



An Assessment on the Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation of Humanitarian Projects on Their Performance. A Study of Lilongwe District In Malawi

¹,Freeza Jefutara

*1,FreezaJefutara, DMI St Eugene University,Zambia
Dr Paramwaseri*

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ABSTRACT: The Performance of Global Environment Facility Projects have not been up to predetermined standards in various aspects. For this reason, Institutional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices are prompted by demand for project effectiveness, efficiency, transparency, accountability, information frameworks, quality, and availability of M & E technologies and instruments. Some institutions have come up full-fledged M & E departments for execution of projects that are donor funded for their benefit and societies at large. The study examined Monitoring and Evaluation routine of humanitarian Projects at Lilongwe District Offices on Project Performance. The specific objectives of this study was to analyse the effect of compliance to activity cost on Project performance of government funded projects in Lilongwe District, to study the effect of compliance to activity duration on Project performance of government funded projects in Lilongwe District and To examine the relationship between monitoring and evaluation and the project performance of government funded projects in Lilongwe District .The study population had 25 project managers, 35 support staff, 30 monitoring, and evaluation staffs. The analysis of data was done by using computerized statistical package of social scientists (SPSS) and summarized in tables for interpretation and inference. M & E practices were analyzed at four levels of planning process, technical expertise, stakeholder involvement and management participation. The study formed an adaptability of planning process and technical expertise on allocation of funds for M & E, development of clear M & E plans/tools, regular collection and analysis of M & E information, training of M & E staffs and attracting skilled M & E staffs with average flexibility on M &

E needs assessment. The project though reported low staff awareness on M & E planning process, lack of control mechanisms to keep track of project progress, lack of utilization of M & E to support decision making during project implementation, lack of developed comprehensive strategic operational plans for regular monitoring and evaluation. The project further reported low-level application of stakeholder analysis or feedback and communication strategy that reflects community needs or people's interest in the implementation or enable stakeholders to influence project acceptance based on their needs. There was lack of visible support and commitment by management towards project implementation as well as effective communication that meets project objectives and effective use of lessons learnt from different projects for future decision-making and improved project delivery. The Humanitarian projects conducted at Lilongwe Districts offices reported good performance on timeline, cost, quality, goals, visibility, donor fulfilment and achievement of targets and poorly on scope, acceptance, visibility, reputation and impact. The study concluded that planning process and technical expert's practices applied optimally while stakeholder involvement and management participation had low-level application. The study recommends establishment of strategic plans to define internal process of carrying out M & E, strengthening organizational M & E capacity, structuring stakeholder involvement and management participation.

KEYWORDS: monitoring and evaluation, implementation, NGO, M&E System



I. INTRODUCTION

Globally, citizens want better and more services to maintain or improve their livelihood in Malawi and beyond borders, like other African countries, local government is responsible for delivering basic services (e.g. access to potable water, proper sanitation, a sustainable electricity supply, and regular waste removal), in collaboration with other spheres of government, to enhance quality of life and local democracy there has been grappling with the challenge of ensuring increased efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of services. The fundamental cause of this challenge has been attributed, among others, to weak Monitoring and Evaluation systems (Hague, 2003).

NEED OF THE STUDY.

The research findings will help scholars falling under the project management field specifically monitoring and evaluation to understand influence of specific practices of M & E on project performance. The study will inform strategic programming in donor-funded projects. The study will collect information related to progressive project monitoring and evaluation for analysis to establish best practices in M & E for improved project performance. This study will be helpful to the organizations in Lilongwe district since it will assist them to know how to deal and benefit from Monitoring and Evaluation. It will also be ideal to the government and other stakeholders when coming up with some policies and procedures on monitoring and evaluation projects should be implemented for the benefit of them. The government and other NGOs will be able to know some priority areas when allocating budget targeting M and E. Apart from that this study will also be essential since it will contribute something tangible

3.1 Population and Sample

The project will target those working in both private and public organization who deal with various projects. It will also comprise of the M and E experts working in monitoring and evaluation in order to enhance their knowledge regrading Monitoring and Evaluation. The study will have a sample size of 100 participants who will take part in the data collection.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The study used both primary and secondary data. Primary data were collected using questionnaires that were used to the participants. Also it was collected using interview guide. Secondary data were collected using other already stocked sources like from (Wayne, 2010) who stipulated that the participation of donors in M and E helps in achieving the project goals

