College of Business and Economics

School of Commerce

Department of Project Management

Assessment of M & E Practices: The Case of Projects of Oxfam Ethiopia

A Research Project Submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Masters of Project Management

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June, 2022

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Approved by Board of Examiners

Berhanu Denu (PhD) **Advisor**	**Signature**	**Date**
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External Examiner	**Signature**	**Date**

Declaration

I, Temesgen Zereabruk, declare that the research project entitled "Assessment of M & E Practices: The Case of Projects of Oxfam Ethiopia" is my own original work, and has not been submitted for any degree in any other University. All sources of materials used for this study have been duly acknowledged.

Name: Temesgen Zereabruk

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Certification

This is to certify that Temesgen Zereabruk has conducted this project work entitled “Assessment of M & E Practices: The Case of Projects of Oxfam Ethiopia” under my supervision. This project work is original, and suitable for the submission in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master of Arts Degree in Project Management.

Name of Advisor: Berhanu Denu (PhD)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

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List of Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
BFMs	Beneficiary Feedback Mechanisms
CSO	Civil Society Organization
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GB	Great Britain
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ILO	International Labor Organization
LFA	Logical Framework Approach
MDC	Mobile Data Collection
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, And Learning
NGOs	Nongovernmental Organizations
Oxfam	Oxford Committee for Famine Relief
OVIs	Objective Verifiable Indicators
PDF	Portable Document Format
PDAs	Personal Digital Assistants
PM&E	Project Monitoring And Evaluation
PMI	Project Management Institute
SBO	Social Benefit Organization
SOV	Sources of Verification
SPSS	Statistical Package for The Social Sciences
SWAP	Sector-Wide Approach
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WWII	World War II

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Abstract

The objective of this research is to evaluate Oxfam GB's monitoring and evaluation practices as well as the challenges that the process faces there in Ethiopia. To achieve its objectives, the study adopted a descriptive survey research design and used both primary and secondary data. The primary data was gathered through structured questionnaire. SPSS statistical package was used to edit, organize and code the data to analyze and review. Organizational records, academic articles, and books on the subject were used as secondary data. A total of 31 program workers from Oxfam GB's offices in various regions of Ethiopia were chosen as the study's target populations using the census method, and the response rate was 80.6 %. The results were tabulated, and then means, standard deviation, percentages, and frequencies were used to analyze them. The result reveals that Oxfam GB, to some extent, employs the M&E practice, including baseline studies, M&E planning, M&E budgeting, midterm and end evaluations, stakeholder engagement, lesson learned, documentation, and dissemination of M&E findings. However, the findings show that there are challenges on the application of M&E practices, particularly in the areas of stakeholder engagement, M&E budgeting, lesson learnt, and documentation. Overall, the results show that Oxfam GB's M&E practices are quite effective. Therefore, it is recommended that the organization has to allocate sufficient fund for the M&E activities. To ensure ownership of M&E results and that those initiatives are relevant to the needs of the beneficiaries, stakeholders should actively participate in each stage of the M&E process. Additionally, a strong lesson learned approach should be used to avoid project failures from happening again and to build on project successes.

Key words: Project, Project Monitoring, Project Evaluation, M&E practices, M&E systems

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Background of The Study

Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are widely recognized as being critical to socioeconomic development in underdeveloped nations with limited government capacity and revenue. The previous decade has seen a surge in the number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and their involvement in the development process. They have gained much importance as a policy lobby, leading campaigns on development issues including debt relief, universal primary education, and HIV/AIDS awareness, as well as increasing their commitment to pro-poor service delivery (Burger & Owens, 2010).

NGOs play a critical role in Ethiopia's social, political, and economic development, as they do in many other nations throughout the world. NGOs also play an important role in sustaining country's rapid and equitable socio-economic development and changing the livelihood of millions of peoples by working on the areas such as crisis management and poverty alleviation, engaging in activities such as agriculture, conflict resolution and displacement, HIV/AIDS, integrated rural development, health, education, income generation, advocacy and influencing work, and other humanitarian activities (Clark, 2000).

