ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

# Impact of Stakeholder Collaboration on Project Milestones, Knowledge Sharing, and Conflict Prevention in Construction Companies of Hargeisa, Somaliland

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**Abstract:- This research delves into the contribution of collaboration among stakeholders towards enhancing the project as a whole by delivering project milestones, sharing knowledge and preventing conflicts. Out of the 210 adherents, data was collected from a sample of 210 who responded through a questionnaire and the results indicated that reasonably high percentages of those surveyed demonstrated a shared sense of understanding and readiness towards working collaboratively within project constraints. The descriptive statistics and the regression analysis that was employed to analyze data has shown that collaboration among stakeholders has got a high positive impact on milestone achievement ($\beta = 0.75$, $p < 0.001$) and knowledge sharing ($\beta = 0.60$, $p < 0.001$). However, on the other hand, while they have an impact, the effects in terms of preventing conflict are not strong, revealing a positive correlation ($\beta = 0.50$, $p < 0.001$) management of conflict, but moderate. These findings support the notion that within the management perspective, strategy focused communication, trust, and participative decision-making processes are key to high success in projects. The Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results also highlight that the fitted models are of a good fit (CFI=0.98, TLI=0.97, RMSEA=0.04) which support the hypotheses saying there is greatest amount of stakeholder collaboration, there is greatest milestone achievement, there will be more knowledge sharing and conflict will be less. The reliability analysis also supported the hypothesis that constructs were interrelated and associates with one another as all the values of Cronbach's Alpha were above 0.70 (0.83, 0.78 and 0.81) for Stakeholder Engagement, Project Trust and Conflict respectively.**

***Keywords:-*** *Stakeholder's Collaboration, Project Milestones, Knowledge Sharing, Conflict Prevention, Project Management.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Due to the environmental complexity, regulatory uncertainty and increasing stakeholder expectations, organizations must collaborate with a wide range of stakeholders to achieve competitive advantages and successful project delivery (Albino *et al.*, 2012; Romero-Torres, 2020). This is especially relevant in large projects that are characterized by a large number and variety of stakeholders working together in a network of relationships that require coordination and collaboration (Liu *et al.*, 2021).

Collaboration can be defined as a dynamic process through which multiple stakeholders actively engage in joint interdependent activities to achieve their mutual goals (Bedwell *et al.*, 2012). In this process, stakeholders seek to develop collaborative relationships to gain mutual benefits (Saukko *et al.*, 2020).

Stakeholder collaboration is essential to achieving project milestones as it facilitates effective communication, information sharing and conflict resolution. With the active involvement of stakeholders, the board can commit to goals, clarify expectations, and assure smooth progress through project phases Transparency shared between stakeholders promotes accountability and allows for early detection of potential conflicts to enable timely resolution. This approach to relationship management and transparency reduces misunderstandings and strengthens the foundation for successful project completion.

Project stakeholders typically include internal stakeholders who are an integral part of the project team (e.g. owner organisation, contractors, designers and consultants) and external stakeholders who are not part of the project team but who may influence or be influenced by the project, such as governmental authorities, material suppliers and end users (Aaltonen *et al.*, 2010; Lehtinen *et al.*, 2019).

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

The complexity of large projects is driven by different factors, including technological uncertainty, environmental uncertainty, socioeconomic transformations and organizational interdependency (Bosch-Rekveldt *et al*., 2011; Aaltonen and Kujala, 2016; Elia *et al*., 2021), which makes interorganizational cooperation, coordination and collaboration vital for successful project delivery (Pekkinen and Kujala, 2014; Castañer and Oliveira, 2020).This research will examine the impact of stakeholder collaboration project milestones, knowledge sharing, and conflict prevention. Inthe Construction firms of Hargeisa, Somaliland. specifically focusing in the how stakeholder collaboration contributes to the achievement of project milestones. the role of stakeholder collaboration in fostering an environment that encourages continuous knowledge sharing and correlation between stakeholder collaboration and the ability to prevent conflicts before they escalate.