3.3 Conceptual Framework

The independent variables in the study are planning process, technical expertise, stakeholder involvement and management participation, while project performance of Lilongwe District projects is the dependent variable. This can easily be summarized below

to relevant bodies of knowledge which will also be studied by some other researchers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The methodology section outlines the plan and method that how the study is conducted. This includes Universe of the study, sample of the study, Data and Sources of Data, study's variables and analytical framework. The details are as follows;

[3.1] Population and Sample

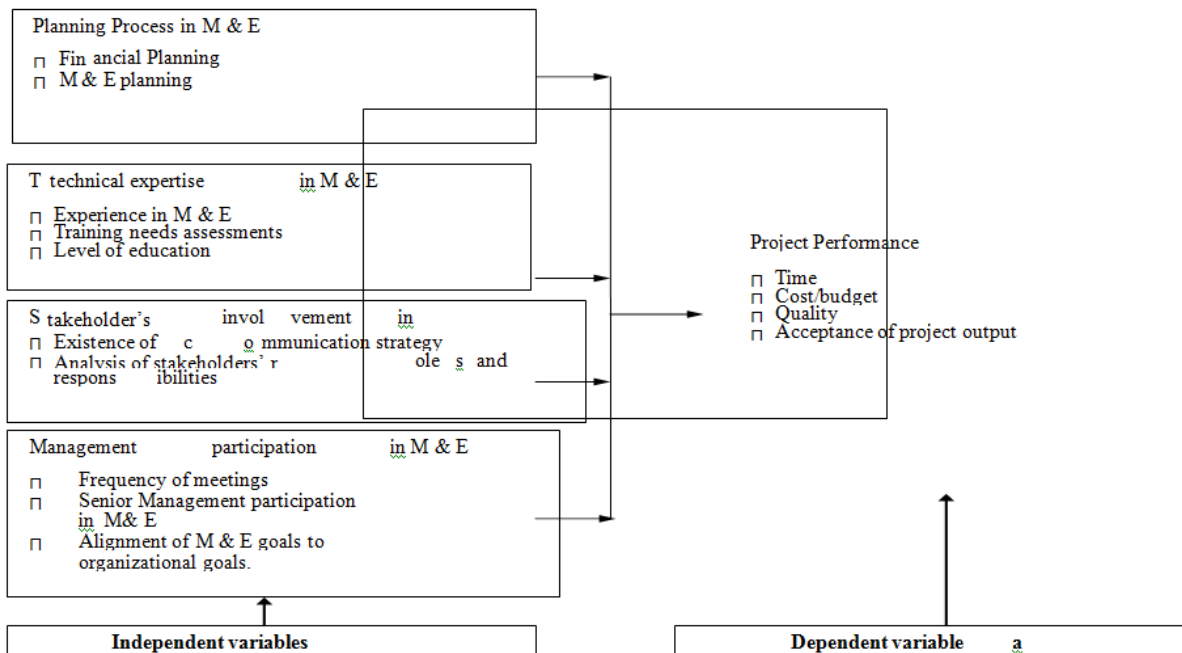
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3.4 Statistical tools and econometric models

3.4.1 Descriptive Statistics

The statistics in the collection and analysis of data employed was correlation, this is to measure and express the extent to which two variables are linearly related, meaning they change together at a constant rate. The following test the relationship between age and levels of experience of those in Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects, it is assumed that experience levels increase as the age increases as well

Correlation statistics

		AGE	LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE
AGE	Pearson Correlation	1	.151**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE	Pearson Correlation	.151**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	100	100

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Therefore, the P-Value is less than the significance level ($\alpha=0.05$) which is 0.00004 and thus there is a relationship between age and income levels.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Results of Descriptive Statics of Study Variables

AGE

Table 4.1.1: Descriptive Statics

Descriptive Statistics					
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
AGE	100	1	5	2.9	1.377
Valid N	100				



AGE			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	18-25 YEARS	25	24.1
	25-35 YEARS	35	26.2
	36-45 YEARS	15	19.3
	46-55 YEARS	15	16.6
	55-65 YEARS ABOVE	10	13.8
	Total	100	100

