

Monitoring and Evaluation Practices, and Performance of Livelihood Development Programme: Case of Caritas Meru, Kenya

Joshua M. Thambura, Naomi Mwangi, John Mbugua, and Reuben Kikwatha

ABSTRACT

Project performance is a vital concern of the project managers and stakeholders since it measures the return on investment. Whereas a correlation between some project monitoring and evaluation practices and the performance of development projects has been established, little is known about the combined influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on the performance of livelihood development programmes. The purpose of the study was to investigate the combined influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on the livelihood development programme by Caritas Meru, Kenya. The study used cross-sectional, descriptive, and correlation research designs. The target population consisted of 465 individuals, including 441 smallholder farmer group leaders, 21 project staff, and 3 senior managers from Caritas Meru. The sample size of 191 farmer group leaders was computed and apportioned using clustering and proportionate stratified random sampling methods. The 21 project staff and 3 senior managers were sampled using the census method. Data was collected through questionnaires, interview schedules, and Focus Group Discussions. The study established that the R value= 0.589 showed a moderate correlation and the F statistic (26.81) for the combined variables regression relationship was <0.001. The null hypothesis (H₀) was rejected, and the research hypothesis was subsequently supported. The study recommended a paradigm shift in policy development and implementation regarding M&E practices by Caritas Meru, NGOs, counties, the national government, and project management professionals to enhance programme performance. The study also recommends the enactment of policies on a coordinated multi-sectoral collaboration approach to promote quality data collection, analysis, and sharing. Additionally, the study suggests further research to determine the M&E capacity development aptitudes necessary for project performance.

Keywords: Monitoring and Evaluation Practices, M&E Data Collection, M&E Planning, M&E Capacity Development, M&E Knowledge Sharing, Performance of Livelihood Development Programme.

Submitted: April 01, 2023

Published: May 15, 2023

ISSN: 2507-1076

DOI: 10.24018/ejbmr.2023.8.3.1942

J. M. Thambura*

Faculty of Business and Management
Science, University of Nairobi, Kenya

(e-mail: jthambura@must.ac.ke)

N. Mwangi

Faculty of Education, University of
Nairobi, Kenya

(e-mail: nmwangi@uonbi.ac.ke)

J. Mbugua

Faculty of Education, University of
Nairobi, Kenya

(e-mail: john.mbugua@uonbi.ac.ke)

R. Kikwatha

Faculty of Business and Management
Science, University of Nairobi, Kenya

(e-mail: kikwathar@uonbi.ac.ke)

*Corresponding Author

I. INTRODUCTION

Measurement of project and programme performance has been faced with divergent opinions among academicians and project practitioners (Amir, 2012). The two main arguments are whether performance should be based on the overall project objectives or secondly, on the traditional performance measure of cost, time, and quality. A study of 1,300 World Bank projects globally from 2008 to 2014 established a linkage between the quality of project M&E and the performance of the projects (Raimondo, 2016). The study found that successful outcomes of projects were associated with quality monitoring and evaluation activities. Webb and Elliot, (2000), further assert that M&E practices are patterns that have been identified in the improvement of project performance. Subsequently, effective M&E has a possible significant influence on programme theory and practice (Haddad *et al.*, 2009).

According to research conducted in Kenya, the success of development projects was greatly influenced by several M&E factors such as budgetary allocation, the monitoring team size, methods and tools chosen, and the M&E plan (Wachaiyu, 2016). The study further confirmed that M&E plays a critical role in determining project performance, but many significant development projects are yet to fully adopt it. As a result, the study suggests that M&E has a significant impact on project performance. Another study by Ntiniya (2016) on the impact of M&E on CDF project performance, found that M&E schedules, budgeting, and result usage had a positive influence on project performance. The study focused on variables such as the participation of stakeholders, M&E budget planning, M&E timeliness, and the utilization of M&E results.

A further study by Wanjiru (2013) on M&E systems in NGOs, attributed project performance to factors such as the use of effective strategies and tools in M&E, the involvement

of the management in M&E activities, M&E training, and the technical expertise of the project team.

Best practices in M&E ensures project success, assessment impact, increased stakeholder ownership and management strategy. It also ensures the capacity building of stakeholders for financial accountability to financiers and implementers. The M&E practices influence on livelihood development programmes (LDP) under investigation in the study was data collection, capacity development, planning, and knowledge sharing. A study that focused on monitoring practices and project performance done by Muchelule *et al.*, (2017), established that monitoring of state corporations in Kenya has a positive correlation with their performance. The study's key monitoring practices used were estimation of activities, participatory approach, and mapping. The monitoring practices in the study ensured that the project planning was well executed by engaging stakeholders in reflecting on and tracking the project progress which resulted in acceptable project performance.