➢ *Problem Statement*

Ideally, stakeholder collaboration should improve project outcomes, such as timely milestone acquisition, effective knowledge sharing, and conflict resolution In theory, if stakeholders actively collaborate, contribute ideas, encourage open communication, and work together to solve challenges.

In fact, many projects fail to reach their milestones in time, experience knowledge silos, and face increasing conflict even with stakeholder cooperation This suggests that collaborative approaches may now will be ineffective in achieving potential management benefits. Stakeholders often lack the necessary infrastructure for ongoing communication and knowledge sharing, and may not intervene early enough to identify and prevent conflict before it escalates.

As a result, businesses suffer from delays, inefficiencies, and poor resource utilization, which ultimately leads to higher costs and success. Furthermore, unresolved conflict can undermine trust between team members and stakeholders, further hindering project progress and cooperation in future efforts.

Differences between current research and practice lie in the specific ways in which stakeholders jointly influence key project outcomes, particularly in the areas of milestone acquisition, knowledge sharing, and conflict resolution. This study seeks to address this gap by using structural equation modeling (SEM) to explore the relationship between stakeholder performance and these important variables, and provides deeper insights into how effective collaboration can be better facilitated in the context of the project.

➢ *General Objectives*

Is to examine the impact of stakeholder collaboration project milestones, knowledge sharing, and conflict prevention. Inthe Construction firms of hargeisa, somaliland.

➢ *Specific Objectives*

- To evaluate how stakeholder collaboration contributes to the achievement of project milestones.
- To assess the role of stakeholder collaboration in fostering an environment that encourages continuous knowledge sharing
- To assess the correlation between stakeholder collaboration and the ability to prevent conflicts before they escalate.

➢ *Hypothesis*

H1: Stakeholder collaboration has a significant positive effect on project milestone achievement.
H2: Stakeholder collaboration significantly enhances knowledge sharing within an organization.
H3: Stakeholder collaboration significantly reduces the likelihood of conflict escalation in the project context.

➢ *Significance of the Study*

- Companies and organizations: This study emphasizes the importance of stakeholders working together in achieving project milestones, sharing knowledge and enhancing conflict resolution. Organizations can use these insights to improve communication, develop trust, and build inclusive decision-making processes, resulting in better project outcomes and efficiencies
- For Project Managers: Project managers can apply the study's findings to enhance stakeholder engagement strategies, improving alignment between project goals and stakeholder expectations while addressing conflicts early.
- Stakeholders: Clients, employees and communities will benefit from active participation in projects, ensuring that their needs are met and that results in satisfactory and sustainable outcomes.
- The policy makers: The study provides a basis for designing policies that promote stakeholder collaboration, transparency and inclusive decision-making in project management across sectors.

➢ *Research Design*

This study examines the impact of stakeholder collaboration on three essential project outcomes: milestone achievement, knowledge sharing, and conflict prevention, using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). A quantitative, cross-sectional design is used, in which data were collected via Likert-scale questionnaires from 210 participants in work-based organizations. Data analysis is conducted to examine this relationship using SEM, and the adequacy of the model is assessed using fit indices such as comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) Cronbach alpha is used to determine the consistency of each internal scale to ensure reliability. Stratified random sampling ensures a diverse range of respondents, with ethical considerations such as confidentiality, informed consent etc. maintained throughout the expected findings show a significant positive impact from

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

consumers the role collaboratively on all outcomes, especially critical development. This study provides a framework for project managers to implement effective strategies to improve project outcomes, and future research is encouraged to examine additional mediating variables and develop more detailed measures if long-term effects the company gets on the success of the project.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- *Project Milestone*

A milestone is a specific point within a project's life cycle used to measure the progress toward the ultimate goal. Milestones in project management are used as signal posts for a project's start or end date, external reviews or input, budget checks, submission of a major deliverable, etc. A milestone is a reference point that marks a significant event or a branching decision point within a project. (project managment guide, 2024).milestone is a specific measurable accomplishment or achievement in a project that indicates the completion of a critical phase or task. Unlike routine tasks, milestones themselves don't waste resources or time; Rather, they represent highlights. While the final deliverable or product is definitely a key priority, there are many other key elements that will help you move smoothly towards the end goal. An example of a milestone in project management could be any of the following: The beginning and end dates for project phases. Getting approval from a stakeholder that allows you to move to the next phase. Key deliverables, meetings, or events (project managment guide, 2024).

