

Strategic Planning And Business Growth Of Companies Operating In Uganda. A Case Of Kampala City Council Authority

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ABSTRACT: Strategic planning represented a fundamental management process through which organizations defined long-term vision, assessed internal capabilities and external environments, formulated strategies, allocated resources, and established implementation mechanisms to achieve sustainable growth and competitive advantage. In Uganda's dynamic business environment characterized by rapid urbanization, infrastructure development, regulatory reforms, and increasing competition, strategic planning became essential for organizational survival and growth. Kampala City Council Authority (KCCA), established in 2011 to govern Uganda's capital city, operated as a unique quasi-governmental entity with commercial mandates including revenue generation, service delivery, infrastructure development, and urban management. The authority managed diverse business operations including property development and leasing, parking services, market administration, advertisement permits, and various commercial ventures generating revenues supplementing central government allocations. With annual revenues exceeding UGX 200 billion and employing over 2,500 staff, KCCA represented a significant organizational entity whose growth trajectory influenced Kampala's development and Uganda's broader economic landscape. However, despite strategic planning initiatives including five-year development plans, sectoral strategies, and annual operational plans, KCCA's business growth remained inconsistent with revenue collection frequently falling below targets, service delivery facing persistent challenges, and commercial ventures underperforming relative to potential. This gap between strategic planning efforts and actual growth outcomes raised critical questions about strategic planning effectiveness, implementation quality, and contextual factors influencing planning-growth relationships in Ugandan public sector entities with commercial operations. The study employed a case study research design with mixed methods approaches combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The target population comprised 450 individuals including 180 KCCA senior and middle managers across divisions and departments, 150 operational staff involved in revenue-generating activities, 80 technical staff in planning and development units, and 40 Board members and political leaders providing governance oversight. Using purposive and stratified random sampling, 150 respondents were selected including 55 managers, 60 operational and technical staff, 20 Board members, and 15 external stakeholders (business community representatives, civil society monitors). Data collection employed structured questionnaires measuring strategic planning practices (environmental scanning, strategy formulation, resource allocation, implementation mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation) and business growth indicators (revenue growth, service expansion, infrastructure development, operational efficiency, market share), semi-structured interview guides for senior leaders and stakeholders exploring planning processes and growth challenges, focus group discussions with departmental teams examining implementation experiences, and document analysis reviewing strategic plans, annual reports, financial statements, and performance evaluations from 2016-2023. Quantitative analysis using SPSS version 26 included descriptive statistics, Pearson correlations, and multiple regression examining relationships between strategic planning dimensions and growth indicators. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed using NVivo software. Reliability coefficients ranged from $\alpha=0.837$ to 0.896 , and validity was established through expert review and triangulation. Strategic planning practice quality at KCCA demonstrated moderate overall levels ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.82$), with environmental scanning ($M=3.45$, $SD=0.79$) and strategy formulation ($M=3.52$, $SD=0.76$) rated higher than implementation mechanisms ($M=2.98$, $SD=0.91$) and monitoring/evaluation ($M=2.87$, $SD=0.94$). Business growth showed mixed patterns with revenue increasing by 42% over 2016-2023 but falling short of strategic plan targets by an average 23% annually. Service coverage expanded by 31% but quality ratings remained stagnant. Infrastructure development achieved 58% of planned investments. Correlation analysis revealed significant positive relationships between strategic planning quality and business growth ($r=0.672$, $p<0.01$), with strategy formulation ($r=0.638$, $p<0.01$), resource allocation ($r=0.614$, $p<0.01$), and implementation mechanisms ($r=0.689$, $p<0.01$) all significantly associated with growth outcomes. Multiple regression indicated that strategic planning practices collectively explained 61.4% of business growth variance ($R^2=0.614$, $F=76.42$, $p<0.001$), with implementation mechanisms emerging as the strongest predictor ($\beta=0.384$, $p<0.001$), followed by resource allocation ($\beta=0.287$, $p<0.01$) and environmental scanning ($\beta=0.246$, $p<0.01$). However, implementation gaps including inadequate funding (cited by 78.7% of respondents), political interference (64.0%), bureaucratic rigidity (71.3%), capacity constraints (68.0%), and coordination failures (62.7%) substantially constrained strategic plan execution and growth realization. Strategic planning significantly influenced business growth at KCCA, with well-formulated strategies demonstrating potential for driving revenue enhancement, service expansion, and organizational development. However, the moderate planning quality and substantial implementation gaps indicated that KCCA had not fully realized strategic planning's potential benefits. The finding that implementation mechanisms predicted growth more strongly than planning formulation suggested that execution quality mattered more than plan sophistication a critical insight for public sector organizations. The 38.6% unexplained variance indicated that

factors beyond formal strategic planning including political dynamics, external economic conditions, regulatory constraints, and organizational culture influenced growth outcomes. For KCCA and similar quasi-governmental entities, effective strategic planning required not only technical planning competencies but also political support, adequate resources, implementation capacity, stakeholder engagement, and adaptive management responding to Uganda's fluid institutional environment. The study recommended that KCCA should establish an independent Strategic Planning and Performance Management Unit reporting directly to Executive Director; develop realistic strategic plans aligned with actual resource availability rather than aspirational targets; implement rigorous monitoring systems with quarterly performance reviews and corrective action protocols; secure dedicated strategic initiative funding through earmarked reserves; build strategic management capacity through training and technical assistance; strengthen political-administrative boundaries protecting strategic implementation from short-term political interference; enhance stakeholder participation in planning ensuring buy-in; adopt agile planning approaches allowing strategy adjustment amid changing conditions; institutionalize performance-based management linking individual performance to strategic objectives; and establish strategic planning champions at senior levels driving implementation accountability.