According to Rogito (2010), M&E is a connection of all things considered, instruments and procedures that are utilized to gauge if activities or projects have been executed according to structures and are accomplishing the arranged results. The history of M & E according to Kusek and Rist (2004) can be traced back to 3000BC when Egyptians utilized observing ways to deal with and track their government's performance in terms of domesticated animals and grain yield. In modern history, in the 1970s M & E was widely used by international NGOs but not in government programmes. Mark, *et al.*, (2000) and World Bank (2011) further explain the development in the 1980s where there was a shift of focus from individual projects to Sector Wide Approaches (SWAPS). In the 1990s, result-based management (RBM) focused on measuring "results" a shift from monitoring inputs and outputs. Result-based M&E was a product of Result Based Management (RBM) in the 2000s during the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) implementation (Zhou & Hardlife, 2013).

This paper focused on the livelihood development programme implemented by Caritas which is an organizational development arm of the Catholic Diocese of Meru. LDP is an approach targeting poor communities to enhance food and nutrition security as well as increase household incomes. The organization strategically focuses on arid and semi-arid regions that are administratively situated in Meru and Tharaka Nithi counties. The population in these regions experience poverty and food insecurity due to severe and frequent droughts (Sida, 2015). Consequently, Caritas has been recognized as a major stakeholder in agriculture and social development in Meru and Tharaka Nithi Counties (GoK, 2018a; GoK, 2018b). Whereas the NGOs sector from time to time supplements the effort of the county and national governments in giving services to the people, skeptics raise questions about their development impact (Ooko, 2014). The concern about the Caritas programmes in Meru and Tharaka Nithi counties is whether the M&E practices in place significantly influence the performance of the livelihood development programme. The specific M&E practices that were studied included data collection, capacity development, planning, and knowledge sharing.

The situation of M&E in social projects in Kenya has been deemed inadequate and ineffective, as reported by the Kenya Social Protection Review (2012). Even when M&E is carried out, the results are not made available to the public. NGOs face various obstacles while implementing M&E systems, as noted in studies by Hughes (2002) and Ramesh (2002). Dobi (2012) found that the main reason for ineffective M&E in many projects is the absence of a structured adoption of M&E systems. Fowler (1997) argued that NGOs have shortcomings in the instruments they use to monitor, evaluate, and review their progress, which makes it difficult for them to account for their accomplishments. Shapiro (2011) contended that M&E is often viewed as a donor-driven agenda rather than a project management process by NGOs, which negatively affects the successful implementation of M&E practices.

This study has its theoretical foundation on the theory of constraints and the theory of change. The theory of constraints suggests that project performance depends on factors such as budget, time, risk, benefits, quality, and scope (Rugenyi, 2016). Despite managing these traditional project constraints effectively, it is believed that M&E practices can also impact programme performance. A theory of change also underpins this study since it rationalizes why the change is necessary and how it will be executed. The theory explains how interventions by M&E practices will lead to the performance of livelihood programme in a causal-effect relationship. The study examines how four M&E practices - M&E data collection, M&E planning, M&E capacity development, and M&E knowledge sharing - affect the performance of the LDP at Caritas Meru. These practices were selected for investigation due to knowledge gaps at Caritas Meru. While there is existing research on M&E systems and NGOs, not much is documented on how M&E practices influence the performance of the livelihood development program at Caritas Meru. Thus, this study aims to explore the influence of M&E practices on the performance of LDP executed by Caritas Meru, Kenya.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature reviewed in this paper included the performance of the livelihood development programme (LDP) (dependent variable) and independent variables comprising M&E data collection, M&E capacity development, M&E planning, and M&E knowledge sharing.

