interrelatedness and even overlapping nature of the factors, the study has demonstrated that there is explanatory power to each though with varying depth and scope. An overall observation here is that the sourcing and use of information are locked in a rather informal system that runs parallel to the formal structures of public service and performance management. This is in line with neo-patrimonial thread that marks Kenya's political and administrative framework.

On political will and leadership, the study's findings show progress and reversals in the interests of politicians to performance management. The demands that politicians and senior executives make to bureaucrats to perform are not always matched with their support. Inconsistent will is observed in the sporadic changes, especially in the last three years on how performance management is structured and coordinated. In such an environment, tracking is difficult and even when the information is available, managers adopt a wait-and-see attitude to its use. The limited evidence on stakeholder involvement may be suggestive that this is still a developing area. It is evident that international development partners play a key role especially due to their power of the purse. The finding that special purpose projects are preferred to traditional channels of

service delivery due to the dedicated resources and additional financial incentives to managers further reinforce the role of external actors.

As theorized, I find evidence that low organizational capacity characterizes the public service and especially in its efforts to adopt and implement performance management in the long run. The study finds that there is wanting capacity to set realistic goals, track and report them in a way that ensures timeliness and quality of the performance information. This coupled with a weak and in some cases ad-hoc information management system means that managers' access to timely and reliable information is limited. Uncertainty and limited capability of available resources affect use and so does poor succession planning management. This affects how much of the information gets used.

Findings on administrative culture confirm that the performance management reform has not altered the core beliefs and norms that exist in the public service. The systems continue in a business-as-usual manner. Performance information has thus become trapped in the informal, personal and competitive culture. Silos and secrecy characterize work relations and this negates the goals of collaboration and sharing of information. As a result institutionalizing performance measurement and information use has not happened.

Lastly and an outflow of the administrative culture, the findings on managers' interests and attitudes, indicate that managers' enthusiasm to performance information is inextricably enmeshed with the incentives they receive and especially if their work is recognized by their seniors. This has not been consistent and thus while they appreciate that the measuring and using performance information is a good thing, they remain cynical as to its value for them. Their attitude is largely due to the fact that the various reforms are implemented without their input and many times with the heavy engagement of external consultants who do little to transfer skills to them. Overall, these findings suggest that the way the reforms are introduced matters and that there is a need for sufficient time for real change to be evident. This is a privilege that governments operating within limited lifecycles and bother with re-election rarely have or are unwilling to indulge in.

**Table 12: Summary of Findings on Factors Influencing Use of Performance Information by Managers in Kenya**

Factor	Expected findings	Actual Findings	Examples from the data
<b>Political will and leadership</b>	Politicians and senior executives' interest in and demand for performance are not followed by support.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress and reversal in performance reforms closely linked to the political will and leadership</li> <li>• Political demands not matched with support in form of resources and incentives</li> <li>• Political interest linked to the interests of powerful stakeholders especially international development partners</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adoption of RBM was a result of government will meeting with partners interests</li> <li>• There has been decline in interest on performance management as structured and instead other mechanisms are being used</li> <li>• Incentives provide have been inconsistent with demands for performance</li> </ul>
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	Weak organizational capacity constrains managers' ability to measure and use information effectively.	The capacity to measure and manage performance information is weak. Resource availability is inconsistent making implementation unpredictable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Targets developed are unrealistic or too simple (on inputs and processes) that makes it hard to measure and use</li> <li>• Manual process makes tracking cumbersome and ad-hoc storage makes retrieval difficult</li> </ul>
<b>Administrative culture</b>	An informal, personal and competitive culture that leads to use of	Informal relationships, secrecy, and silos. Managers compete to take advantage of the limited opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Culture has remained unchanged from one of the informal and personal pursuits</li> <li>• Silos and secrecy characterizes the use of</li> </ul>

	information where it is convenient.		performance information
<b>Attitude, perceptions, and interests of managers towards performance measurement</b>	Managers are somewhat cynical about performance measurement and perceive it as an extra burden	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Acceptance of performance appraisal as it's based on personal career advancement prospects</li> <li>• Cynical attitude and thus resistant to performance measurement</li> <li>• Uncertainty of careers creates apprehension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ownership not created as performance is seen as the work of others</li> <li>• Performance appraisal embraced on realization that it is linked to promotions</li> </ul>

*Source: Author's empirical findings*

From the foregoing summary of findings I concluded as follows with a tabular demonstration in Table 13:

- Inconsistent political will and leadership for performance management reforms explain forms of use that are passive, political and perverse.
- Low organizational capacity could best explain passive and some limited aspects of purposeful use.
- Informal, personal and competitive administrative culture is associated with purposeful use and mostly with political and perverse use.
- Limited interest and apprehensive attitude is mostly associated with passive use.