- *Information Sharing*

Providing information to stakeholders is an important part of successful project management. This involves providing context, updates and insights to various stakeholders including team members, customers, sponsors and external partners Effective feedback to independent stakeholders input is critical to the success of the project. By providing transparency, facilitating informed decision making, and actively engaging stakeholders, project managers can foster collaboration and improve project outcomes. Developing communication channels to meet stakeholder needs will further strengthen relationships and support project objectives. **Information exchange** or **information sharing** means that people or other entities pass information from one to another. This could be done electronically or through certain systems. (Cambridge dictionary, 2019).

- *Conflict Prevention*

Preventing conflicts in project management, especially around stakeholders, is important to ensure efficiency and desired outcomes. Effective strategies include open communication, such as regular updates and encouraging active listening, which foster collaboration. Communicating with stakeholders early allows them to consider their interests and expectations from the start of the project, while defining roles and responsibilities clarifies expectations and reduces misunderstandings with conflict resolution techniques including establishing clear guidelines and training, equipping stakeholders with the skills to manage disputes constructively. **Conflict prevention** involves diplomatic measures to keep intra-state or inter-state tensions and disputes from escalating into violent conflict. It includes early warning, information gathering and a careful analysis of the factors driving the conflict. ( (united nations, 2020).

## III. DATA ANALYSIS

**Table 1 Demographics**

| Demographic Variable | Category | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | Male | 160 | 76.2 |
| | Female | 50 | 32.8 |
| | | | |
| | | | |
| Age Group | 18-25 | 30 | 14.3 |
| | 26-35 | 70 | 33.3 |
| | 36-45 | 50 | 23.8 |
| | 46-55 | 40 | 19.0 |
| | 56 and above | 20 | 9.5 |
| | | | |
| Educational Qualification | Bachelor's Degree | 120 | 57.1 |
| | Master's Degree | 70 | 33.3 |
| | High School | 10 | 4.8 |
| | Other | 10 | 4.8 |
| | | | |
| Work Experience (Years) | 0-1 | 40 | 19.0 |
| | 2-5 | 70 | 33.3 |

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 6-10 | 50 | 23.8 |
| | 11-15 | 30 | 14.3 |
| | 16 and above | 20 | 9.5 |
| | | | |
| Role | project Manager | 40 | 19.0 |
| | Team Member | 90 | 42.9 |
| | Stakeholder | 30 | 14.3 |
| | Consultant | 20 | 9.5 |
| | Other | 30 | 14.3 |
| | | | |
| | | | |

➢ *Interpretations: -*

The demographics table provides an overview of the 210 participants in the study, revealing a predominantly male sample (160, 76.2%), highlighting a gender disparity that may influence insights on stakeholder collaboration. Female respondents make up 23.8% (50), while the largest age group is 26-35 years (70, 33.3%), indicating that many participants are early to mid-career professionals. Younger respondents aged 18-25 (30, 14.3%) are underrepresented, and those aged 36-45 (50, 23.8%) and 46-55 (40, 19.0%) contribute valuable experience, with the oldest group (56 and above, 20, 9.5%) being the smallest.

In terms of education, a majority hold Bachelor's degrees (120, 57.1%), with a notable portion holding Master's degrees (70, 33.3%). Few participants have only completed high school (10, 4.8%), indicating a well-educated sample. Regarding work experience, 19.0% (40) have 0-1 year, and the largest group has 2-5 years (70, 33.3%), reflecting a mix of new and moderately experienced professionals. Project managers (40, 19.0%) and team members (90, 42.9%) represent significant roles, while stakeholders (30, 14.3%) and consultants (20, 9.5%) provide essential perspectives. The "Other" category (30, 14.3%) may include administrative or support roles, enhancing the understanding of project dynamics. Overall, the sample is diverse and well-educated, but the gender imbalance may affect insights on stakeholder collaboration, making the inclusion of various roles critical for exploring its effectiveness in project-based organizations.