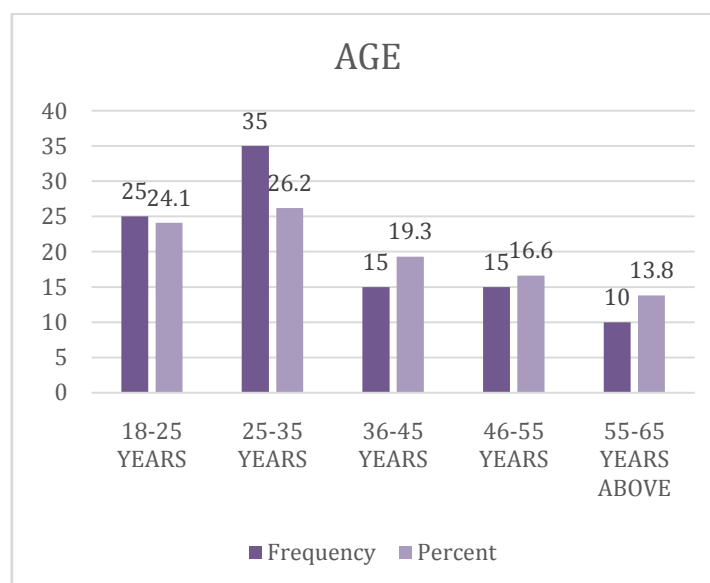


Figure 4.1 stipulates the age of the those working in different public organizations under monitoring and evaluation of projects. Whereby 35 participants representing 24.1% age ranges from 15-25 years, 38 representing 26.2% of participants age ranges from 25-36 years and 28 participants representing 19.3% age range from 36-45 years, and 24 participants representing 16.6% age range from 46-55 years, 20

representing 13.8%. The working age can be estimated to range from 18-64. This indicator measures the share of working age population in total population, the data above entails that there is potential of economic growth if there is an active participation from those whose age ranges from 18-64 years as they have the ability to enhancement of M and E Knowledge and skills.

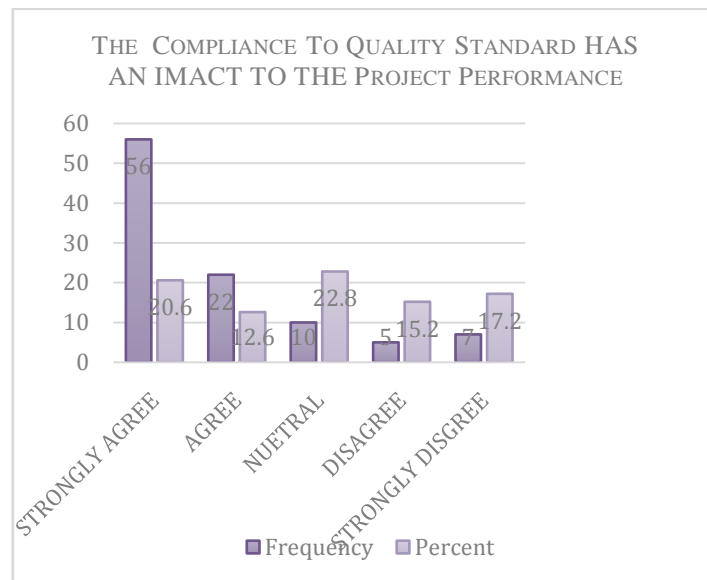
Table 4.1.2 The Compliance To Quality Standard Has an Impact to Project Performance

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
The Compliance To Quality Standard Has an Impact to Project Performance	100	1	5	3.1172	1.33595
VALID N (LISTWISE)	100				



Table 4.1.3

THE COMPLIANCE TO QUALITY STANDARD HAS AN IMPACT TO THE PROJECT PERFORMANCE			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	56	20.6
	AGREE	22	12.6
	NEUTRAL	10	22.8
	DISAGREE	5	17.2
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	7	15.2
	Total	100	100



The data above shows the response from the participants in regards to the statement that the compliance to quality standard has an Impact to Project Performance, 56 participants representing 20.6% participants strongly agreed, 22 participants representing 12.6% agreed, 10 participants representing 22.8% had a neutral response, 5

representing 5% participants representing 17.2% disagreed and 7 participants representing 15.2% strongly disagreed to the statement. This entails that there is for every project to successfully achieve its aim should comply to its quality of work.