**Table 13: Linking Explanatory Factors to forms of Performance Information Use**

		Form/Type of use		
		Passive	Purposeful	Political and Perverse
<b>Explanatory Factor</b>	Inconsistent Political Will and Leadership	+	-	+
	Low Organizational Capacity	+	+	-
	Informal, Personal and Competitive Administrative Culture	-	+	+
	Limited Interests and Cynical Attitude of Managers	+	-	-

Note: + means that there is evidence that the factor is associated with the form/type of use  
 - means that there is no evidence that the factor is associated with the form/type of use

## **6.2 Contribution of the Study & Areas for Further Research**

By focusing on Kenya, a developing country, this case study aimed at contributing to the literature on how a performance information use occurs in a context outside the OECD with different constraints and incentives. Guided by literature on institutional theory and neo-patrimonialism, the study made assumptions and built expectations that have been investigated. The study shows the intractable nature of processes and actors by providing a detailed picture of how public administrations in a neo-patrimonial context adopt and implement performance oriented reforms. Its qualitative nature provides in-depth descriptions of what managers in a public administration have to deal with and what their opinions are. As such it lends important lessons for researchers and practitioners.

While the findings on how managers use performance information do not depart from the obtaining state of research, the findings on explanatory factors do show some differences. The main observation is that purposeful use occurs in spite of context that managers operate in. While noted that such desirable use is often minimal and inconsistent, it provides a flicker of hope for performance oriented reforms. As indicated, this seems to be because of the competitive space that civil servants operate in and thus have to do something to stay ahead of the pack. Informality while has a positive side in the sense that it often provides a channel to cut through red-tape and unnecessary bureaucratic processes. It could explain why the reforms have persisted this far as it provides enterprising managers with space to implement new ideas. This personal drive is an asset for future reform efforts.

That said and in an effort to further the field, three areas of further research would be worthy of consideration:

First is the need for a quantitative study that would cover a larger sample and investigate specific aspects of each of the variables explored here. For instance, it would be of value to see how the four explanatory factors drive different forms of use and which ones are more significant than the others. This could apply a comparative focus between state departments as well as between national and local levels.

A second area is an investigation of the role of external stakeholders, especially international development partners and the citizens, in shaping how managers use performance information. In what ways, for instance, do managers interact with these stakeholders and what kind of demands do they make on them. This was acknowledged but not investigated in this study.

Thirdly, and building on the finding that managers use information purposefully in the context of an informal administrative culture is to further investigate under what specific conditions this positive behavior occurs. In this quest, the literature on developmental patrimonialism as demonstrated in the work of African Power and Politics Project that suggests that neo-patrimonialism can breed positive results could be of value (Booth, 2012; Booth & Cammack, 2013; Booth & Golooba-mutebi, 2011; Kelsall, 2011, 2013). This could also be done in conjunction with work on pockets of effectiveness by (Roll, 2014). This needs further investigation as to whether there are instances or even state departments at national or local levels that exhibit greater adoption and use of performance measures.

### **6.3 Recommendations to Practitioners in Kenya and Developing Countries in General**

As indicated in the introduction, this study was motivated by my practical experiences in advocating for evidence used in decision-making within public organizations. It soon became evident that an understanding of this organizational behavior within the Kenyan context was crucial if success was to be registered in facilitating and theorizing it. This study has thus been a refreshing reflection from which I wish to share three thoughts and recommendations for reform designers and practitioners in developing countries.

A first focus is that the public servants (especially managers), their interests and aspirations, matter and should be at the core of reforms. Most reforms seem to view managers and their officers as tools in the production machine of public services, goods, and works. As such they are seen as things to be fixed and improved so as to achieve better results. However given the complexity of defining, let alone delivering public services in an environment constrained by limited resources and overwhelming needs, the individual officer has to be valued and rewarded



with more than money and this be done regularly. Further, the belief in external consultants has limited long term effect, especially where there is no mechanism of skills transfer. As such the focus ought to be in developing managers to innovate and risk and not just to administer what has already been designed by external consultants. Mixed teams of managers working with consultants to design, implement and regularly review should be implemented. This focus should be reinforced by an effective mechanism of incentives, succession planning, and management where older managers work in tandem with younger ones to ensure that officers are well developed before they assume managerial positions.