In most NGOs, project success would be impossible without the effectiveness of M&E practices. M&E practices at NGOs helps in guiding projects in the right direction, resulting in the organization's success (UNDP, 2014). Practitioners have accepted such practices as an effective way to integrate M&E into projects (Webb & Elliott, 2000). M&E procedures begin with the acquisition of basic information regarding a project's baseline data (Estrella & Gaventa, 1997). This information is then utilized to create a comparison for evaluating the project's overall impact. The second practice deals with the planning that underpins the assumptions that project goals are based on. M&E planning was classified by Armstrong and Baron (2013) into budget, capacity, feasibility, timeframe, and ethics resources. The third practice is the M&E structural framework, which aims to uncover the reasons for performance measurement and project aspects, how they are related, and their underlying principles (Muzinda, 2007). The fourth practice is the M&E budget, and it is critical for the project's budget to include a clear and enough provision for the

activities in order to achieve proper M&E (Muzinda, 2007). The fifth M&E practice is scheduling, and according to McCoy et al. (2005), M&E must be scheduled so that it receives the attention it deserves and is not left to the project manager's whims. Following scheduling, specifying the frequency of data collection, a clear specification on how often M&E data collection should be done comes next. It is critical that all stakeholders participate at this level. The participatory approach to M&E is seen as a tool to empower participants in projects, according to (Muzinda, 2007). The seventh practice is the use of ICT, which has a significant role to play in the M&E process. M&E teams use computers and computer-aided tools to analyze data, which saves time & expense while also resulting in a more efficient construction design (Kelly & Magongo, 2004). The eighth practice is midterm and end evaluation, which determines the project's impact and how it contributed to the project's goal being met and determines how well the project performed in terms of input and product (Gyorkos, 2003). (Uitto, 2014) further said that these lessons should be shared with the implementation team. Finally, a plan for disseminating M&E findings should be included in the M&E effort. These findings should be distributed to stakeholders in the form of donor reports, community and beneficiary communication, and implementation staff training to help them improve their implementation procedures and tactics.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are the systematic process of acquiring, processing, analyzing, interpreting, and storing data and information in order to initiate a sequence of administrative activities aimed at ensuring the achievement of established objectives and goals (Watson, 2006). Monitoring and evaluation have existed since ancient times (Kusak & Rist, 2001), but the necessity for monitoring and evaluation systems as a management tool to demonstrate performance has expanded in recent years, in response to stakeholder expectations for accountability and transparency.

Monitoring and evaluation of various social initiatives, particularly international development programs, became a distinct field in the late 1960s, while it was first used in the early 1970s and mid-1980s. This came as a result of interactions between many practitioners working in a variety of disciplines in the social, economic, and political domains, employing varied approaches derived from a variety of disciplines. Many of the current trends in evaluation practices around the world are the result of changes in evaluation practices that occurred in the mid-1980s (USAID, 2000).

Monitoring and evaluation have played a significant role in international development since the mid-2000s. Development agencies' desire to focus on results and impact, as well as providing evidence of their performance, has shifted dramatically as a result of the aid effectiveness agenda. In order to respond to this shift, several organizations have given monitoring and evaluation a far higher priority. As a result, a better understanding of the challenges encountered when seeking to gather and access the right data to improve work outputs while also proving accountability to both donors and beneficiaries has emerged (Elkins, 2006).

1.2 Background of the Organization

The Oxford Committee for Famine Relief, created in Britain in 1942, inspired the name "Oxfam." During WWII, the organization pushed for food supplies to be transported to starving women and children in enemy-occupied Greece via an allied naval blockade. Oxfam maintained its work after the war, delivering materials and funds to organizations that helped needy people all around Europe. Oxfam's focus switched to the needs of people in developing nations as the situation in Europe improved (Oxfam, n.d.).

Oxfam International was formed in 1995 by a group of independent non-governmental organizations. They joined together as a confederation to maximize efficiency and achieve greater impact to reduce global poverty and injustice. Oxfam is currently working in approximately 70 countries with thousands of partners, allies, and communities to save and protect lives in emergencies, help people rebuild their livelihoods, and campaign for genuine, long-term change, all while keeping women's rights at the forefront of their efforts (Oxfam, n.d.).

