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Exploring the Risks of Project Failure in Africa: Contextualizing Certain Cases in Chad

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Abstract

Many development projects in Africa have failed, either partially or completely. Most often, these failures have been understood and interpreted by researchers and development players in terms of a global and striking concept, as phenomena of blockage and/or attachment to secular traditions" of African populations, Assogba (2005) [8]. Applying the principle of pernicious effects with a weberian interactional model (Zidane and Olsson 2017), we realize that project achievements are best understood and interpreted as the product of specific social behavior change. In terms of practical utility, the present study suggests that an interactionist approach to the process of carrying out development projects in Africa would undoubtedly reduce

the number of failures or negative effects. Most, almost all development or resilience projects don't do well in Africa (Montes-Guerra *et al*, 2015) [5], and particularly in Chad. Yet there is a chance that these projects will succeed if certain aspects of the project management concept are respected. Studies have shown that it is clear that development actors have put much more emphasis on a "management" angle to the detriment of the "development/impact" angle, yet the overall success of a project is both "management success" and "development success". It should also be noted that project failures are not confined to Africa - other countries also experience failures - but in Africa, it's a question of the behavior of donors and project implementers.

Keywords: Project, Failure, Development, Success, Management

1. Introduction

Studies around projects Development in sub-Saharan Africa aims to define the issues and contexts for implementing development and resilience projects in the Lake Chad area, and then to determine its positive impact on society. In other term, project development must have a significant influence on the social side of society. According to Blanc (2018), the notion of social impact consists of all the spin-offs (evolutions, inflections, changes, ruptures) of an organization's activities on both its external stakeholders (beneficiaries, users, customers) direct or indirect from its territory and internal stakeholders (employees, volunteers), as well as on society in general. Does the most currently used results-based management (RBM) approach contribute to the success of development projects in Africa in general, and in Chad in particular?

To measure the success of a project, it is essential to distinguish between management success and development success, but it is clear that in the RBM approach, and practically on the ground, the emphasis is mainly on management success, leaving aside development success. Other questions will also guide our study. Firstly, the question of the interest in studying the problem of development project failures in Chad¹ and proposing possible solutions. Secondly, it may be useful to clarify the theoretical complement to project risk management issues. In Chad, as in most African countries, projects of any kind are exposed to a number of risks. The most recurrent are weak risk management strategies themselves, followed by shortcomings in project monitoring. This article begins with a review of the literature on risks in project management, followed by the methodology used and, finally, the results and discussions, followed by conclusions.

¹ National plan of development of Chad 2017-2021

2. Literature review

Success is a difficult concept to define exactly. In the dictionary Le Petit Larousse (1999), success is “a happy result, an accomplishment”. But what about project success? There is no real consensus on what constitutes the “success” or a project “failure”. Pinto and Slevin (1988) assert that there are few concepts in project management that have been regularly debated by experts without agreement on their definition. Indeed, Wells (1998) denounces the fact that very little thought has been given to the notion of success, other than in vague terms. The challenge of defining project success for researchers seems considerable (Ika, 2009). At present, many authors assume that everyone knows exactly what is meant by “project success” or “project failure”. However, the only certainty in terms of project management is that it is an ambiguous, multi-faceted and multi-dimensional document, whose definition is context-dependent. Before proposing a complete definition of project success here, we can draw a comparison with certain concepts such as profitability, performance and efficiency. Such confusion is often found in project management literature (Belout, 1998; Ika, 2009). Project effectiveness is linked to the principle of added value and meeting a need or purpose in terms of cost, quality and time. Consequently, we can say that performance in project management integrates the notions of effectiveness and efficiency. For Drucker, effectiveness is more important than efficiency (see, among others, O'shaughnessy, 1992, p.13). Consequently, project success corresponds to project effectiveness and efficiency (Belout, 1998; Ika, 2009).