A second thought relates to the assumptions made on capacity. The current model is that of transplanting ideas from other contexts just on the basis that they have worked. As demonstrated here and in other works on public sector reforms(Booth & Cammack, 2013; Kelsall, 2013; Manning, 2001; Ni Putu et al., 2013; Schick, 1998), this approach rarely works as it ignores the context of the recipient public administration. Developing capacity should of necessity work along the grain by appreciating the prevailing culture and existing capabilities (Kelsall, 2013). Capacity development has to be prioritized and institutionalized. This means by allocating resources (human, technical and financial) with a long-term focus. The time it takes to develop capacity should not be assumed and instead should be planned for. Tradeoffs such as downtimes and disruption of service delivery should be expected and planned for. The benefits for strong capacity can only be reaped in the long run. Of course, quick wins should be used to obtain early ownership by public servants.

Lastly, and maybe the hardest to achieve in my opinion is on how to create a desire for and the will to improve the performance of public organizations especially at senior management and political levels. This is particularly in a context where collective action problems constrain even the well-intended public officers. An assumption made by reform designers (often consultants hired by international development partners) is that government leaders and politicians are pro-change thus committed to the reforms and that its their bureaucracies that are the problem and thus need to be changed through reforms (Booth, 2012; Government of Kenya, 2003). This then takes the approach of the good people trying to change the bad people. In Kenya, this was

demonstrated by the NARC government's case that the greatest impediment to their success was the public service. Thus focus was on reforming the public service, their culture and practice but no focus were on the political and senior executives. In this study, I find grounds to question this assumption as I find that politics and the bureaucracy are complicit in their attitude towards reforms. I have cause to agree with Booth and Cammack (2012) that performance reforms require an approach to solving collective action problems. Both the politicians and civil servants should be targeted for any such reforms to take place. This multiplicity of focus is inevitably one that requires sufficient time for each level to come to speed on their roles and expectations.

From this study, it is clear that the political drive to see a change is critical. It shows that when public servants have an inkling that their leaders are for change then they have limited options but to follow suit. This drive from the top is demonstrated by the incentives and motivations that are made available to the public servants. My thinking is that one way to build this drive is to lower the premium placed on elective political offices. This would help that those who seek them do so out of a motive to serve and not just make money. This is what Leonard (1988, p.1) referred to as "a strong sense of professional vocation". As it is now, the focus seems to be on what rewards in form of monetary gains one can make and hence the intense competition to get promoted to higher positions.

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## ABBREVIATIONS

AFFA	Agriculture Food and Fisheries Authority
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CKRC	Constitution of Kenya Review Commission
CPSB	County Public Service Board
CPU	Central Planning Unit
CS	Cabinet Secretary
CSR	Civil Service Reforms
DPM	Directorate of Personnel Management
ERA	Economic Review of Agriculture
ERSWEC	Economic Recovery Strategy for Wealth and Employment Creation
GCG	Grand Coalition Government
GNU	Government of National Unity
GoK	Government of Kenya
HRM&D	Human Resource Management and Development
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
IEE	Independent Evaluation Experts
ISO	International Organization of Standards
JC	Jubilee Coalition
JG	Jubilee Government
JSC	Judicial Service Commission
KADU	Kenya African Democratic Union
KANU	Kenya African National Union
KICC	Kenyatta International Conference Center
KRC	Kenya Railways Corporation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCA	Member of County Assembly
MDAs	Ministry, Departments, and Agencies
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MoDP	Ministry of Devolution and Planning

MP	Member of Parliament
MPMC	Ministerial Performance Management Committee
MTP	Medium Term Plan
NA	National Assembly
NACOSTI	National Council for Science Technology & Innovation
NARC	National Rainbow Coalition
NCC	National Constitutional Conference
NCPB	National Cereals and Produce Board
NDP	National Democratic Party
NPM	New Public Management
NPSC	National Public Service Commission
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP	Office of the President
OPM	Office of Prime Minister
PA	Performance Appraisal
PC	Performance Contracting
PCD	Performance Contracting Division
PDU	Presidents Delivery Unit
PER	Performance Evaluation Reports
PMS	Project Management System
POE	Panel of Experts
PS	Permanent/Principal Secretary
PSC	Parliamentary Service Commission
PSC	Public Service Commission
PSR	Public Service Reforms
PSR&DS	Public Sector Reforms and Development Secretariat
PSTD	Public Sector Transformation Department
RBM	Results Based Management
RRI	Rapid Results Initiative
SLO	State Law Office