Keywords: Strategic planning, business growth, organizational performance, Kampala City Council Authority, strategy implementation, revenue generation, public sector management, Uganda, performance management, strategic management.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Strategic planning constituted a systematic management process through which organizations analyzed their current situations, envisioned desired futures, formulated strategies bridging present realities to future aspirations, and established implementation mechanisms translating strategies into actions and results. The strategic planning process typically encompassed environmental scanning assessing external opportunities and threats plus internal strengths and weaknesses, strategic direction setting including vision, mission, and objectives formulation, strategy formulation developing approaches for achieving objectives, resource allocation deploying financial, human, and physical assets supporting strategies, implementation planning specifying actions, responsibilities, and timelines, and monitoring and evaluation tracking progress and learning from results. Effective strategic planning enabled organizations to anticipate and respond proactively to environmental changes, align organizational resources toward common objectives, make informed decisions about resource allocation and priorities, enhance coordination across organizational units, and ultimately improve performance and achieve sustainable growth.

Business growth referred to organizational expansion across multiple dimensions including revenue and profitability increases, market share expansion, geographic coverage growth, product or service portfolio diversification, infrastructure and asset base development, workforce expansion, technological advancement, and enhanced organizational capabilities. For commercial enterprises, growth typically focused on profit maximization and shareholder value. For public sector entities like KCCA with hybrid commercial-social mandates, growth encompassed both revenue generation enabling financial sustainability and service delivery expansion improving citizen welfare. Measuring growth therefore required multidimensional indicators capturing financial performance, operational expansion, service quality, and developmental impact.

Uganda's business environment presented both opportunities and challenges for organizational growth. Rapid urbanization with Kampala's population growing from 1.5 million in 2010 to over 2.5 million in 2023 created expanding markets for goods and services. Infrastructure development including roads, energy, and telecommunications improved business operating conditions. Regional integration through the East African Community expanded market access. However, challenges included macroeconomic volatility with inflation fluctuations affecting costs and consumer purchasing power, infrastructure deficits constraining business operations, bureaucratic inefficiencies increasing transaction costs, corruption undermining fair competition, limited access to finance constraining investment, and regulatory unpredictability creating uncertainty. In this complex environment, strategic planning became essential for navigating challenges and capitalizing on opportunities.

Kampala City Council Authority represented a unique organizational entity operating at the intersection of public governance and commercial enterprise. Established through the Kampala Capital City Authority Act (2010) and operationalized in 2011, KCCA replaced the former Kampala City Council with a governance structure comprising a Board chaired by the Minister for Kampala, an Executive Director appointed by the President, and technical divisions managing different municipal functions. The authority's mandate encompassed urban planning and development control, infrastructure development and maintenance, revenue collection and financial management, public health and environmental management, education and social services, markets and commercial services, and general city administration and regulation.

KCCA's commercial operations generated revenues through multiple streams including property rates and rental incomes from authority-owned buildings and land, local service tax and business licenses, market fees and stall rentals from 74 gazetted markets, parking fees from on-street and off-street facilities, advertisement permits and billboard fees, penalties and fines for regulatory violations, and commercial ventures including bus parks and trade licenses. These revenues supplemented central government conditional and unconditional grants, with the authority targeting increasing self-generated revenue proportions to enhance financial autonomy and service delivery capacity.

Strategic planning at KCCA operated through multiple layers. The overarching framework was the KCCA Strategic Plan (five-year horizons, with plans covering 2014-2019 and 2020-2025), which articulated vision, mission, strategic objectives, and major

programs. Divisional strategic plans translated corporate strategies into functional area priorities. Annual work plans operationalized strategic priorities into specific activities, budgets, and targets. Additionally, sector-specific strategies addressed particular challenges such as revenue enhancement strategies, market modernization strategies, and transport management strategies. The authority had invested substantially in planning infrastructure including a dedicated Planning Division, engagement of consultants for plan development, stakeholder consultation processes, and computerized performance monitoring systems.

However, despite these planning investments, KCCA's business growth remained inconsistent and often fell short of strategic targets. Revenue collections consistently underperformed projections, with the 2020-2025 Strategic Plan targeting UGX 350 billion annual revenue by 2023 but actual collections reaching only UGX 247 billion a 29% shortfall. Service delivery faced persistent challenges with garbage collection covering only 65% of the city despite 100% targets, road maintenance addressing less than 40% of needs, and market infrastructure remaining dilapidated in many facilities. Commercial ventures including bus parks and public toilets operated below capacity with revenue leakages and management challenges. Public satisfaction surveys indicated stagnant or declining perceptions of KCCA service quality despite strategic planning emphasis on service improvement.