To satisfy the requirements of the conceptual framework of our research, it is necessary to distinguish between “project management success” and “project success”. Traditionally, the success of a project has been considered as the respect of temporal, financial and qualitative constraints. This “triangle: Deadline, cost, quality” or “iron triangle” (Atkinson, 1999) or “golden triangle” (Westerveld, 2003), also referred to by some professionals as the “Holy Trinity” or “virtuous triangle” (Hazebroucq and Badot, 1996, p.35), was sufficient in itself to define the success of a project (Ika, 2009).

However, it is not uncommon to find that projects that were delivered on time, on budget and to specification were still considered failures. On the other hand, other projects that have exceeded forecasts and costs have turned out to be successes (Pinto and Slevin, 1988a; Ika, 2009). Some projects are convincing illustrations of this (Mulms and Bjeinni, 1996; Lim and Mohamed, 1999; Ika, 2009). De Wit (1988) reports, for example, that although the Fulmar North Sea Oil project experienced considerable delays and cost overruns, fortuitous circumstances, including the dramatic rise in oil prices in 1973 and 1979, made it a prosperous project.

A “percussion effect”, to quote Hazebroucq (1993), would seem to be observed: Some projects considered “failures” at their start-up become models of success later on, and vice versa, while others, considered “successes” at their start-up, turn out to be disastrous later on. In this way, the project team can be unfairly congratulated or blamed, depending on whether the project is considered a success or a failure (Ika, 2009).

Paradoxically, de Wit (1988) proposed a classification between the notion of project success and that of project management success. From the tautological perspective that

“a business project only exists in relation to predefined goals” (Hazebroucq and Badot, 1996, p.35), de Wit (1988) questions the relationship: Project goals is the project management potential. Munns and Bjeirmi (1996) argue that the objectives of project management and projects are not the same, and that time, cost and quality - the most common objectives of project management - can no longer be confused with project success (see also Ika, 2009).

3. Method

It's hard to understand the underdevelopment in which the various African states find themselves in general and Chad in particular, despite the fact that Africa, and in this case Chad, abounds in immense wealth (natural, cultural, social and human) in terms of both quantity and quality. To find answers to these questions, research into these aspects of project management may well elucidate the situation: Statistics on project success and failure factors, List of failed projects in Africa, The challenge of disappointing project performance, Time and cost performance of ADBs (Ahsan and Gunawan, 2010), Example of some projects in Africa (JA, 2019), Success/failure analysis of management vs. development, The root causes of these failures.

4. Results and discussion

4.1 Quantitative results

The most important points discussed in this section will give us a fairly in-depth view of the issue of project failure in Africa². General tendencies in statistics on project success and failure factors (Tchiakpe, 2024). According to this author, for 15% of organizations, the quality of the deliverable is not the most important factor in project success. In the same context, he found also that the most important factor of project success according to 18% of organization is related to the respect of the budget while 19% consider meeting deadlines to be the most important success factor. In the 60% of projects which are behind schedule, 19,70% of organizations admit to having experienced a project failure and 77% of organizations with good project management systems achieve their objectives, compared with 56% of those without. Agile projects are 28% more successful than traditional V-cycle projects. In 2009, 39% of companies consider that changing priorities is the main cause of project failure. The following table lists some of the projects whose successes have been problematic. Given the multitude of projects implemented or executed in Africa, these are supposed to be the most prestigious and gigantic the continent has ever seen.

Table 1: List of failed projects in Africa

Project	Country	Amount
West Nile Gas Project	Egypt	\$12 billion
Diarniadio Lake City	Dakar	\$2 billion
TGV Tangier-Casa	Morocco	\$2 billion
Grand Barrage Inga III	Congo DRC	\$14 billion
TGV Abouja Kaduna	Nigeria	\$849 million
Kinshassa-Brazzaville Bridge:	Congo, Congo DRC	\$550 million
Sissi-City, the Pharaonic City	Egypt	\$43 billion

² Le contexte conditionne la réussite des projets en Afrique. La recherche à l'École Telfer - École de gestion Telfer. <https://telfer.uottawa.ca/fr/research/reflexions-novatrices/le-contexte-conditionne-la-reussite-des-projets-en-afrique/>