A. Performance of Livelihood Development Programmes (LDP)

The performance of projects and programmes has been the subject of studies around the world in project organizations (Jitpaiboon *et al.*, 2019; Nanema *et al.*, 2021). Performance determines how successful or unsuccessful programmes will be. According to Kamau and Mohamed (2015), M&E is the key factor in a project's success. According to a study on M&E factors impacting development project performance conducted in Kenya (Wachaiyu, 2016), budgetary allocation, the size of the monitoring team, the technique and device selection, and the M&E plan were all crucial in determining the success of development projects. The study found that M&E has a significant impact on project performance, although many important development projects have not used

it to its full potential. In a study on projects by Ntiniya (2016), on the impact of M&E on project performance, it was found that project performance was positively impacted by M&E timeliness, budgeting, and result usage. Wanjiru (2013) attributed project success in an M&E systems study in NGOs to the strategies and tools utilized in M&E, the role of the board in M&E activities, training in M&E, and the specialized ability of the project team. Wongtschowski *et al.* (2016) explored the performance factors in agricultural projects, including M&E for accountability and IT. In a survey of nearly 900 households and 119 farmer groups across 14 districts of Uganda, an assessment was done on the performance of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) (Benin *et al.*, 2007). The study found that NAADS performed significantly due to the adoption of new technologies introduced to farmers, but several constraining factors affected productivity, including shortage of capital, unavailable credit, lack of quality inputs, inadequate farmland, unfavorable weather, and challenges of pests and diseases (Benin *et al.*, 2007). Household and farmer group surveys were used to collect data related to the adoption and productivity of new technologies, awareness, and use of improved production practices, participation in the market, access to advisory services and other institutions, and the empowerment of farmers in the management of advisory services.

B. Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection

Experts across various disciplines agree that the accuracy of collected data, whether primary or secondary, can have a significant impact on research outcomes. Wongtschowski *et al.* (2016) suggest that M&E systems are frequently employed in projects, but the data collected may not be adequate or of sufficient quality. In the public sector, a weak culture of information gathering has led to a lack of appreciation for the importance of evaluation (World Bank, 2000).

Khatiala's (2013) study conducted in Nairobi and Nyanza regions found that the use of M&E tools and practices, such as performance reviews, project management software, earned value management, and variance analysis, contributed to better project performance. The study revealed that 70% of the respondents supported broader and more effective utilization of these tools which consequently enhanced project performance.

Triangulation of data collection methods can help to validate findings. Primary data was collected directly by M&E systems, while secondary data served as sources of information for monitoring and evaluation, according to Gebremedhin *et al.* (2010). The M&E system employs various data collection methods, including questionnaires, key informant interviews, observations, project documents, surveys, and focus group discussions. Kusek and Rist (2004) argue that M&E methods must be effective to enable managers to evaluate the degree to which planned or pledged deliverables are met. They also note that some development projects may collect excessive data that is ultimately wasted due to unclear end-user requirements. Nasambu (2016) emphasizes that frequent data collection helps managers track trends and avoid errors that can arise when data collection periods are too long. Guijt (1999) similarly suggests that data

must be collected at the right moments and with the right regularity to be useful.

A study by Thambura *et al.* (2023) empirically established how data collection practices of M&E influence the performance of LDP. The study analyzed various factors such as the data collection tools, data security, data validation, Frequency of data collection, and timeliness. The results showed that there is a strong correlation between the quality of M&E data collection and the performance of LDP. The study concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between M&E data collection and the performance of LDP implemented by Caritas Meru, Kenya.

C. Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development

Human capital, in terms of numbers as well as job skills, is vital for the success of monitoring and evaluation practices. The importance of effective human resource management has been identified by World Bank (2011) as a requirement for M&E staffing. The required human capacity should have proper training and experience in M&E. According to Koffi-Tessio (2012), employees' competency levels are a key challenge during the implementation of M&E. UNAIDS (2010), asserts that M&E capacity development involves diverse activities that include formal training, mentorship, in-service training, internships, and coaching. It is not limited to the technical skills of M&E but also addresses financial accounting, supervision, facilitation, leadership, communication, and activism. Development of these skills is through both formal training in educational institutions and on-the-job experience through mentorship programmes (Acevedo *et al.*, 2015).

In situations where M&E is done by incompetent persons the process turns out to be costly and time consuming (Nabris, 2012). The data obtained from such undertaking becomes unusable ultimately affecting project success. Murunga (2011) asserts that specialized training in participatory M&E practitioners provides the remedy for incompetency.

The importance of project staff in M&E is emphasized by Acevedo, *et al.* (2015) who attributes the project's success to their influence. He further asserts that training, reasonable remuneration, and decent working conditions contribute towards project success. White (2013) found out that insufficient M&E capacity becomes pronounced when staff is engaged in several projects at a time leading to overworked M&E capacity and rapid fatigue. Competency in M&E can be attained through formal training in learning institutions coupled with "on-the-job experience" (Acevedo *et al.*, 2015).