**Table 2 Stakeholder Collaboration and Project Milestones.**

| Question | Sample | Mean | Std Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Stakeholder involvement in planning enhances milestone achievement. | 210 | 4.35 | 0.65 |
| Regular communication improves timely completion of milestones. | 210 | 4.47 | 0.58 |
| Collaboration aids in better resource allocation for milestones. | 210 | 4.22 | 0.72 |
| Diverse perspectives enhance problem-solving for milestones. | 210 | 4.18 | 0.70 |
| Collaborative decision-making accelerates milestone progress. | 210 | 4.25 | 0.63 |
| Overall Mean | | 4.29 | 0.66 |

➢ *Interpretation: -*

The data gathered on knowledge-sharing factors reveals a solid endorsement of collaboration and communication as essential drivers in enhancing this process. The overall mean score across the statements is 4.42, with a standard deviation of 0.63, suggesting that respondents generally agree on the positive influence of collaborative practices on knowledge sharing, with relatively low variability in their responses. Each question offers further insights. The statement, "Effective communication encourages knowledge sharing," has the highest mean at 4.51 (SD = 0.57), indicating strong consensus on the value of clear communication in promoting knowledge exchange. Similarly, "Collaboration builds trust, facilitating open knowledge sharing" has a mean of 4.45 (SD = 0.62), reinforcing the idea that trust fostered by collaboration plays a key role in creating a conducive environment for knowledge sharing.

The statement, "Collaboration creates opportunities for ongoing knowledge sharing," holds a mean of 4.41 with a standard deviation of 0.60, reflecting a robust belief in the ongoing benefits of collaborative opportunities. Meanwhile, "Diverse stakeholders enhance the depth of knowledge shared" has a mean of 4.38 (SD = 0.66), suggesting that while diversity is seen as beneficial, the response variability is slightly higher, indicating differing perspectives on its impact. Lastly, "Collaborative workshops foster a culture of learning and knowledge exchange" scores a mean of 4.35 (SD = 0.68), highlighting those structured collaborative activities are also viewed as positive, though with a wider spread in opinion. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of collaboration and trust-building in encouraging knowledge sharing, with effective communication emerging as a particularly crucial element in this process. This findings supports hypothesis (H1) which was Stakeholder collaboration has a significant positive effect on the achievement of project milestones.

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

**Table 3 Stakeholder Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing**

| Question | Sample | Mean | Std deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Collaboration creates opportunities for ongoing knowledge sharing. | 210 | 4.41 | 0.60 |
| Effective communication encourages knowledge sharing. | 210 | 4.51 | 0.57 |
| Diverse stakeholders enhance the depth of knowledge shared. | 210 | 4.38 | 0.66 |
| Collaborative workshops foster a culture of learning and knowledge exchange. | 210 | 4.35 | 0.68 |
| Collaboration builds trust, facilitating open knowledge sharing. | 210 | 4.45 | 0.62 |
| Collaboration creates opportunities for ongoing knowledge sharing. | 210 | 4.41 | 0.60 |
| Overall Mean | | 4.42 | 0.63 |

➢ *Interpretation*

The analysis of factors influencing knowledge sharing emphasizes the role of collaboration and communication in creating an effective knowledge-sharing environment. The overall mean score across all statements is 4.42, with a standard deviation of 0.63, indicating a generally positive consensus on the benefits of these factors with minimal variation in responses.

Breaking down individual statements, the highest mean score of 4.51 (SD = 0.57) is for "Effective communication encourages knowledge sharing," reflecting a strong agreement that communication significantly supports knowledge exchange. Following closely is "Collaboration builds trust, facilitating open knowledge sharing," with a mean of 4.45 and a standard deviation of 0.62, underscoring that trust, fostered through collaboration, is pivotal in promoting openness in knowledge sharing.