Akwaba City, urban development	Nigeria	\$370 million
Kenya-Ethiopia power line	Kenya-Ethiopia	\$1.26 billion
Nacala logistics corridor	Mozambique	\$4 billion
Port of Cotonou modernization	Benin	€ 953 million euros;
Cotonou-Parakou-Dosso-Niamey railway loop	Benin	€ 1.2 billion euros

Source: Author construction through documentary review

a. The challenge: Disappointing project performance

An analysis of the main challenges facing projects carried out in Africa as a whole by the major institutions reveals a disappointing performance by the latter. According respectively to Armstrong (2013), McKinsey-Devex (2011), the Meltzer Commission, the IFC (2007) and the World bank (2010; 2016) more than 70%, 64%, 50% and 25% to 50% of projects in Africa fail in one way or another. The works of Ahsan & Gunawan (2010) in the context of the success of Agency of Burundi Development (ADB) found that the performance of projects in the view of delay (time) and cost are very correlated in the case of some country instead of Burundi. On average, projects start 17 months behind schedule. In the same vein, they conclude that, of all the projects studied, 31.4% are running over schedule, while 14.5% are running over budget.

b. Example of some projects in Africa

According to JA (2019), there are two types of success: management success and development success. First, the management success with some criteria as efficiency-cost-effectiveness and effectiveness-objectives.

- **Efficiency/Delay:** The project is completed on time;
- **Effectiveness/Objectives:** The project has achieved its objectives;
- **Efficiency/Cost:** The project budget has been well managed.

A change in one of these three parameters has a significant impact on the two others.

Secondly the development success. The criteria of the development of the success of a project are linked to the relevance and the impact/effect and sustainability.

- **Country relevance:** The project has met the country's needs;
- **Beneficiary relevance:** The deliverable has met the needs of the beneficiaries;
- **Impact:** The project strengthened the country's institutional capacity;
- **Sustainability:** The project has achieved results that will continue after its completion.

c. Management and development success/failure analysis

In project failures, there is a paradox and a percussion effect: short-term performance vs. long-term performance (Ika, 2018). A management failure but a great development success, this is the ticked-off hand theory: As for example the "Water supply project in Ouagadougou (2001-2007)" a rare case.

A management success but a development fiasco: example of the "Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline (1993-2003); 4 billion dollars is a success on time, but a development failure", a rare case. A management failure and a development fiasco (planning error): Project examples "Centrale Maria-Gleta I, 61 million euros or 'to billion FCFA in Benin; Tinapa, a white elephant, 450 million dollars in Nigeria" very frequent cases. Also, A management success and a development success: Example of the project "Strengthening handwashing capacities, Ghana (2007-2009), \$110,000", a very rare case.

According to Richard (2021) ^[13] studies, half of all new application development requests end in failure. In detail, the study reveals that 15% of these projects are never launched, 15% are never completed, and 20% are delivered, but do not meet business needs.

d. Root causes of failure

Generally speaking, however, the root causes of these failures are more closely linked to the contextual framework, such as the history, geography and economy of the country in question, to the institutional framework (corruption, lack of capacity, poor governance, etc.) and to the managerial framework relating to faulty design, cost overruns and missed deadlines or delays. In order to highlight the analytical framework of project failures, let's consider a case study of the Chad-Cameroon oil pipeline (Ika and Saint-Macary, 2012). The Project characteristics are the following:

- **Overall objective:** Reduce poverty;
- **Objective:** Build the pipeline;
- **Length of pipeline:** 1000 km linear, Chad-Cameroon;
- **Budget:** Approximately 4 billion dollars;
- **Duration:** 10 years (1993-2003);
- **Technical and financial partners:** Exxon Mobil and World Bank;
- **Management success:** Yes;
- **Development impact:** No.

The following table provides a contextual analysis of the causes of the pipeline project's failure in Chad. The answers given in this table are based on documentary research and the facts observed.