According to Ooko *et al.* (2018), from a study on the human capacity for monitoring and evaluation systems in the health sector, there was increased access to the provision of health services to a moderate extent with capacity building on Monitoring & Evaluation. A separate study by Mibey (2011) on determinants of monitoring and evaluation implementation in the kazi kwa kijana project, established that capacity building was lacking and hence should be added. In support of the foregoing, White (2013) found out that health institutions meet challenges of insufficient M&E capacity due to M&E staff engagement in multiple projects at a time, hence being overworked.

Munce (2005), asserts that M&E in LDPs lacks organized capacity building for M&E, despite its importance in project

management. M&E in LDPs also lacks effective participation of stakeholders where all stakeholders consider each other as partners with the common ultimate purpose of achieving development outcomes (Munce, 2005). However, in a study by Gathege and Yusuf (2019), in Uasin Gishu County established that the sustainability of women-based LDPs was attained when training had been made on monitoring and evaluation use and implementation.

D. Monitoring and Evaluation Planning

Effective planning for M&E in projects, makes it possible to decide if project activities are progressing, if the project is on track, and how to improve in the future. A study conducted by Mackay (2007), pointed out that M&E planning was critical in enhancing project performance. The study investigated ways of determining better governance through M&E. By use of descriptive statistics to analyze data, the results showed that the M&E practices in the different projects were inadequate. In a related study, Muhammad *et al.* (2012) observed that project management offers an organization with control instruments that advance its capacity for project cycle management activities. The investigation distinguished project performance improvements through various stages of the projects. Variable models were utilized to distinguish how each stage is useful during the process of managing project performance. The analysis of various project phases established that the planning phase of projects affects performance of projects.

E. Monitoring an Evaluation Knowledge Sharing

The construct of knowledge sharing in project management processes has been documented in the literature. Knowledge sharing is valuable among the project team to avoid making repeated mistakes, increase work efficiency, and reduce risks of failure (Ni *et al.*, 2018). Researchers have linked knowledge sharing to project performance (Jamil *et al.*, 2019; Soderlund, 2011). According to Manoj and Baker (2007), communication is ranked very important in project management, the reason that up to 95% of all trouble shootings emanate from a lack of proper communication. According to Carvalho (2013) project communication manifests in various forms that include formal meetings, presentations, documents, casual discussions, meeting minutes, and records. Nyandongo and Davids (2017) identify the media of communication also known as tools as; intranet, e-mail, skype, telephones, Facebook, videoconferencing, VOIP, and chat.

A study carried out in South Africa by Nyandongo and Davids (2017) on the evaluation of the link between communication and project management performance, established that project managers who made up 49% of the sample responded "yes" (80%) to the question whether the communication was the most important aspect contributing to project success. This confirms earlier research findings that established project communication as a critical success factor in projects (Alias *et al.*, 2014; Kerzner, 2013). Another study in the education sector in Uganda on the connection between project communication and project performance in Public Universities in Uganda established that when communication increases, project performance was enhanced.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study design utilized was descriptive research that focused on observing and measuring existing variables without any intervention from the researcher. The study employed a pragmatic research paradigm, which involved a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. This study was carried out in two counties, Meru and Tharaka-Nithi that constitute the territorial jurisdiction of Caritas Meru. The study targeted a population of 465 respondents, including 441 farmer group leaders, 21 project staff, and 3 senior managers. The sample size of the study was determined using Cooper and Schindler's (2006) formula, which resulted in 215 respondents. The sample was proportionately distributed among five sub-counties: Tigania West, Buuri, Igambang'ombe, Imenti Central, and Tharaka North, which have maintained low agricultural productivity and food insecurity. The data collection process involved the use of a ten-item Likert-type survey questionnaire, interview guide, and focus group discussion guide. Data processing was done by coding and entering raw data into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software version 22. Descriptive statistics used were mean, composite mean, and composite standard deviation, while inferential statistics for analysis were person's correlation coefficient (r), regression coefficient (β) and ANOVA (F)

IV. RESULTS AND FINDINGS

A. Descriptive Findings on Scales

The descriptive statistics are presented in Table I showing the composite means and composite standard deviations for various variables. Composite means for monitoring and evaluation data collection, monitoring and evaluation capacity development, and monitoring and evaluation knowledge sharing were 3.98, 3.683, and 3.935 respectively. This indicates that, on average, the respondents were in agreement that these practices exist and are being carried out at Caritas Meru. However, the composite mean for M&E planning was 3.45, indicating that on average, respondents were uncertain about planning activities in the LDP. The performance of the LDP had a composite mean of 3.88 implying that on average, respondents agreed that the LDP had shown performance. The composite standard deviations were relatively low, with M&E data collection at 0.9655, M&E capacity development at 1.009, M&E planning at 0.793, M&E knowledge sharing at 0.792, and performance of livelihood program at 0.846. This indicates that the data points were closely clustered around the mean, thus confirming data consistency.