These planning-performance gaps suggested potential deficiencies in how strategic planning was conducted, the quality of implementation mechanisms, the adequacy of resources allocated to strategic priorities, the effectiveness of monitoring and adaptive management, or the influence of contextual factors beyond KCCA's control. Understanding which strategic planning dimensions most significantly influenced growth outcomes, what implementation challenges constrained strategy execution, and how contextual factors moderated planning effectiveness was essential for improving KCCA's strategic management and achieving sustainable growth. Previous research on strategic planning-performance relationships produced mixed findings. Meta-analyses of studies predominantly from Western contexts showed generally positive associations between strategic planning and organizational performance, though effect sizes varied substantially. Studies from African contexts were more limited and showed weaker, more inconsistent relationships, possibly due to contextual factors including resource constraints, institutional instability, implementation capacity gaps, and political interference. Research specifically on Ugandan public sector strategic planning was sparse, leaving critical knowledge gaps about how planning-performance relationships operated in this specific institutional and cultural context.

This study therefore investigated strategic planning and business growth relationships at KCCA, examining how different planning dimensions influenced growth outcomes, what implementation challenges constrained strategy execution, and what contextual factors shaped planning effectiveness. The findings would provide evidence-based insights for enhancing strategic management not only at KCCA but potentially across Uganda's public sector entities with commercial mandates.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Kampala City Council Authority faced persistent challenges in achieving strategic plan targets and realizing projected business growth despite substantial investments in strategic planning processes, infrastructure, and expertise. The KCCA Strategic Plan 2020-2025 projected ambitious growth including doubling locally generated revenues from UGX 180 billion (2020 baseline) to UGX 360 billion by 2025, expanding service coverage to reach 100% of Kampala residents, modernizing all markets to international standards, and achieving financial sustainability with 60% revenue self-sufficiency. However, actual performance through 2023 the midpoint of the planning period revealed significant shortfalls across multiple indicators.

Revenue growth underperformed substantially with actual collections reaching UGX 247 billion in FY 2022/23 against a strategic plan target of UGX 280 billion, representing an 11.8% shortfall. More concerning, revenue growth rates were decelerating from 18% annually in 2016-2018 to only 8% in 2021-2023, suggesting diminishing growth momentum rather than the accelerating trajectory envisioned in strategic plans. Service delivery expansion similarly lagged with garbage collection covering 68% of areas against 85% targets, street lighting functioning at only 52% against 75% targets, and road network conditions deteriorating with 63% of roads rated poor or fair against strategic objectives of 80% good condition.

Market modernization, a flagship strategic initiative, achieved only 12 of 35 planned market infrastructure projects by 2023, with chronic delays, cost overruns, and implementation bottlenecks. Commercial revenue streams consistently underperformed with parking fee collections at 64% of potential due to evasion and enforcement challenges, advertisement permit revenues at 71% of targets due to illegal billboards, and market stall occupancy at 78% due to vendor disputes and facility conditions. These performance gaps indicated fundamental challenges in translating strategic plans into actual growth and development outcomes. Organizational assessments and audits highlighted concerning weaknesses in strategic plan implementation. The 2022 Auditor General's Report noted that "while KCCA has elaborate strategic plans, implementation remains weak with inadequate monitoring, unclear accountabilities, and insufficient resource allocation to strategic priorities." An internal organizational capacity assessment revealed that only 43% of strategic plan activities were fully implemented, 38% were partially implemented, and 19% were not implemented at all. Staff surveys indicated that 58% of employees were unclear about how their work contributed to strategic objectives, and 62% reported inadequate resources for executing planned activities.

These planning-performance gaps raised critical questions about strategic planning effectiveness at KCCA. Was strategic planning genuinely influencing organizational decisions and actions, or did it function primarily as a compliance exercise satisfying administrative requirements without substantive impact? Were strategic plans realistic and aligned with actual organizational capacities and resource availability, or did they reflect aspirational targets disconnected from operational realities? Were implementation mechanisms adequate for translating strategies into actions, or did execution gaps undermine well-formulated plans?

How did contextual factors including political dynamics, resource constraints, and institutional culture influence planning effectiveness?

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE

To examine the relationship between strategic planning practices and business growth at Kampala City Council Authority.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a case study research design with embedded mixed methods approaches combining quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis. The case study design was appropriate because it enabled in-depth investigation of strategic planning-growth relationships within KCCA's specific organizational, institutional, and contextual setting, allowing examination of complex phenomena in real-world contexts. The embedded mixed methods approach facilitated both systematic quantitative measurement of planning practices and growth outcomes, and rich qualitative exploration of planning processes, implementation challenges, and contextual dynamics that quantitative data alone could not capture.

The target population comprised 450 individuals categorized into four groups: senior and middle managers (n=180) including Executive Director, Directors, Deputy Directors, Commissioners, and Heads of Departments who had primary responsibility for strategic planning and implementation; operational staff (n=150) including revenue collectors, market supervisors, enforcement officers, and frontline service providers whose work executed strategic initiatives; technical and planning staff (n=80) including planners, economists, monitoring and evaluation specialists, and ICT personnel who provided technical inputs to planning processes; and Board members, political leaders, and external stakeholders (n=40) including KCCA Board members, parliamentary oversight representatives, and business community leaders who provided governance, oversight, and external perspectives.

Sample size determination balanced statistical requirements for quantitative analysis and information saturation needs for qualitative inquiry. Using Yamane's formula for finite populations with 95% confidence and 5% margin of error, a recommended sample of 212 respondents was calculated. However, considering resource constraints and the intensive data collection required for case study research, a final sample of 150 respondents was selected, providing adequate diversity while ensuring research feasibility. The sample included 55 managers (30.6% of manager population), 60 operational and technical staff (26.1% of combined staff population), 20 Board members and political leaders (50% of governance population), and 15 external stakeholders purposively selected for their knowledge of KCCA operations and strategic planning.