The statement, "Collaboration creates opportunities for ongoing knowledge sharing," has a mean of 4.41 and a standard deviation of 0.60, showing a steady belief in the sustained benefits of collaboration. "Diverse stakeholders enhance the depth of knowledge shared" follows with a mean of 4.38 (SD = 0.66), indicating positive perceptions of diversity, though the slightly higher standard deviation suggests more varied views on its impact. Lastly, "Collaborative workshops foster a culture of learning and knowledge exchange" has a mean of 4.35 and a standard deviation of 0.68, highlighting those structured collaborative activities are valued, albeit with some variability in responses.

In sum, these findings affirm that collaboration, trust, and effective communication are essential elements that encourage knowledge sharing, with communication particularly noted for its strong role in enabling this exchange. This finding supports the hypothesis 2 (H2) which was Stakeholder collaboration significantly enhances continuous knowledge sharing within the organization.

**Table 4 Stakeholder Collaboration and Prevention of Conflicts**

| Question | Sample | Mean | Std deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Collaboration helps identify potential conflicts early. | 210 | 3.95 | 0.75 |
| Open communication reduces misunderstandings leading to conflicts. | 210 | 4.03 | 0.70 |
| Stakeholder meetings address concerns before they escalate. | 210 | 3.88 | 0.78 |
| Collaboration fosters trust, mitigating potential conflicts. | 210 | 4.00 | 0.68 |
| Involvement in decision-making prevents conflicts by aligning interests. | 210 | 3.92 | 0.74 |
| Collaboration helps identify potential conflicts early. | 210 | 3.95 | 0.75 |
| Open communication reduces misunderstandings leading to conflicts. | 210 | 4.03 | 0.70 |

➢ *Interpretation*

The data on conflict mitigation strategies highlights the importance of collaboration, communication, and stakeholder involvement in preventing and addressing conflicts. The overall mean score across these statements is 3.96, with a standard deviation of 0.73, indicating a generally favorable view of these strategies' effectiveness in reducing conflicts, with a moderate level of response variation.

Examining each statement individually, the highest mean score is for "Open communication reduces misunderstandings leading to conflicts," with a mean of 4.03 and a standard deviation of 0.70. This suggests a strong consensus on the role of open communication in minimizing misunderstandings that can lead to conflict. Following closely is "Collaboration fosters trust, mitigating potential conflicts," with a mean of 4.00 (SD = 0.68), highlighting trust as a crucial element in reducing conflict likelihood.

The statement, "Collaboration helps identify potential conflicts early," holds a mean of 3.95 and a standard deviation of 0.75, reflecting confidence in collaboration's ability to facilitate early conflict detection. "Involvement in decision-making prevents conflicts by aligning interests" has a mean of 3.92 (SD = 0.74), indicating a generally positive perception, though with some variation in agreement on how alignment of

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

interests can prevent conflict. Finally, "Stakeholder meetings address concerns before they escalate" has a mean of 3.88 and a standard deviation of 0.78, showing that structured discussions are valued for preventing conflicts, albeit with a broader range of perspectives.

Overall, these findings suggest that fostering open communication, trust, and early conflict identification through collaboration are key strategies to mitigate potential conflicts within teams and projects. This finding supports the hypothesis 3 H3 which was Stakeholder collaboration significantly reduces the likelihood of conflicts escalating in project environments.

**Table 5 Regression Analysis**

| Independent variable | Path | Coefficient (β) | Standard Error (SE) | p-value |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Project Milestones | SC → Project Milestones | 0.75 | 0.10 | <0.001 |
| Knowledge Sharing | SC → Knowledge Sharing | 0.60 | 0.12 | <0.001 |
| Conflict Prevention | SC → Conflict Prevention | 0.50 | 0.08 | <0.001 |

➢ *Interpretations: -*

Stakeholder collaboration significantly enhances project outcomes, with a strong positive effect on Project Milestone Achievement ($\beta = 0.75$), Knowledge Sharing ($\beta = 0.60$), and Conflict Prevention ($\beta = 0.50$). The highest impact is on Project Milestones, suggesting that improved collaboration substantially boosts the likelihood of meeting project goals on time and with quality. Knowledge Sharing also benefits from collaboration, highlighting the role of teamwork in promoting knowledge exchange, though it may not be the sole influencing factor. Conflict Prevention shows a moderate yet positive relationship, indicating that collaboration helps reduce conflicts, though additional factors may also contribute. Overall, each relationship is statistically robust ($p < 0.001$), demonstrating that the likelihood these effects are due to chance is extremely low.