SPAS	Staff Performance Appraisal System
TNA	The National Alliance
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
URP	United Republican Party
US	United States of America
VDS	Vision Delivery Secretariat
WB	World Bank



## APPENDICES

### Annex I: Interview Protocol

#### a. Phase I

### PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA'S PUBLIC SECTOR: CASE STUDY ON PERFORMANCE INFORMATION USE

Phase 1 Fieldwork, July 2 – August 12, 2016

#### Interview Protocol

**Focus:** Public Sector Transformation Department (PSTD), Public Service Commission (PSC), Performance Contracting Division (PCD), Presidential Delivery Unit, Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MoALF) and Kenya Agriculture and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO) (1-2 Informants for the later two as they are the key cases of study)

#### Interviewee Information Points

- Thank you for accepting that I interview you.
- Your identity will remain anonymous and no comment you make will be attributed to you
- You have right to decline to respond to any of the questions in this interview
- Should you wish to be quoted please do advice
- I request to record the interview for ease of transcription but should you want anything off the record please do mention it.

#### Interview Questions

##### General Information of Interviewee

- Code:
- Name of Person
- Name of department worked in? Position? How Many years?
- Current position? Number of years in that position?
- Level of Education

##### Historical Overview of Performance Related Reforms

- What was your role?
- What was the main incentive for introducing a results focus in your ministry?
- What were the main initiatives related to the results focused reforms? RRA/I; Public service weeks;
- Was there a policy framework for the reforms?
- Who were the main actors responsible for the design and implementation of the PMS? Were they local or foreign consultants?

- Were there reform champions? How were they identified and their capacity built?
- Was there a specific focus on re-orienting the attitudes and perceptions of public managers? Especially those responsible for service delivery departments in the MDAs?
- What was the process of setting targets, measuring progress and reporting?
- What documents are available? Especially for the inception of the reforms? Can you share them?
- Role of the cabinet? President?
- Role of the KNBS and MED or were these outcomes of the performance reforms?
- Was the process centralized or decentralized?
- What were the main successes of the initiatives then? What worked?
- What failed? And why you think it failed?
- What other information that is relevant but I may not have covered in my questions would you be willing to provide me?
- Are you aware of studies that I could refer to that have been done so far? Published papers, books or reports?
- Who else would you suggest I talk too?
- Would you like to have see a copy of the transcribe of this interview before analysis?

Thank you so much for your time.

## **b. Phase II**

# **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA'S PUBLIC SECTOR: A STUDY ON PERFORMANCE INFORMATION USE**

**Phase 2 Fieldwork, September 19 – October 21, 2016**

## **Interview Protocol**

**Focus:** State Departments in the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (Focus on Service Delivery, Finance & Planning, and Personnel Departments)

### **Interviewee Information Points**

- Thank you for accepting that I interview you.
- Your identity will remain anonymous and no comment you make will be attributed to you
- You have right to decline to respond to any of the questions in this interview
- Should you wish to be quoted please do advise
- I request to record the interview for ease of transcription but should you want anything off the record please do mention it.

### **Interview Questions and Schedule**

#### **I. General Information of Interviewee**

- Name of Person
- Name of State Department/Organization/Directorate/Division/Section
- Reporting line
- Level of Education
- Job Group, Position and role in the Organization
- Years in employment: Public Sector? Private Sector? Other?

#### **II. Measurement System Characteristics**

- When was the results focus introduced in the ministry? Who did it? What was your role?
- Through which tools/instrument was it introduced?
- What is the policy instrument on which the result based management is anchored?
- How long has your department had a results measurement system/process? Is it internal to the department or is it shared with other departments? How?
- In day to day work what does performance mean to your department?
- What are the results expected from your docket?
- How are the result targets established?
- Who is responsible to achieve the results?
- How do you track results? Role of the PMS portal?
- Could you be so kind to describe the process tracking results that you are responsible for?
- How are performance targets set? Who is involved?