Sampling procedures varied by respondent category. For managers, stratified random sampling ensured representation across all divisions (Physical Planning, Public Health, Revenue Collection, Engineering, Education, Corporate Services) with selection proportionate to divisional sizes. For operational and technical staff, simple random sampling was employed using employee lists and random number generators. Board members and political leaders involved in KCCA governance were purposively selected based on their strategic planning engagement. External stakeholders were purposively selected representing business associations, civil society organizations monitoring KCCA performance, and community leaders engaged in KCCA planning consultations.

Data collection employed multiple instruments capitalizing on mixed methods strengths. Structured questionnaires for managers and staff comprised four sections: demographic and employment information, strategic planning practices assessment (environmental scanning, strategy formulation, stakeholder participation, resource allocation, implementation mechanisms, monitoring and evaluation), business growth perceptions and evidence (revenue trends, service expansion, infrastructure development, operational efficiency, organizational capabilities), and implementation challenges. Strategic planning practices were measured using 45 items on five-point Likert scales (1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree) adapted from validated strategic planning assessment instruments. Business growth was measured through 32 items assessing financial performance, operational expansion, service quality, and organizational development, plus objective data from organizational records.

Semi-structured interview guides for senior leaders explored KCCA's strategic planning history and evolution, planning process strengths and weaknesses, major growth achievements and constraints, implementation challenges and success factors, resource adequacy and allocation decisions, political and institutional dynamics affecting planning, and recommendations for enhancing strategic planning effectiveness. Interviews lasted 45-75 minutes, were audio-recorded with permission, and were conducted in private settings ensuring confidentiality.

Focus group discussion protocols for departmental teams examined how strategic plans were communicated and understood at operational levels, alignment between strategic objectives and daily work, resource availability for implementing planned activities, coordination mechanisms across departments, monitoring and feedback processes, and barriers to strategy execution. Eight focus groups with 6-8 participants each were conducted, representing different functional areas and organizational levels.

Document analysis reviewed extensive organizational records including KCCA Strategic Plans (2014-2019, 2020-2025), annual reports and performance reports (2016-2023), audited financial statements, sector-specific strategies, monitoring and evaluation reports, Board meeting minutes, and external evaluations by Auditor General and other oversight bodies. This provided objective data on planned versus actual performance, resource allocations, strategic initiative implementation status, and temporal trends.

Instrument validity was established through multiple mechanisms. Content validity was ensured through expert review by three university faculty specializing in strategic management and public administration, plus two former senior KCCA officials who assessed item relevance and comprehensiveness. Face validity was checked through pilot testing with 20 KCCA staff from units not included in the main study, leading to clarification of ambiguous items and correction of terminology. Construct validity was assessed through factor analysis confirming theorized dimensions of strategic planning and business growth.

Reliability testing yielded Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.896 for strategic planning practices scale, 0.847 for business growth scale, and 0.837 to 0.883 for specific sub-dimensions, all exceeding the recommended 0.70 threshold indicating high internal consistency. Qualitative data quality was ensured through investigator triangulation (multiple researchers conducting interviews and cross-checking interpretations), member checking (sharing preliminary findings with key informants for validation), and audit trails documenting analytical decisions.

Data collection occurred over eight weeks in September-October 2023 following approvals from the university ethics committee, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, and KCCA Executive Director. Questionnaires were distributed through departmental focal persons with completion occurring during work time. Researchers were available for clarification. Interviews and focus groups were scheduled at participants' convenience. Document access was negotiated with relevant departments ensuring appropriate permissions.

Quantitative data analysis employed SPSS version 26. Data were screened for missing values (minimal due to in-person administration), outliers, and normality assumptions. Descriptive statistics summarized respondent characteristics, strategic planning practice levels, and business growth indicators. Pearson correlation coefficients examined bivariate relationships between strategic planning dimensions and growth indicators. Multiple regression analysis assessed the predictive power of strategic planning practices on business growth while controlling for organizational and environmental variables. Model 1 entered control variables (respondent position, tenure, division), Model 2 added strategic planning dimensions, allowing assessment of incremental variance explained.

Qualitative data analysis employed thematic analysis. Interview and focus group recordings were transcribed verbatim, yielding over 450 pages of text. Transcripts were imported into NVivo software for systematic coding. Initial coding used both deductive codes derived from theoretical frameworks (environmental scanning, strategy formulation, implementation, monitoring) and inductive codes emerging from data (political interference, bureaucratic rigidity, resource constraints). Codes were organized into themes representing key findings about planning processes, growth patterns, implementation challenges, and contextual influences. Themes were validated through constant comparison across data sources and negative case analysis. Integration of quantitative and qualitative findings occurred through convergent analysis identifying areas of agreement and complementarity, and divergence analysis exploring contradictions requiring explanation.

Ethical protocols included informed consent emphasizing voluntary participation and withdrawal rights, confidentiality protections through anonymous questionnaires and pseudonymized interview transcripts, secure data storage with password protection and restricted access, and aggregate reporting preventing individual identification. Given KCCA's political sensitivity, special care ensured participant protection from any repercussions for candid responses.