B. Multiple Regression Summary for the M & E Practices

In order to determine the independent variable that had a significant association with the performance of LDP by Caritas in Meru Catholic Diocese, a multiple regression analysis was conducted. The model summary as well as ANOVA statistics were utilized to evaluate the overall relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

The multiple R-value, which indicates the degree of correlation between the set of independent variables and the dependent variable, was found to be 0.589, indicating a moderate correlation as presented in Table II. The R^2 value indicates the percentage of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the four predictors, which is 34.7% in this case. This means that 34.7% of the variation in the performance of LDP implemented by Caritas in Meru Catholic Diocese can be attributed to the four parameters of monitoring and evaluation practice. The adjusted R^2 value corrects for multiple predictors and is slightly lower than the R^2 value.

TABLE I: COMPOSITE MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR STUDY VARIABLES

Research Variables	Composite Mean	Composite Standard Deviation
Monitoring and Evaluation of data collection	3.98	0.9655
Monitoring and Evaluation Capacity Development	3.683	1.009
Monitoring and Evaluation Planning	3.45	0.793
Monitoring and Evaluation Knowledge Sharing	3.935	0.792
Performance of Livelihood Development Programme (LDP)	3.88	0.846

TABLE II: MODEL SUMMARY FOR THE COMBINED MODEL

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.589	0.347	0.334	4.05958

Table III presents the ANOVA for the combined model, which shows that the F statistic is 26.81 for the overall regression relationship with a probability of less than 0.001, which is lower than the level of significance (0.05). Therefore, the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0$) was rejected. This implies that there is a statistically significant relationship between the M&E practices and the performance of livelihood development programme, thus supporting the research hypothesis. Therefore, the findings suggest that monitoring and evaluation practices have a significant impact on the performance of the LDP at Caritas Meru.

The independent variables for the study were M&E data collection, M&E capacity development, M&E planning, and M&E knowledge sharing. The output of the multiple regressions indicating the significance of each predictor variable is shown in Table IV.

TABLE III: ANOVA FOR THE COMBINED MODEL

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	p-value
Regression	1767.4	4	441.8	26.81	0.000
1 Residual	3329.0	202	16.48	-	-
Total	5096.4	206	-	-	-

In terms of monitoring and evaluation data collection, the statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between this variable and the performance of livelihood development programs implemented by Caritas in the Meru Catholic

Diocese. The t statistic for the b coefficient was 3.605, yielding a probability of < 0.001 , which is lower than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. As a result, we rejected the null hypothesis that the slope associated with monitoring and evaluation data collection is zero ($b = 0$), indicating a statistically significant association.

However, this study did not find a significant relationship between monitoring and evaluation capacity development and the performance of livelihood development programme implemented by Caritas Meru. The p-value was 0.114 which is greater than 0.05, thereby failing to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between monitoring and evaluation capacity development and the performance of livelihood programs.

On the other hand, concerning monitoring and evaluation planning, the analysis demonstrated a statistically significant relationship between this predictor variable and the performance of livelihood development programme implemented by Caritas Meru. The t statistic for the b coefficient was 3.432, resulting in a probability of < 0.001 , which is below the significance level of 0.05. Consequently, we rejected the null hypothesis that the slope associated with monitoring and evaluation planning is zero ($b = 0$), indicating a statistically significant association.

In relation to the predictor variable of monitoring and evaluation knowledge sharing, the statistical analysis revealed a significant relationship between this variable and the performance of livelihood development programme implemented by Caritas Meru. The t statistic for the b coefficient was 6.459, resulting in a probability of < 0.001 , which is below the predetermined significance level of 0.05. Consequently, we rejected the null hypothesis that the slope associated with monitoring and evaluation knowledge sharing is zero ($b = 0$), indicating a statistically significant association between monitoring and evaluation knowledge sharing and the performance of livelihood development programme.