Table 2: Causes likely to impact the pipeline project

Contextual causes (projects are part of a context)	
background	Case of Chad pipeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Politics; - Economic; - Physical/Geographic; - Historical; - Sociocultural; - Demographic; - Environmental 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Chad is a landlocked country; - The 1979 civil war destabilized Chad; - Political violence is recurrent; - The curse of natural resources; - Malnutrition: 60,000 children die every year
Institutional	
background	Case of Chad pipeline
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Corruption - Reversals in capacity building; - Lack of political support; - Lack of implementation capacity; - Too much emphasis on quick, visible results. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Asymmetry of power between planners/implementers/beneficiaries; - Political and institutional difficulties;
Managerial	
background	Case of Chad pipeline
<p>Several management failures are due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • - <i>Poor design;</i> • <i>Unclear objectives;</i> • <i>Uncaptured needs;</i> • <i>Poor policy;</i> • <i>Lack of qualified personnel;</i> • <i>Time and cost overruns;</i> • <i>Poor risk analysis;</i> • <i>Poor coordination and monitoring</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Difficulty in involving beneficiaries and capturing their voice; - Escalating World Bank environmental assessment requirements; - Monitoring challenges to ensure that oil revenues are used to fight poverty.

Source: Authors

There are generally four kinds of project management pitfalls, but it's very difficult and complex to tackle them all at once (Hirschman, 1967). They are firstly Universalism. The countering universalism means adapting project management to the context, type and complexity of the project. Secondly their result is demonstrability. Countering demonstrability of results means managing with an emphasis on benefits, not on detailed plans. Thirdly, the lack of management capacity: Training is required and also the culture: Adapting project management to culture and engaging stakeholders.

Even if the reasons and factors are numerous, analyzing them from a project management perspective seems highly relevant. For example, the following (non-exhaustive) list of key elements contributing to project failures in general is accepted: Unclear objectives, underestimated or overestimated planning, inadequate project set-up, insufficient funding and weaknesses in the management of financial flows, the old reflex: "Let's get started..., then we'll see", errors in the choice of staff, lack of governance, poor risk management, poor monitoring and team meetings, cultural rigor and dimension not taken into account, inadequate communication, unsuitable tools, neglect of context and timing.

4.2 Results and Discussion

Every project must meet one or more precise objectives. If the objective is not clearly defined, or if something changes along the way, it will be difficult to achieve. In the case of a ship, if it doesn't know its destination, it risks getting lost at sea and using all its resources just to stay afloat. So, start by establishing precisely what the project's objective is, based on the SMART method (Specific, Measurable, Acceptable, Realistic and Time-bound). The staff will then know which

direction to go in, and will be able to do everything in their power to reach the target on time. Staff will also be more motivated and more involved in the project.

4.2.1 Planning: Underestimated or overestimated

The project runs a high risk of missing its target or being delayed if no minimum planning attention is kept in mind. In addition to missing the deadline, the project will suffer budget overruns. And if the product doesn't reach the market on time, the company may miss opportunities, lose customers and see its sales fall.

There's no need to plan every project down to the last detail. On the contrary, it can even be counter-productive. (Richard, 2021) ^[13] On the other hand, it is essential to define the key dates by which certain stages of your project must be completed. Automatically allow for contingencies. It's important to allow for a sizeable margin.

4.2.2 Inadequate project set-up

The project set-up stage is often taken lightly. This stage normally involves taking the time to obtain the necessary answers and commitments before embarking on a project. It's during this stage that precise milestones and clear objectives are defined to measure the project's progress later on.

Generally speaking, if a project is not sufficiently well thought-out, with all the technical, administrative, political and financial arrangements necessary to support and realize it, it is particularly risky to start. Yet this is the mistake that is all too often made. In fact, the project usually runs into trouble when, for example, political support is slow to materialize. The same applies to financing. If we have even the largest part of a project's funding, we absolutely must secure the rest of the money.