RESULTS

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Demographic and Employment Characteristics

The study achieved a 93.3% response rate with 140 of 150 questionnaires returned complete. Among respondents, 58.6% (n=82) were male and 41.4% (n=58) female, reflecting KCCA's gender composition. Age distribution showed 21.4% aged 25-34 years, 45.7% aged 35-44 years, 24.3% aged 45-54 years, and 8.6% aged 55+ years, indicating a predominantly mid-career workforce. Educational qualifications included 12.9% with diplomas, 57.1% with bachelor's degrees, 25.0% with postgraduate diplomas or master's degrees, and 5.0% with doctoral degrees, demonstrating a highly educated workforce.

Organizational tenure ranged from less than 2 years (15.7%) to over 10 years (18.6%), with the largest groups having 2-5 years (35.0%) and 6-10 years (30.7%). Position levels comprised 42.9% operational and technical staff, 40.0% middle managers, and 17.1% senior managers. Divisional representation included Revenue Collection (18.6%), Engineering and Works (17.1%), Physical Planning (15.7%), Public Health (14.3%), Education (12.9%), Corporate Services (11.4%), and other units (10.0%), ensuring broad organizational coverage.

Strategic Planning Practice Quality

Table 1: Assessment of Strategic Planning Dimensions at KCCA (N=140)

Strategic Planning Dimension	Mean	SD	Quality Level
Environmental Scanning	3.45	0.79	High
Vision and Mission Clarity	3.68	0.72	High
Strategy Formulation Quality	3.52	0.76	High
Stakeholder Participation	3.21	0.86	Moderate
Resource Allocation Alignment	2.94	0.88	Moderate
Implementation Mechanisms	2.98	0.91	Moderate
Coordination Systems	3.08	0.84	Moderate
Monitoring and Evaluation	2.87	0.94	Moderate
Strategy Communication	3.15	0.82	Moderate
Adaptive Management	2.76	0.97	Moderate
Overall Strategic Planning Quality	3.28	0.82	Moderate

Note: Scale: 1.00-1.80 = Very Poor; 1.81-2.60 = Poor; 2.61-3.40 = Moderate; 3.41-4.20 = High; 4.21-5.00 = Very High

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 1 revealed moderate overall strategic planning quality at KCCA (M=3.28, SD=0.82), with substantial variation across dimensions. Vision and mission clarity scored highest (M=3.68, SD=0.72), indicating that KCCA had well-articulated organizational purpose and direction that staff understood. Strategy formulation quality was also rated highly (M=3.52, SD=0.76), suggesting that strategic plans contained well-developed strategies addressing identified priorities. Environmental scanning (M=3.45, SD=0.79) demonstrated that KCCA reasonably assessed external opportunities and threats, and internal strengths and weaknesses, though this could be strengthened.

However, critical implementation-related dimensions scored substantially lower. Monitoring and evaluation achieved only moderate ratings (M=2.87, SD=0.94), indicating weak systematic tracking of strategy implementation progress and results. Adaptive management scored lowest (M=2.76, SD=0.97), suggesting limited ability to adjust strategies based on changing circumstances or implementation learning. Resource allocation alignment (M=2.94, SD=0.88) and implementation mechanisms (M=2.98, SD=0.91) both showed moderate levels, indicating gaps between planned strategies and actual resource deployment plus insufficient structures, processes, and accountabilities for execution.

Stakeholder participation (M=3.21, SD=0.86) and strategy communication (M=3.15, SD=0.82) demonstrated moderate levels, suggesting that while some stakeholder engagement occurred, it remained insufficient for building broad ownership and understanding. The relatively high standard deviations (0.82-0.97) across dimensions indicated substantial variation in perceptions, with some respondents rating planning practices highly while others viewed them critically—possibly reflecting genuine variability across different divisions or departments.

Qualitative data illuminated these patterns. Senior managers described elaborate strategic planning processes involving consultants, stakeholder workshops, and detailed documentation: "We've invested millions in developing comprehensive strategic plans with all the right frameworks and language." However, operational staff reported disconnection between plans and reality: "The strategic plan is a document that sits on shelves. We rarely refer to it in our daily work." Multiple respondents noted that planning focused heavily on document production while implementation received inadequate attention: "We're good at planning but weak at executing. The plans look impressive but implementation is where we fail."

Business Growth Patterns and Performance

Table 2: Business Growth Indicators at KCCA (2016-2023)

Growth Indicator	2016 Baseline	2023 Actual	% Change	Strategic Target 2023	Target Achievement
Annual Revenue (UGX Billion)	174	247	+42.0%	320	77.2%
Property Rate Collection Rate	48%	63%	+31.3%	75%	84.0%
Market Revenue (UGX Billion)	12.4	16.8	+35.5%	22.0	76.4%
Parking Revenue (UGX Billion)	8.2	11.6	+41.5%	18.0	64.4%
Service Coverage (% of city)	58%	76%	+31.0%	95%	80.0%
Roads in Good Condition (%)	42%	51%	+21.4%	75%	68.0%
Markets Modernized (number)	8	20	+150%	35	57.1%
Staff Productivity Index	62	78	+25.8%	90	86.7%

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 2 documented mixed business growth patterns at KCCA over the 2016-2023 period. Absolute growth occurred across most indicators with revenue increasing 42%, service coverage expanding 31%, and infrastructure improving measurably. However, actual performance consistently fell short of strategic plan targets by significant margins. Revenue achievement reached only 77.2% of targets, representing a UGX 73 billion shortfall. Market modernization achieved just 57.1% of planned targets with only 20 of 35 markets modernized. Roads in good condition reached 51% against 75% targets.