TABLE IV: REGRESSION COEFFICIENTS FOR THE COMBINED MODEL

	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	p-value
(Constant)	17.343	2.842	-	6.102	0.000
M&E data collection	0.239	0.066	0.268	3.605	0.000
1 M&E Capacity Development	0.150	0.094	0.156	1.586	0.114
M&E Planning	-0.342	0.100	-0.314	-3.432	0.001
M&E Knowledge Sharing	0.556	0.086	0.467	6.459	0.000

V. DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS

The statistical analysis of the overall regression relationship yielded an F statistic of 26.81 with a probability of < 0.001 , indicating that the probability is lower than the predetermined significance level of 0.05. This outcome led to the rejection of the null hypothesis (H_0) which posited no relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable ($R^2 = 0$). The findings support the research hypothesis, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the set of independent variables and the dependent

variable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices at Caritas Meru exert a significant influence on the performance of the Livelihood Development Program (LDP). This conclusion is supported by the descriptive statistics, with the majority of respondents linking performance to M&E practices, including M&E data collection (196 respondents, 94.6%), M&E planning (196 respondents, 94.6%), and M&E knowledge sharing (197 respondents, 95.1%).

The significance of M&E practices in determining project performance is supported by previous studies. Thambura *et al.* (2023) demonstrated the significant influence of M&E data collection practices on LDP performance. Muchelule *et al.* (2017) discovered a positive correlation between monitoring of state corporations in Kenya and their performance. Similarly, Kamau and Mohamed (2015) proposed that good project performance is influenced by various factors, with M&E playing a major role. Wachaiyu (2016) reported that M&E methods and planning were instrumental in determining the success of development projects in Kenya. Another study by Singh *et al.* (2017) found that M&E was the main driving factor in the success of development projects and programmes. Despite the critical role of M&E in project performance, the study indicates that significant development projects have not effectively adopted M&E as part of their project management practices.

VI. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The aim of this study was to examine how the combined M&E practices influence the performance of Caritas Meru's livelihood development programme. The results of the multiple regression analysis indicated that three out of four variables were significant with a p-value of less than 0.05, while M&E capacity development was not significant with a p-value of 0.114. The statistical analysis provided strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0), which suggested no relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable ($R^2=0$). On the contrary, the findings supported the research hypothesis, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices and the performance of the Livelihood Development Programme (LDP) at Caritas Meru. The study recommended the establishment of policies to govern M&E data collection, M&E planning, M&E capacity development, and M&E knowledge sharing by various entities including Caritas Meru, NGOs, counties, the national government, and project management professionals to enhance programme performance. The study recommends a policy on multi-sectoral collaborations to promote quality data collection, analysis, and sharing. Additionally, the study suggested further research to determine the levels of M&E capacity development necessary for project performance.

REFERENCES

Acevedo, G. L., Rivera, K., Lima, L., & Hwang, H. (2015). Challenges in Monitoring and Evaluation: An Opportunity to Institutionalize M&E Systems. *Fifth Conference of Latin America and the Caribbean Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Network*. World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank, 1-178.