Securing the project can be done either by a firm promise, legally signed by the partners concerned, to finance the

project at an agreed date, or ideally by making the funds available in a bank account created for this purpose (Galiana, 2020): "Any delay in the payment of the sums initially lacking or the sums promised is a major financial risk which, sooner or later, could force the project to be stopped or abandoned". A simple equation, with predictable results.

4.2.3 *Insufficient funding and weaknesses in cash flow management*

(TOP 10 causes of project failure in Africa, 2021) "Lack of funding is often the source of project stoppage or abandonment". The important thing is to manage project cash flow forecasts properly. For example, if you know in advance that the fourth month of the project will see a 2-fold increase in monthly costs due to an expected high level of downtime; the management team will be able to take the necessary steps to find the funds to cope with this situation.

4.2.4 *The old reflex: "Let's get started..., then we'll see"*

If there's one thing that happens all too often in projects in Chad, when the first start-up obstacles begin to appear on the horizon, it's "Let's get started..., we'll see later!" The problem is that, more often than not, many projects are overtaken by the same mistakes made at the outset. When this is the case, the bill for resolving them is higher, and the subsequent risks that had not been taken into account end up, in many cases, forcing the project to be stopped or abandoned.

Finally, the conclusions of the article will be presented in a last section, followed by the main conclusions. Where appropriate, limitations and proposals for continuity will be included.

4.2.5 *Staffing mistakes*

To ensure the success of a project, it's important to surround yourself with people who are qualified in their field, i.e. talented, available and motivated. The first asset that determines the success of a project is the project team. Project execution requires both men and women. A project manager who doesn't have all the skills needed to manage the project, lead it, steer it, keep the stakeholders informed so that they can make optimal decisions... is in itself a risk for the project! All those involved in the project need to be aware of their responsibilities, roles, limits and powers in order to support the project effectively. Galiana, D. (2020, February 6). "A project is too strategic an undertaking, and too important in achieving the organization's objectives, to take the risk of entrusting the reins to people with no project experience or project management training". Indeed, in a project, risk lies at every level: Being a good operational "manager" will not necessarily make someone a good project or program manager.

4.2.6 *Lack of governance*

It's not enough to recruit or train key personnel to ensure that the project runs according to plan. What's important is that internal operating mechanisms and clear rules are designed, written down and shared with all project stakeholders.

The rules, roles and responsibilities of each officer and

committee are clarified, as are the nature and mechanisms of interactions between them, constituting the governance of the project. It's about being accountable, because the more the rules, responsibilities and standards are formalized, written down in advance and "democratically" shared so as to be accessible to all; the better it is to achieve the project's objective. Financial governance must also be taken into account, as there is also a financial governance system for organizations bound by stricter financial management rules, which describes the mechanisms for managing and authorizing the project's financial flows.

The project will inevitably face a number of risks, including communication risks, financial risks, political risks, decision-making risks, and many other human risks, when all these rules are missing or not clearly defined and communicated.

4.2.7 *Poor risk management*

Few projects run smoothly, because in project management, there's no such thing as zero risk. Shortage of raw materials, supplier bankruptcy, underestimation of resources, resignation of a team member, various breakdowns, etc. - if you haven't thought of a solution beforehand, such situation can quickly turn into a disaster and speed things up towards a fiasco. That's why it's essential to be prepared for any problems that may arise during the course of the project. To do this, it's essential to implement risk management right from the start of the project. Identify all potential risks so you can prevent, limit or even eliminate them, by thinking about preventive and corrective actions to be taken if they do arise.

Project management is first and foremost a risky adventure, i.e. moving towards a future that is unknown but assumed to be certain by the promoter. This future is made up of a set of activities bathed in a universe of uncertainties, creating risks, some of which have the potential to undermine the achievement of project results. This nuisance can extend beyond the project's perimeter (indirect negative impacts). Neglecting them is a mistake that pays off dearly most of the time. It's not enough to be aware of them, or to have some idea of the project's risks.