Revenue growth showed concerning patterns. While total revenue increased 42% over seven years (approximately 5.2% annual compound growth), this underperformed both the strategic plan projections of 10% annual growth and Uganda's average nominal GDP growth of 7.8% during the period. Revenue growth decelerated from 8.4% in 2016-2018 to 4.1% in 2021-2023, suggesting diminishing growth momentum. Revenue collection efficiency remained problematic with property rate collection at 63% indicating 37% of billed amounts uncollected, and parking revenue at only 64% of potential due to evasion.

Service expansion achieved 76% coverage, representing meaningful improvement from 58% baseline but falling substantially short of universal coverage objectives. Quality dimensions showed less improvement with citizen satisfaction surveys rating KCCA services at 54% satisfaction in 2023, barely changed from 51% in 2016 despite strategic emphasis on service quality enhancement. Infrastructure development showed the largest target shortfalls. Market modernization achieved only 57% of targets due to funding constraints, procurement delays, vendor resistance, and implementation bottlenecks. Road rehabilitation addressed only 51% of the network against 75% targets due to budgetary limitations and rapid infrastructure deterioration outpacing maintenance.

Table 3: Perceived Business Growth Quality (N=140)

Business Growth Dimension	Mean	SD	Performance Level
Revenue Growth	3.42	0.81	High
Revenue Diversification	3.28	0.84	Moderate

Service Coverage Expansion	3.51	0.76	High
Service Quality Improvement	2.94	0.91	Moderate
Infrastructure Development	3.18	0.87	Moderate
Operational Efficiency	3.06	0.89	Moderate
Organizational Capacity	3.22	0.83	Moderate
Market Competitiveness	3.35	0.79	Moderate
Overall Business Growth	3.25	0.78	Moderate

Note: Scale: 1.00-1.80 = Very Poor; 1.81-2.60 = Poor; 2.61-3.40 = Moderate; 3.41-4.20 = High; 4.21-5.00 = Very High

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 3 presented respondent perceptions of business growth quality, revealing moderate overall performance (M=3.25, SD=0.78). Service coverage expansion received the highest rating (M=3.51, SD=0.76), aligning with objective data showing geographic expansion. Revenue growth was rated high (M=3.42, SD=0.81), though respondents recognized it fell short of potential. However, service quality improvement scored only moderately (M=2.94, SD=0.91), indicating recognition that expansion prioritized quantity over quality. Operational efficiency (M=3.06, SD=0.89) and infrastructure development (M=3.18, SD=0.87) received moderate ratings, reflecting both achievements and shortfalls.

Qualitative interviews provided nuanced perspectives. Senior managers emphasized achievements: "We've grown significantly our revenue has doubled in real terms, we're providing services to areas that never had them, and we've modernized major markets." However, they acknowledged shortfalls: "We're growing but not at the pace we planned. Targets were ambitious, perhaps unrealistic given our resource constraints and institutional challenges."

Frontline staff offered more critical assessments: "We're doing more but not necessarily better. We've expanded coverage but quality remains poor. Garbage piles up, roads are potholed, markets are congested." External stakeholders noted missed opportunities: "KCCA has potential to generate much more revenue if they fixed collections, stopped leakages, and improved efficiency. They're underperforming their potential."

Correlation Analysis: Strategic Planning and Business Growth

Table 4: Correlations Between Strategic Planning Dimensions and Business Growth (N=140)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Environmental Scanning	1							
2. Strategy Formulation	.724**	1						
3. Stakeholder Participation	.612**	.658**	1					
4. Resource Allocation	.587**	.641**	.693**	1				
5. Implementation Mechanisms	.634**	.682**	.714**	.756**	1			
6. Monitoring & Evaluation	.598**	.627**	.648**	.672**	.731**	1		
7. Overall Strategic Planning	.843**	.897**	.826**	.841**	.912**	.824**	1	
8. Business Growth	.612**	.638**	.574**	.614**	.689**	.593**	.672**	1

Note: **p < 0.01 (2-tailed)

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 4 demonstrated significant positive correlations between all strategic planning dimensions and business growth. Overall strategic planning quality exhibited a strong positive correlation with business growth (r=0.672, p<0.01), indicating that as planning quality increased, growth outcomes improved substantially. Among specific dimensions, implementation mechanisms showed the strongest correlation (r=0.689, p<0.01), suggesting that execution quality mattered most for achieving growth. Strategy formulation (r=0.638, p<0.01), resource allocation (r=0.614, p<0.01), and environmental scanning (r=0.612, p<0.01) all demonstrated strong positive relationships with growth.

Stakeholder participation (r=0.574, p<0.01) and monitoring and evaluation (r=0.593, p<0.01) showed moderately strong correlations, indicating these dimensions contributed meaningfully to growth though less directly than implementation mechanisms and resource allocation.

The intercorrelations among strategic planning dimensions (r=0.587 to 0.756 for specific dimensions) indicated these were related yet distinct components of strategic planning. Implementation mechanisms correlated strongly with resource allocation (r=0.756, p<0.01), suggesting resource availability enabled implementation. Strategy formulation correlated highly with environmental scanning (r=0.724, p<0.01), indicating that quality analysis informed strategy development. These patterns supported viewing strategic planning as an integrated system where dimensions reinforced each other.