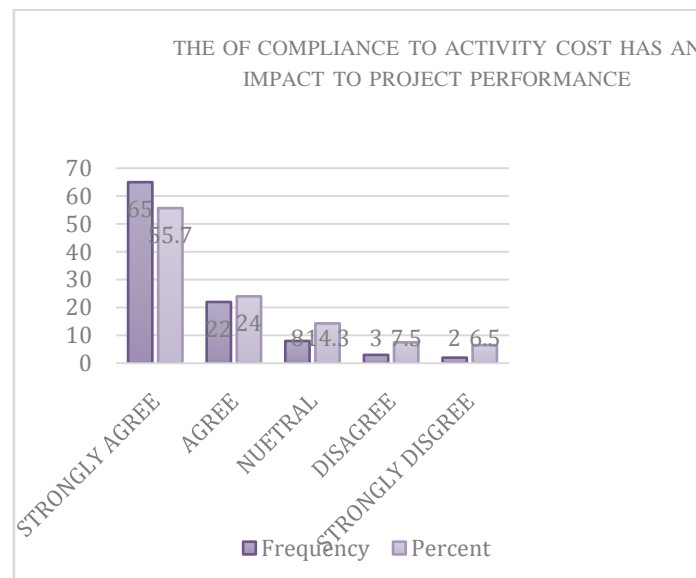
Table 4.1.4 THE OF COMPLIANCE TO ACTIVITY COST HAS AN IMPACT TO PROJECT PERFORMANCE

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS					
	N	MINIMUM	MAXIMUM	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
THE OF COMPLIANCE TO ACTIVITY COST ON HAS AN IMPACT TO PROJECT PERFORMANCE	100	1	5	2.86	1.321
VALID N (LISTWISE)	100				



Table 4.1.5

THE OF COMPLIANCE TO ACTIVITY COST HAS AN IMPACT TO PROJECT PERFORMANCE			
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	STRONGLY AGREE	65	55.7
	AGREE	22	24
	NEUTRAL	8	14.3
	DISAGREE	3	7.5
	STRONGLY DISAGREE	2	6.5
	Total	100	100



The graph above represents the response from the participants to the statement that the of compliance to activity cost has an impact to project performance 55.7% strongly agreed to the statement, participants representing 24% generally agreed to the statement, 8 participants representing 14.3% neither agreed nor disagreed, 3 participants representing 7.5% disagreed and 2 participants representing 6.5% strongly disagreed. Checking at the statistics the data tells that the with proper compliance to activity cost of a project can lead to achieving of project goals

V. SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

In assessing the effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation of Humanitarian projects in Lilongwe Districts office the, researcher samples out 100 questionnaires randomly of which all of them took part in the study giving a 100% of response rate.

The study also found out that it very ideal for every project to have a reasonable budget when it comes to Monitoring and Evaluation. This is because for the project to work well employees who are the M AND E experts should be paid, purchasing M and E related materials also plays a pivotal role when it comes to project monitoring and evaluation.

The study assessed the effectiveness of the Monitoring and Evaluation systems in humanitarian projects on their performance that are in Lilongwe District. It found that there is a need of projects to be monitored so that they can achieve their goals. For any project to achieve its aims it has to be monitored so that any barriers can easily be seen and eliminated.

The study found out that technical expertise in relation to monitoring and evaluation have an effect on performance of Humanitarian projects in Lilongwe. Apart from that, the study also noted that planning for monitoring and evaluation was critical



on performance of in the projects. The other finding to this study was that stakeholder involvement was an important aspect in enhancing performance of projects. Last but not least, the management participation in monitoring and evaluation was found to have a significant effect on performance of Humanitarian projects in Lilongwe.

VII. CONCLUSION

It is concluded that M & E planning process, M & E technical expertise, stakeholder involvement along with management participation in M & E have a positive and significant effect on performance of Humanitarian project in Lilongwe District. Given this finding, the various responsible authorities should consider employing experts who will help them in coming up with effective monitoring and evaluation plans as this will help in guiding the planning process. Apart from that, the authorities should also consider upgrading the skills of their technical staff on monitoring and evaluation. Besides that, the various stakeholders in projects should be encouraged to play an active role in the course of monitoring and evaluation of their projects. Last but not least, the management should assume an active role rather than a passive role in monitoring and evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- The management of the organizations who want to achieve good results should consider outsourcing experts in monitoring and evaluation planning.
- capacity building of their employees on planning for monitoring and evaluation should also be enhanced by the organizations. This can be done through the provision of scholarships and study leaves for employees who are eligible for technical training in monitoring and evaluation as this will help in boosting the M & E technical expertise
- The stakeholders and the management should sensitize the community and the nation at large on the importance of their participation in monitoring and evaluation

AREA FOR FURTHER STUDY

A further study can be conducted on the effects of stakeholder's involvement and management participation in Monitoring and Evaluation of projects.

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