Managing these risks requires rigorous planning, careful identification of risks, at least qualitative (and, in rare cases, quantitative) analysis, monitoring and evaluation of each identified risk, and an appropriate response strategy. It's proactivity that counts here. The use of a risk register (a simple Excel spreadsheet is generally sufficient) is the best practice required in this field, where each risk is recorded with an assessment of its probability of occurrence, its effect and the impact of appropriate responses. A logbook helps to ensure good project management.

The occasional need to represent the risks in the monitoring register on a Cartesian graph called a risk criticality matrix (or probability-impact or severity matrix), is only to better appreciate the extent of the project's overall criticality, to communicate on this subject with decision-makers with an additional level of rigor, and to prioritize actions.

Table 3: Project risk analysis table

Gravity \ Probability	Minor	Significant	Severe	Very serious
Frequency	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions	Uncapturable	Uncapturable
Uncommon	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions	Uncapturable
Rare	Acceptable	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions
Very Rare	Acceptable	Acceptable	Acceptable under conditions	Acceptable under conditions

Source: Authors

4.2.8 Poor follow-up and team meetings

Does the absence of project coordination meetings contribute to project failure? That's the question some people ask themselves. But it does!

Long experience of project management has shown that a project is first and foremost a regular follow-up meeting of all those directly involved in its management. As soon as the frequency of meetings is reduced, the project begins to suffer from shortcomings. Risks of mobilizing and taking charge of action points begin to systematically enter the project.

Ideally, meetings of the project staff should be held at least once a week: They are an exceptional way for the staff to stay focused on the project, and to keep each other informed. It also keeps them motivated, involved and accountable to the project.

4.2.9 Rigor and cultural dimension not taken into account

In addition, they enable project managers to pass on messages and receive new ones about the tasks in hand, to motivate their teams and understand their problems... Such meetings must be held several times a month: They are a crucial opportunity to bring the project to life. The cultural dimension is an important source of information for the project. The project manager must keep a close eye on the progress of the project and the execution of tasks, to ensure that everything is going as smoothly as possible. If a problem arises, he or she must be able to intervene immediately. It is essential to ensure that:

- The project is progressing towards the final objective;
- All intermediate objectives are met;
- No task is behind schedule;
- Budget and deadlines are respected;
- Resources are used correctly and efficiently.

All updated project management tools must be applied on a daily basis.

The lack of rigor in project implementation in the African context stems from the cultural dimension: Cumbersome administration, late meetings, neglect of tasks, unauthorized use of funds, introduction of unplanned tasks...

When the project manager and/or a member of the project staff forget to take part in a project meeting, these absences not only affect the progress of the meeting and planned decisions, they also demotivate the other participants and, in the long run, demotivate all those involved in project implementation.

The same lack of rigor can be seen in the time it takes to reply to e-mails: In an African context, it can take anywhere from a few hours to one or two weeks to receive a reply to a simple urgent e-mail, compared with just a few minutes to two or three days in the West or East, which can be a real source of delay for projects.

Generally speaking, however, rigor is required in all phases of the project life cycle: Identification/initial assessment, planning/formulation, execution (including controls,

monitoring and reporting), final assessment and closure.

4.2.10 Inadequate communication

Communication is central to project implementation, and must be effective. When it isn't, problems start, then conflicts arises if nothing is done. Communication problems can also slow down the mobilization of the entire team. Not communicating enough, or on the contrary, communicating too much, kills communication (for example, by passing on sensitive information to the wrong people or at the wrong time), can considerably damage a project.

There's a middle ground to be respected in project communication: Principles and procedures. The project manager is the primary animator of the project, and it is his or her responsibility to set the right tone in the forms of communication (verbal, written and non-written). For this reason, many organizations rely on the project manager's interpersonal skills, and one of the primary recruitment criteria is his or her ability to communicate effectively.