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Predicting Business Growth (N=140)

Predictor Variable	Model 1	Model 2
Control Variables	β	β
Respondent Position Level	.184*	.093
Organizational Tenure	.156*	.087

Division (Revenue vs. Others)	.127	.078
Education Level	.112	.069
Strategic Planning Dimensions		
Environmental Scanning		.246***
Strategy Formulation		.183**
Stakeholder Participation		.128*
Resource Allocation		.287***
Implementation Mechanisms		.384***
Monitoring and Evaluation		.156*
R ²	.084	.614
Adjusted R ²	.057	.597
ΔR ²	.084**	.530***
F	3.09**	36.42***

Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001; β = standardized regression coefficient

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 5 presented hierarchical regression results examining how strategic planning dimensions predicted business growth. Model 1 containing only control variables explained 8.4% of growth variance (R²=0.084, F=3.09, p<0.01), with position level (β=0.184, p<0.05) and tenure (β=0.156, p<0.05) showing small significant effects. This limited variance explained by individual characteristics indicated that growth was primarily determined by organizational factors rather than personal attributes.

Model 2 added strategic planning dimensions, dramatically increasing explained variance to 61.4% (R²=0.614, ΔR²=0.530, F=36.42, p<0.001). This massive increment demonstrated strategic planning's powerful influence on business growth. Implementation mechanisms emerged as the strongest predictor (β=0.384, p<0.001), indicating that for each standard deviation increase in implementation quality, business growth increased by 0.384 standard deviations. This finding suggested that execution mattered more than planning formulation—a critical insight for KCCA.

Resource allocation was the second strongest predictor (β=0.287, p<0.001), confirming that aligning financial and human resources with strategic priorities drove growth. Environmental scanning (β=0.246, p<0.001) and strategy formulation (β=0.183, p<0.01) both significantly predicted growth, validating the importance of quality analysis and strategy development. Stakeholder participation (β=0.128, p<0.05) and monitoring/evaluation (β=0.156, p<0.05) showed smaller but significant effects.

The model's high R² of 0.614 indicated that strategic planning practices explained 61.4% of business growth variance a substantial proportion demonstrating strategic planning's centrality to growth outcomes. However, the 38.6% unexplained variance suggested other factors also mattered, including external economic conditions, political dynamics, competitive forces, and organizational culture not captured in the model.

Implementation Challenges

Table 6: Implementation Challenges Constraining Strategic Plan Execution (N=140)

Implementation Challenge	n	%	Severity Rating (Mean)
Inadequate Funding for Strategic Initiatives	110	78.6	4.34
Bureaucratic Rigidity and Slow Processes	100	71.4	4.12
Capacity Constraints (skills, systems)	95	67.9	3.98
Political Interference in Implementation	90	64.3	4.28
Poor Inter-Departmental Coordination	88	62.9	3.87
Resistance to Change	82	58.6	3.74
Weak Monitoring and Accountability	79	56.4	3.91
Unclear Roles and Responsibilities	76	54.3	3.68
External Regulatory Constraints	71	50.7	3.82
Corruption and Resource Misappropriation	68	48.6	4.15

Note: Severity rated on 5-point scale (1=Minor Challenge to 5=Critical Challenge)

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 6 documented substantial implementation challenges constraining strategy execution at KCCA. Inadequate funding emerged as the most prevalent (78.6%) and severe (M=4.34) challenge. Respondents emphasized that while strategic plans articulated ambitious initiatives, budgets allocated to these initiatives were grossly insufficient. One divisional director explained: "Our strategic plan has beautiful programs, but when budget time comes, we receive 30% of what we requested. How can we implement strategies without resources?"

Political interference (64.3%; M=4.28) posed severe challenges with political leaders sometimes overriding technical decisions, redirecting resources to politically favored projects, or blocking strategically important but politically unpopular initiatives. A senior planner noted: "We plan based on technical analysis, but politicians intervene changing priorities for political reasons. This

undermines our strategic direction." Another manager added: "Political cycles don't align with strategic planning cycles. Every election brings new politicians with new priorities, disrupting our long-term strategies."

Bureaucratic rigidity (71.4%; M=4.12) created implementation delays and inefficiencies. KCCA's status as a quasi-governmental entity subjected it to public sector procurement regulations, approval hierarchies, and administrative procedures that slowed implementation. "By the time we get all approvals for a project, market conditions have changed or costs have escalated beyond budgets," a projects manager explained.

Capacity constraints (67.9%; M=3.98) limited implementation quality with insufficient specialized skills, outdated systems and equipment, and overwhelming workloads. Poor coordination (62.9%; M=3.87) meant departments implemented strategies in silos without synergies or cross-functional collaboration. Weak monitoring (56.4%; M=3.91) allowed implementation drift without corrective action.

Corruption and misappropriation (48.6%; M=4.15), while cited by fewer respondents, received high severity ratings from those acknowledging it. Resource leakages through inflated contracts, ghost projects, or embezzlement diverted funds from strategic implementation. External stakeholders were more forthcoming: "There's significant corruption at KCCA that siphons resources away from service delivery into private pockets."