- What instruments are used to collect, analyze and report performance information in your department?
- What measures are made- Resource input, processes, output or outcome? Individual or organizational?
- What are main reports produced on performance in your department? Do you have copies I can look at?
- What is the frequency for producing such reports?
- How regular is the collection of information? Who does it?
- How else do you obtain data/information on your performance? Calling, walk –in, meetings
- In what processes is performance information mostly relevant? Planning, budgeting, parliamentary questions?
- Of what use is the online portal (project management system) for the ministry? Is it for internal use or for external reporting?

### **III. Assessing use of performance information**

- What kind of data/information is considered when planning the next steps in service delivery?
- Are there forums, meetings (retreats) dedicated to reflecting on what the performance information means for your department and the organization at large?
- How regular are they? Who is present?
- Could you describe to me the process in which your department members review and reflect on the implications of the previous results of performance?
- Is there a mechanism of documenting such lessons i.e. best practice manual, handbook?
- What about sharing the lessons with other actors in the ministry?
- What is the process of decision making during service delivery/implementation in your department?
- What is the place of past performance results when making decisions?
- What kind of information is used for such decision making?
- What is its source?
- Is there a legal (or any other) requirement to use that data and feedback in your day to day management work? Or is it voluntary?
- How usable is the information on day to day work?
- What challenges do you face in your attempts to make use of the results information you have?
- To whom and for what is your department accountable for?
- How often do you have to account for your work? And that of your department?
- In what form does it take place...meetings, sending of reports (physical or through uploading to a portal)?
- What kind of information is expected in the reports?
- Could I see some of the reports?
- Do you share your performance reports via website? And on social media such as facebook, twitter, instagram? Through your account or does the organization/department have an account?

#### **IV. Assessing the Explanatory Variables**

- What does performance mean to you? And your department?
- How do you assess its value addition to your work? Has it made it easier to make decisions?
- How was performance management introduced in your department? Were staff members involved? Was there preparatory trainings? For who?
- How is performance perceived in your organization?
- Do you get rewarded for meeting your targets? How?
- Is there a sanction mechanism for poor performance? How
- Who are the actors in the organization?
- Who asks for the performance reports from your department?
- Do you get any questions from the parliamentary committee on Agriculture? What kind of questions?
- To what extent are the political leaders (minister or his designate, parliamentary committee or individual politicians) involved in the performance management process of your department?
- Do you regularly get feedback from the politicians? In what way, in writing, meetings, visits to your office?
- Does your department's performance elicit public political responses?
- To what extent does your departmental budget depend on your reported performance?
- Have there been instances where the departments plans have been rejected by the minister or parliamentary committee? Why? Any connection with performance claims?

Thank you very much for your time.

## Annex II: Research Permit

### a. Research Permit

**CONDITIONS**

- 1. You must report to the County Commissioner and the County Education Officer of the area before embarking on your research. Failure to do that may lead to the cancellation of your permit.**
- 2. Government Officers will not be interviewed without prior appointment.**
- 3. No questionnaire will be used unless it has been approved.**
- 4. Excavation, filming and collection of biological specimens are subject to further permission from the relevant Government Ministries.**
- 5. You are required to submit at least two(2) hard copies and one(1) soft copy of your final report.**
- 6. The Government of Kenya reserves the right to modify the conditions of this permit including its cancellation without notice.**

**REPUBLIC OF KENYA**

**NACOSTI**

**National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation**

**RESEARCH CLEARANCE PERMIT**

**Serial No: A-10339**

**CONDITIONS: see back page**

**THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:**

**MR. ABRAHAM RUGO MURIU**

**of UNIVERSITY OF POTSDAM 0-14467**

**Potsdam, has been permitted to conduct research in Nairobi County**


**on the topic: PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN KENYA'S PUBLIC SECTOR (2003-2013)**

**for the period ending: 29th July, 2017**

**Permit No : NACOSTI/P/16/94697/12289**

**Date Of Issue : 1st August, 2016.**

**Fee Received : ksh 2000**



**Abraham Rugo Muriu**

**Applicant's Signature**

**Director General**

**National Commission for Science, Technology & Innovation**



**NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE,  
TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION**

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NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/16/94697/12289**

Date:  
**1<sup>st</sup> August, 2016**

Abraham Rugo Muriu  
University Of Potsdam  
**GERMANY.**

**RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION**

Following your application for authority to carry out research on *“Performance management in Kenya’s public sector (2003-2013),”* I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Nairobi County** for the period ending **29<sup>th</sup> July, 2017.**

You are advised to report to **the Principal Secretaries of the selected Ministries, the Chief Executive Officers, selected Government Agencies, the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Nairobi County** before embarking on the research project.