Lack of communication is a recurring problem in project failures. Indeed, if team members don't communicate with each other on a regular basis, problems will never be solved. Sharing information is essential to a project's success. What's more, exchanging information facilitates teamwork and develops creativity. It also builds strong bonds and trust between stakeholders. In the end, good communication brings nothing but positive results: The team works in a good atmosphere and becomes more productive. As the saying goes, information is power. Information is crucial to project management. If it's in the right quantity and of the right quality, it leads to the right decisions. Conversely, when a project lacks this decision-making tool, it runs a high risk of failure.

In a project context, the synthesis of information for a quantitative and qualitative analysis of facts is essential. Performance indicators are one such tool.

4.2.11 Unsuitable tools

Project management software such as Wimi and MS Project (Gantt) are ideal tools. They make it easy to track project progress, foster collaboration between team members, exchange information, centralizes all your documents, and much more. Best of all, you can try it out for free to see if it's right for you.

4.2.12 Neglect of context and timing

If nothing has happened during project implementation, it's often the case that the context in which the project is carried out is the main underlying cause of failure. A project fails because the timing is wrong. For example, this was the case with the Renault Vel Satis (2002), a car with an overly modern design that failed to win over customers, or Google Glass (2013), its high-tech glasses that were supposed to transform the way we use technology (Context determines the success of projects in Africa). Factors such as a product that's too innovative, a competitor with a head start, or a sudden crisis in the field, can lead to project failure. What often has a negative influence on a project in the African

context is, in particular, the context in which the project is implemented. According to the World Bank, sub-Saharan Africa is a region of the world conducive to economic and social development. A great deal of money is invested in Africa in development, resilience and other locally-financed initiatives (Africa - Overview). These funds are earmarked for large-scale government and community initiatives, resilient infrastructure, rural mobility, public sector reform and access to renewable energy, among others. However, it seems that financing is not always the problem in Africa. On the contrary, available funds are not systematically allocated to the right projects. According to a McKinsey article entitled Solving Africa's Infrastructure Paradox, highly evocative of project failure rates in Africa, the investment is there, but "most infrastructure projects in Africa fail to reach financial close: Less than 10% do, and 80% stumble at the feasibility and business case stages in particular". Professor Ika's research has established that over 50% of projects - aimed at infrastructure development or capacity building, for example - either fail to deliver the expected results or fail to meet the expectations of partners and beneficiaries for a variety of reasons, not least of which is a lack of understanding of the context. The article Four Reasons Why Projects Fail in Africa discusses such reasons in greater detail.

Context can inevitably have a major impact on the success or failure of a project. In fact, the impact of socio-economic, politico-legal, socio-cultural, institutional, managerial and other levels of context is irrefutable, but their role in project success remains to be clarified. Professor Ika has studied the circumstances that pre-exist the launch of projects, or that arise during their implementation. He is now seeking to identify the contextual issues that lead to the success or failure of certain projects in French-speaking African countries such as Chad, Benin, Côte d'Ivoire and Senegal. His approach will involve interviewing stakeholders in 12 major projects, including project supervisors, project managers, experts and technical and financial partners, to gauge the influence of different contexts on project implementation, from management and development (economic and social) perspectives. The major projects included in the study sample have received national or international funding.

"It's well known and on everyone's lips: Context is everything. However, it's time to study its various aspects and the way in which they interact over time to positively or negatively affect project implementation in French-speaking Africa, where socio-political complexity tends to be very high", explains Professor Ika.

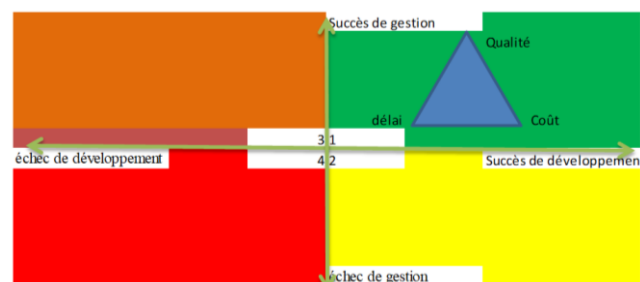
The main reasons for these failures are poor communication, mismanagement of objectives and priorities, inadequate programming and lack of willpower.