Enablers of Strategic Planning Success

Table 7: Factors Facilitating Effective Strategic Planning and Growth (N=140)

Success Factor	n	%	Importance Rating (Mean)
Strong Leadership Commitment	118	84.3	4.52
Adequate Resource Availability	112	80.0	4.47
Stakeholder Buy-In and Participation	106	75.7	4.28
Clear Implementation Structures	102	72.9	4.18
Competent and Motivated Staff	98	70.0	4.12
Effective Monitoring Systems	93	66.4	4.06
Political Support and Stability	89	63.6	4.35
Organizational Culture of Performance	85	60.7	3.94
Flexible, Adaptive Planning Processes	81	57.9	3.87
External Technical Support	76	54.3	3.72

Note: Importance rated on 5-point scale (1=Not Important to 5=Critically Important)

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Table 7 identified factors respondents considered critical for strategic planning success. Strong leadership commitment received highest endorsement (84.3%; M=4.52), with respondents emphasizing that when senior leaders championed strategic priorities, provided resources, removed obstacles, and held people accountable, implementation advanced. "When the Executive Director makes something a priority and follows up on it, things get done. Without that push from the top, strategies languish," a manager observed.

Adequate resources (80.0%; M=4.47) and political support (63.6%; M=4.35) were rated critically important, underscoring that planning without resources and political backing was futile. Stakeholder participation (75.7%; M=4.28) and clear implementation structures (72.9%; M=4.18) were viewed as essential for building ownership and ensuring coordinated execution.

These success factors suggested that effective strategic planning required technical competencies (quality analysis, strategy formulation, monitoring) plus organizational and political conditions (leadership, resources, stakeholder support, conducive culture). The gap between identified success factors and actual implementation challenges indicated substantial room for improvement.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that strategic planning significantly influenced business growth at Kampala City Council Authority, with moderate-to-strong positive relationships between planning quality and growth outcomes. Organizations investing in quality strategic planning processes comprehensive environmental scanning, stakeholder-engaged strategy formulation, aligned resource allocation, robust implementation mechanisms, and systematic monitoring achieved superior growth in revenues, service coverage, infrastructure development, and organizational capabilities compared to those with weaker planning practices.

However, KCCA's experience demonstrated that strategic planning's potential benefits were constrained by implementation challenges, resource limitations, political interference, and institutional rigidities characteristic of Uganda's public sector context. The moderate overall planning quality and mixed growth outcomes indicated significant unrealized potential. KCCA produced sophisticated strategic plans but struggled to execute them consistently, resulting in performance falling short of ambitious targets while still exceeding what likely would have occurred without strategic planning.

Implementation mechanisms emerged as the most critical strategic planning dimension for driving growth, more important than planning formulation quality. This finding underscored that execution mattered more than planning sophistication—well-executed moderate strategies outperformed poorly executed brilliant strategies. For public sector organizations like KCCA, building implementation capacity through clear accountabilities, adequate resources, monitoring systems, and adaptive management represented higher-return investments than incremental improvements in planning sophistication.

Resource allocation alignment proved essential for translating strategies into reality. Strategic plans without corresponding budgets constituted aspirational documents unlikely to drive actual change. KCCA's pattern of ambitious strategic targets combined with inadequate resource allocation created credibility gaps undermining planning's motivational and coordinating functions. Realistic planning aligned with resource availability, or alternatively, aggressive resource mobilization strategies enabling ambitious plans, were necessary for effective strategic management.

Political and institutional contexts profoundly shaped strategic planning effectiveness. Political interference, bureaucratic rigidities, and governance dynamics constrained technocratic planning's impact. Strategic planning in public sector contexts required not only technical competencies but political navigation skills, stakeholder management capabilities, and adaptive approaches accommodating institutional realities. Mechanistic application of private sector strategic planning models without contextual adaptation produced sub-optimal results.

The study concluded that for KCCA and similar quasi-governmental entities operating in Uganda's institutional environment, effective strategic planning required balancing aspirational vision with realistic assessment of implementation capacity and resource availability, prioritizing implementation capability building alongside planning formulation, establishing strong monitoring and adaptive management systems enabling course correction, securing political support and managing interference, addressing systemic constraints including bureaucratic rigidities and capacity gaps, and viewing strategic planning as ongoing management process rather than periodic planning exercise.

RECOMMENDATIONS

KCCA should create a dedicated Strategic Planning and Performance Management Unit reporting directly to the Executive Director, independent from operational divisions. This unit should coordinate strategic planning processes, monitor implementation across divisions, provide performance data and analysis, and serve as institutional custodian of strategic management. Independence from operational pressures enables focus on strategic priorities versus urgent operational demands. Staffing should include strategic planning specialists, monitoring and evaluation experts, and performance analysts.

Future strategic planning should balance aspirational vision with realistic assessment of available and mobilizable resources. Strategic targets should be evidence-based, aligned with historical performance trends and resource projections rather than purely aspirational. Alternative scenarios (base case, optimistic case, pessimistic case) should be developed with corresponding implementation plans. This enhances planning credibility and reduces demotivation from consistently missing unrealistic targets.

Comprehensive monitoring systems should track strategic plan implementation quarterly with standardized performance indicators, division-by-division implementation status reports, variance analysis identifying gaps between planned and actual performance, and Board-level quarterly performance reviews with Executive Director accountability. Real-time dashboards should provide leadership with visibility into implementation progress. Regular monitoring enables early identification of implementation problems and timely corrective action.

KCCA should establish dedicated Strategic Development Funds through earmarked budget allocations, percentage of annual revenue reserved for strategic investments, donor partnerships for specific strategic initiatives, and public-private partnerships for capital-intensive projects. Ring-fencing strategic initiative funding prevents diversion to recurrent costs. Multi-year funding commitments enable continuity for long-term strategic programs.