- Alias, Z., Zawawi, E. M. A., Yusof, K., & Aris, N. M. (2014). Determining critical success factors of project management practice: A conceptual framework. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 153, 61-69.
- Amir, A. (2012). The Origin Concept of Project Success. *International Journal of Engineering Research & Technology (Ijert)*, 1(05).
- Benin, S., Nkonya, E., Okecho, G., Pender, J. L., Nahdy S, Mugarura, S. & Kayobyo, G. (2007). *Assessing the Impact of the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) in the Uganda Rural Livelihoods*. IFPRI Discussion Paper 00724, October 2007 <http://dspace.cigilibrary.org/jspui/bitstream/123456789/31938/1/IFPRI%20Discussion%20Paper%2000724.pdf>.
- Carvalho, M. M. (2013). An investigation of the role of communication in IT projects. *International Journal of Operations & Production Management*, 34(1), 36-64. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOPM-11-2011-0439>.
- Cooper, D. R., Schindler, P. S., & Sun, J. (2006). *Business research methods*. Retrieved from: http://sutlib2.sut.ac.th/sut_contents/HI399963.pdf.
- Dobi, B. A. (2012). Factors influencing adoption of monitoring and evaluation system for project management among NGOs in Rarieda District, Siaya county, Kenya [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi].
- Fowler, A. (2000). NGO futures: Beyond aid: NGDO values and the fourth position. *Third World Quarterly*, 21(4), 589-603.
- Gathege N. W. & Yusuf, M. (2019). Monitoring and evaluation on sustainability of women based agricultural projects. A case of Joywo Uasin Gishu county. *International Journal of Management and Commerce Innovations (Online)*, 7(1), 250-259.
- Gebremedhin, B., Getachew, A., & Amha, R. (2010). *Results-based monitoring and evaluation for organizations working in agricultural development: A guide for practitioners*.
- Government of Kenya (GoK, 2018a). Meru County Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022.
- Government of Kenya (GoK, 2018b). Tharaka Nithi Integrated Development Plan 2018-2022.
- Guijt, I. (1999). *Seeking Surprise: Rethinking monitoring for collective learning in rural resource management*. Communication Studies. Wageningen: Wageningen University.
- Haddad, L., Lindstrom, J., & Pinto, Y. (2010). The sorry state of M&E in agriculture: Can people-centred approaches help? *IDS Bulletin*, 41(6), 6-25.
- Hughes, A. (2002). Lessons Learnt on Civil Society Engagement in PRSP Processes in Bolivia, Kenya and Uganda: A Report Emerging from the Bolivian-East African Sharing and Learning Exchange. *Report, July, Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, Brighton, United Kingdom*.
- Jamil, M., Ahmad, F., & Mariam, S. (2019). Knowledge Sharing Accelerates Success of Complex Projects: An Evidence from Pakistan. *Global Regional Review*, IV(II),438-447, doi:10.31703/grr.2019(IV-II).47.
- Jitpaiboon, T., Smith, S. M., & Gu, Q. (2019). Critical Success Factors Affecting Project Performance: An Analysis of Tools, Practices, and Managerial Support. *Project Management Journal*, 50(3), 271- 287. <https://doi.org/10.1177/8756972819833545>.
- Kamau, C. G. & Mohamed, H. B. (2015). Efficacy of monitoring and evaluation function in achieving project success in Kenya: A conceptual framework. *Science Journal of Business and Management*. 3(3), 82-94. DOI: 10.11648/j.sjbm.20150303.14.
- Kerzner, H. (2013). *Project Management, A Systems Approach to Planning Scheduling and control 8th Edition*. John Wiley & Sons. Ohio, USA.
- Khatiala, M. P. (2013). *The influence of monitoring & evaluation tools and practices on project delivery capability (PDC): A case of HIV/aids interventions in Nairobi and Nyanza regions*, Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Koffi-Tessio, B. (2012). *Efficacy and efficiency of Monitoring and Evaluation (MES) for Projects Financed by World Bank Group*. African Development Bank Group.
- Kusek, J. Z., & Rist, R. C. (2004). *Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System: A Handbook for Development Practitioners*. World Bank Publications, Washington: USA.
- Mackay, K. (2007). *How to build M & E systems to support better government*. Independent evaluation group. Washington, DC: World Bank
- Manoj, B. S., & Baker, A. H. (2007). Communication challenges in emergency response. *Communications of the ACM*, 50(3), 51-53.
- Mibey, H. K. (2011). Factors affecting implementation of monitoring and evaluation programs in kazi kwa vijana projects by government ministries in Kakamega Central District, Kenya [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi, Kenya].
- Muchelule, Y. Iravo A. M., Odhiambo, R., & Shalle, I. N. (2017). Effect of Monitoring Practices on Project Performance of Kenyan State