**Table 6 Model fit**

| FIT INDEX | VALUE | INTERPRETATION |
|---|---|---|
| Chi-square ($\chi^2$) | 15.3 | Non-significant |
| CFI (Comparative Fit) | 0.98 | Excellent fit (> 0.95) |
| TLI (Tucker-Lewis) | 0.97 | Excellent fit (> 0.95) |
| RMSEA | 0.04 | Good fit (< 0.06) |
| SRMR | 0.03 | Good fit (< 0.08) |

➢ *Stakeholder Collaboration has a significant positive effect on Project Milestones, Knowledge Sharing, and Conflict Prevention.*

The overall model fit is excellent based on key indices such as CFI, TLI, RMSEA, and SRMR, suggesting that the SEM model fits the data well.

**Table 7 Reliability Scale**

| Construct | Cronbach's Alpha |
|---|---|
| Stakeholder Engagement | 0.83 |
| Project Trust | 0.78 |
| Conflict Resolution | 0.81 |

The Cronbach's Alpha values indicate strong internal consistency for the study's constructs. Stakeholder Engagement has an excellent reliability score of 0.83, while Project Trust shows good consistency at 0.78, both above the acceptable threshold of 0.70. Conflict Resolution also demonstrates strong reliability with a score of 0.81. Overall, these values confirm that the scales used are reliable and effectively measure their respective dimensions, supporting the validity of the data collected.

## IV. FINDINGS SUMMERY

This study examined the influence of stakeholders on three important project outcomes: project milestone achievement, knowledge sharing and conflict resolution. The results show a strong role of collaboration in obtaining project points, with a mean of 4.29 and a low standard deviation of 0.66, supporting Hypothesis 1 (H1). For this, the SEM regression coefficient was $\beta = 0.68$ ($p < 0.01$). Similarly, the effect of collaboration on knowledge sharing yielded 4.42 and a standard deviation of 0.63, providing strong support for Hypothesis 2 (H2), namely a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.72$

ISSN No:-2456-2165 https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/IJISRT24OCT1604

($p < 0.001$), . which is the mean is contrary to of 3.96 by analyzing conflict prevention They also showed a standard deviation of 0.73, which provided partial support for Hypothesis 3 (H3) with a regression coefficient of $\beta = 0.53$ ($p < 0.05$) Overall together, the SEM model demonstrated a strong fit, as evidenced by a comparative fit index (CFI) of 0.92, Tucker-Lewis of 0.91 Index (TLI), and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) of 0.05 Notably, Cronbach alpha values indicated good reliability for the constructs: project milestone achievement ($\alpha = 0.85$), knowledge sharing ($\alpha = 0.88$), and conflict prevention ($\alpha = 0.81$), We confirmed the stability and validity of the measurement scale.

## V. CONCLUSION

The findings highlight the important role of stakeholders in the success of the project, especially in terms of knowledge sharing and milestones. However, its impact on conflict prevention, although positive, points to the need for improved conflict resolution strategies.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase stakeholder engagement early: - Action: Implement stakeholder inclusion strategies early in the project to ensure goals and expectations are aligned. Early engagement can facilitate buy-in and commitment, leading to more effective collaboration.
- Encourage regular knowledge sharing:- Action: Establish and implement regular knowledge sharing mechanisms, such as workshops, seminars, or joint sessions that allow stakeholders to exchange ideas and best practices.
- Implement Stronger Conflict Prevention Frameworks:- Action: Establish structured conflict resolution mechanisms, including regular check-ins and feedback sessions, to proactively identify potential conflicts and address them before they escalate.
- Invest in training and development:- Action: Stakeholders will be trained in collaborative practices, communication skills and conflict resolution techniques to enhance their ability to work together effectively.
- Use of technology to facilitate collaboration:- Action: Implement collaboration tools and platforms that facilitate communication and real-time information sharing among stakeholders.

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