On completion of the research, you are expected to submit **two hard copies and one soft copy in pdf** of the research report/thesis to our office.

  
**BONIFACE WANYAMA**  
**FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO**

Copy to:

The Principal Secretaries  
Selected Ministries.

The Chief Executive Officers  
Selected Government Agencies.

The County Commissioner  
Nairobi County.

**b. Sample Letter to PS's in Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock & Fisheries**

August 11, 2016

Principal Secretary,  
State Department of Agriculture,  
Kilimo House, Nairobi

Dear .....

**RE: DATA COLLECTION ON PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IN STATE  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

I am a doctoral fellow in the department of Public Management at the University of Potsdam, Germany. My research topic is on Performance Management in Kenya's Public Sector (2003-2016). My dissertation project is focusing on how public sector organizations design and implement performance oriented reforms and especially on the use of performance information to improve service delivery.

Looking at it from a management perspective based on institutional theory, I am interested on the place of attitudes and perceptions of managers towards performance management processes and that of political interest, support and demand in influencing the use of performance information. While Kenya has an array of tools employed for performance management, I am specifically interested in performance contracting and appraisal system.

This is to request your permission to interview and obtain relevant documents from the following offices and officers in the State Department of Agriculture:-

1. Directors
2. Heads of Divisions
3. Heads of Sections
4. Central Planning and Project Coordination Unit
5. Human Resources Management and Development Directorate
6. State Corporation Unit
7. Records Department and Library

I plan to undertake the said interviews during the period **September 19 – October 28, 2016**. I have already obtained the research permit from the National Council of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI). Find the same attached and the accompanying letter of conditions that I bound too. Once done with my dissertation I will share a copy of my study with your office.

Yours Faithfully,  
Abraham Rugo Muriu



### Annex III: List of Interviews Conducted & Documents Collected

#### a. List of Interviews

<b>Interview (ee) Reference</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Position/Level or Equivalent</b>
001	Male (M)	Head of Division
002	M	Director
003	Female (F)	Head of Section
004	F	Head of Division
005	F	Head of Section
006	M	Director
007	M	Head of Section
008	M	Head of Division
009	M	Head of Division
010	M	Director
011	M	Director
012	M	Director
013	F	Head of Division
014	F	Director
015	F	Head of Section
016	M	Head of Division
017	F	Head of Section
018	M	Director
019	M	Director
020	F	Director
021	M	Head of Division
022	M	Head of Division
023	M	Head Of Division
024	M	Head of Section
025	F	Head of Section
026	M	Head of Section
027	M	Head of Division
028	F	Director
029	M	Director
030	M	Director
031	F	Head of Division
032	M	Head of Division
033	M	Head of Division
034	M	Head of Division
035	M	Director

036	M	Head of Division
037	M	Head of Section
038	M	Head of Section
039	M	Head of Section
040	M	Head of Division
041	M	Head of Section
042	M	Director
043	M	Head of Division
044	M	Head of Division
045	F	Head of Division
046	M	Director
047	F	Director
048	M	Head of Division
049	M	Director
050	M	Head of Section

**b. List of Documents**

<b>Document Type</b>	<b>Number of Documents</b>	<b>Document Reference</b>
Work plans and Performance Contracts	8	008, 038, 054, 062, 063, 073, 075, 059
Minutes of meetings	12	009, 016, 017, 034, 035, 037, 070, 071, 076, 081, 060, 061
Performance evaluation Reports	24	003, 004, 012, 013, 018, 019, 020, 029, 030, 039, 040, 041, 044, 055, 056, 057, 058, 064, 065, 066, 067, 069, 074, 078
Program Reports	26	014, 021, 022, 023, 024, 025, 026, 027, 028, 031, 032, 033, 036, 042, 043, 045, 046, 047, 048, 049, 051, 052, 053, 068, 072, 080
Briefing Notes	9	001, 002, 005, 006, 007, 010, 011, 015, 050
<b>Total</b>	<b>79</b>	