- Corporations. *European Scientific Journal*, 13(19)
DOI:10.19044/esj.2017.v13n19p264.
- Muhammad, S. J., Ahmad, K. M. & Suziah, B. S. (2012). Project planning, implementation and monitoring issues, findings and recommendations; *Research Journal of Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology* 4(15), 2469-2488.
- Munce, K. (2005). Planning projects that make a difference: an integrated, results-oriented & principled approach to project design, monitoring & evaluation. In *Scholarship and Community: Papers presented at the College of Arts, Education and Social Sciences Inaugural Research Conference, University of Western Sydney, Bankstown Campus, 7 to 9 October 2005*.
- Murunga, K. B. (2011). Factors influencing the application of participatory monitoring and evaluation approach of managing development projects in Kenya. The case of local links projects. [Unpublished master's thesis]. University of Nairobi.
- Nabris, K. (2012). *Monitoring and Evaluation*. Palestinian Academic Society for the Study of International Affairs (PASSIA).
- Nanema, M., Nassé, T. & Ouedraogo, A. (2021). Determinants of the Performance of Development Projects in Developing Countries. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 3(1), 11-29. DOI: 10.51594/ijmer.v1i3.200.
- Nasambu J. (2016). *Factors influencing the performance of monitoring and Evaluation systems in non-government organizations in Iira District, northern Uganda*, [Unpublished Master's Thesis], Uganda Technology and Management University.
- Ni, G., Cui, Q., Sang, L., Wang, W., & Xia, D. (2018). Knowledge-sharing culture, project-team interaction, and knowledge-sharing performance among project members. *Journal of Management in Engineering*, 34(2), 04017065.
- Ntiniya, M., E. (2016). *Influence of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of constituency development funded projects in Kenya: A Case of Kajiado East Constituency*, [Unpublished Master's Thesis], UON repository, Nairobi.
- Nyandongo, K. M., & Davids, M. (2017). The impact of communication on project performance: An empirical study". In *26th International Association for Management of Technology Conference, IAMOT 2017* (pp. 404-425).
- Ooko S. (2014). NGOs and development in Africa: Lessons for donors. <https://news.trust.org/item/20140303151017-208vf>.
- Ooko, O. S., Rambo, C. M., & Osogo, J. A. (2018). Influence of Human Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation Systems on Provision of Health Care Services in Public Health Institutions in Migori County. *Journal of Business and Management (IOSR-JBM)*, 20(8), 62-71.
- Raimondo, E. (2016). *What Difference Does Good Monitoring and Evaluation Make to World Bank Project Performance?* Policy Research Working Paper; No. 7726. World Bank, Washington, DC, World Bank.
<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/24644> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.
- Rogito, D. O. (2010). Influence of monitoring and evaluation on project's performance: case of Youth Enterprise Development Fund in Marani district, Kenya [Doctoral dissertation, University of Nairobi, Kenya].
- Rugenyi, F., (2016). Assessment of the Influence of Project Management Competence on the Triple Constraint in Projects in Nairobi, *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 6(4), 295-309.
- Shapiro J. (2011). Monitoring and Evaluation. CIVICUS. Retrieved from: <https://civicus.org/view/media/Monitoring%20and%20Evaluation.pdf>
- Sida (2015). Evaluation at Sida Annual Report 2015, <https://www.oecd.org/derec/sweden/Sida-annual-report-2015.pdf>.
- Singh, K., Chandurkar, D. & Dutt, V. (2017). *A practitioners' manual on monitoring and evaluation of development projects*. Cambridge Scholars Publishing Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK.
- Söderlund, J. (2011). Pluralism in project management: navigating the crossroads of specialization and fragmentation. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(2), 153-176.
- Thambura, J.M., Mwangi, N., Mbugua, J., & Kikwatha, R. (2023). Monitoring and Evaluation Data Collection Practices and Performance of Livelihood Programmes: A Case of Caritas, Catholic Diocese of Meru, Kenya. *Journal of Sustainable Development*, 16(1), 124-135. <https://doi.org/10.5539/jsd.v16n1p124>.
- UNAIDS (2010). Guidance on Capacity Building for HIV Monitoring and Evaluation. Retrieved from: https://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/sub_landing/files/5_4_MER_G_Guidance_HIV_ME_Capacity_Buidling.pdf.
- Wachaiyu, V. W. (2016). Monitoring and evaluation factors influencing success of development projects: A case of Starehe Sub-county, Kenya. Unpublished Master's Thesis, University of Nairobi, Nairobi, Kenya.
- Wanjiru, W. E. (2013). Determinants of effective monitoring and evaluation systems in non-governmental organizations within Nairobi county, Kenya. [Unpublished Master's Thesis], Kenyatta University.
- Webb, D., & Elliot, L. (2000). Learning to live: monitoring and evaluation of HIV/AIDS programmes for young people. *Evaluation exchange*, 9(4), 2-7.
- White, K. (2013). Evaluating to learn: Monitoring & evaluation best practices in development INGOs.
- Wongtschowski, M., Oonk, L. & Mur, R. (2006). Monitoring and evaluation for accountability and learning, KIT working papers 2016-3. Amsterdam: Royal tropical Institute.
- World Bank (2011). E-sourcebook. ICT in Agriculture: Connecting Smallholders to Knowledge, Networks, and Institutions. Report Number 64605. P. 3.
- Zhou, G. & Hardlife, Z. (2013). Interrogating the trajectory of Zimbabwe national budgeting. *Global Business and Economics Research Journal*, 2(3), 26-49.