By being aware of these different factors and taking steps to avoid them, it is possible in many ways to increase the chances of success of projects for which one is responsible (Tchiakpe, 2024).

It should also be recognized that Africa is not the only bad pupil when it comes to project management. A gigantic project is never truly a quiet river. If "the road is long from the project to the thing", as Molière suggests, it can also be tortuous when projects are not simply abandoned, as in the case of the controversial Notre-Dame-des-Landes airport project. Other major projects have survived abandonment, however, albeit at the cost of a life for the most paused:

Forks in the road, side roads, off-track exits or reorientations, in other words, zigzags.

Project managers know this well: The life of a project is often complicated, with disappointing results, delays and cost overruns. It's as if they have a mechanism to explain their performance, or lack of it, over time. Failed projects represent a huge loss for organizations. In short, the "Kemy Cadran" will be very useful for analyzing the results of development projects. Please note that Kemy Cadran is my own invention.



Source: Authors

Fig 1: Kemy Cadran

5. Conclusion

Giving away food, training sessions, medicines and other financial and material aid will not make the misery and development problems of the province of Chad, nor of Africa, disappear. Such generosity has shown its own limits; in some places, it has even led to passivity in the face of progress, a feeling of weakness and a spirit of eternal assistance. In fact, it is self-responsibility and social awareness that are decisive for human development. The appropriation we are attempting to highlight is part of this process. It wears on the mind as an evolutionary process, not as an end in itself. It is a state of mind, an attitude, an approach, a dynamic approach to self-help, and an awareness of one's obligations. This resolutely multi-dimensional and simultaneous analysis is, in this respect, both relevant and profitable. Indeed, appropriation cannot be conceived only in terms of technology and capital transfer flows. Rather, it involves aspects such as sociology, culture, economics, politics and pedagogy. However, none of the projects reviewed achieved full ownership due to a lack of stakeholder involvement. Negative results have been achieved, while the so-called positive results remain fragile, for a variety of reasons, most of which relate to the behavior of exogenous stakeholders, but also to somewhat endogenous factors.

Target groups who initially have a low level of understanding of the projects do not achieve a level of ownership at the end of these projects. All members of the organization do not have the same balance of power, the same attributions and the same representations. It takes time and trust to bring people to a stage of receptiveness and genuine upstream change. Communities are leery of anything that might threaten their cultural belonging and fail to take into account old social practices, as well as customary representations and new aspirations. In this reflection, human beings are far from having a single belonging or a single source. According to Pierre Claude Collin, social reality is highly complex, involving several levels of functioning, reading and expression: The "lived", the "memorized" and the "dreamed". This underscores the

importance of mastering a group's shared memory, its "consciousness", which is thinking about the present, and its "imagination", which is looking to the future. Thus, these three levels of functioning, reading and expression are "relays" for transmitting and redefining messages, reciprocally challenged by economic conditions and cultural patterns, both conceived as "transmitter and receiver systems". All this explains why change cannot always be "hurried", "dictated" or "decreed".

A class or society that has been repressed or alienated doesn't talk; it is talked about, and won't develop in such a situation. In order to unleash the dormant forces or habitual dynamic potential of the population, it is important to enable it, as Pierre Collin puts it, to make itself heard in its own language. Hence the primordial role of project managers and NGOs implementing projects in sub-Saharan Africa who know how to communicate and facilitate the quality of inter-individual relations, the generalization of information, the rigor and transparency of project and program management, and also the deepening of analysis. Like local community members, these facilitators end up as "student teachers". Ultimately, ownership is a question of will on the part of project implementers and the authorities, who must also take ownership of the guiding principles of development and harmonize the interests of the local community with those at the top of the hierarchy. Provided we don't lose sight of all these propositions, perhaps it will be easier to avoid forms of aid or support that weaken, infantilize and kill, and instead develop a genuine character of responsibility and free will in development actions.

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