Since the 1960s, Oxfam GB has responded to humanitarian emergencies and long-term needs in Ethiopia, and it is currently ramping up its response to this crisis. This briefing is based on Oxfam's water, sanitation, and hygiene promotion efforts in Somalia, Afar, and Oromia, as well as its emergency food security response. Its goal is to bring attention to the significant difficulties that people face in terms of water, food, and livelihood support. In addition to addressing the underlying drivers of food insecurity and the long-term impacts of climate change, it makes recommendations to donor governments, the UN, the Ethiopian government, and implementing agencies on how to address these immediate needs and support families in getting back on their feet (Seaward, 2016).

Oxfam GB has developed a guide for monitoring and evaluating its projects in order to learn what succeeds and what doesn't in the fight against poverty and suffering, and to adapt their programs based on their results. Monitoring and evaluation procedures and products also expected to assist them in being accountable to a wide range of stakeholders by allowing them to account for their decisions and actions as well as take into consideration the thoughts and opinions of others. In Oxfam GB it is expected that monitoring and evaluation take place throughout the program cycle and should be considered from the start of the program design to the end and reporting. However, Oxfam GB projects have problems in incorporating M&E practices into their projects in order to increase project maintainability.

It is against this backdrop that this study aims to explore the existing project monitoring and evaluation practices of the NGO projects in Ethiopia with a case study of Oxfam GB in Ethiopia Projects, focusing on identifying gap between the existing practices and best practices in project monitoring and evaluation, which is critical in identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The success of projects is crucial for the growth and development of an organization, and it is determined by a variety of factors. Having a sound monitoring and evaluation system and practices in place to make informed decisions and document lessons learned for future programming, design, and implementation is one of the most important components for project success. Most project managers believe that project monitoring and evaluation are essential to achieving project objectives and success. By providing corrective action for deviations from the expected standard, the project monitoring and evaluation exercise adds value to the overall efficiency of project planning, management, and implementation. "Project managers must conduct more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of projects, as well as develop frameworks and procedures for quantifying impact" (Kahilu, 2011). By doing so, they will be capable of creating more value for the organization through project success.

Most Ethiopian organizations do not have a proper monitoring and evaluation strategy for their programs (CIDA, 2010). According to a World Bank research on capacity building in Africa (Ethiopia), existing assessments of monitoring and evaluation capacity in Ethiopia also identify

gaps in institutional and individual skills development for monitoring and evaluation (Mackay, 2006). There are several misconceptions and myths about M&E, such as that it is difficult, expensive, time and resource heavy, only occurs at the end of a project, and is the duty of someone else (IFC Advisory Services, 2008).

Without much attention to monitoring and evaluation, it would be important to understand if the claimed results are achieved as intended, what corrective action may be required to ensure delivery of the intended results, and whether initiatives are making positive contributions towards human development. Monitoring and evaluation are constantly linked to previously identified impacts in the development plan. They are driven by the need to account for the achievement of intended results and provide a fact base to inform corrective decision making (UNDP, 2009).

Limitations in the application of monitoring and evaluation as a component of the project management cycle contribute to poor project performance. The introduction of new tools, processes, and developments in project monitoring and evaluation methodologies help development projects perform better. Evidence of project performance versus targets is required by project donors, recipients, and stakeholders. Different ways to monitoring and evaluation have been used by different projects to achieve various degrees of performance (Kihuna, 2018).

According to Amal (2013), the main obstacles that different NGOs face when conducting the M&E process include a lack of money and resources for developing internal capacity building programs and M&E activities; the donor does not allocate funds for M&E activities or staff because they believe that the project coordinator is sufficient. They prefer external evaluators to ensure objectivity and avoid bias; M&E is costly and time consuming; M&E tools, design, and plan at the organizational level require highly qualified expertise; there is a negative perception of M&E among staff who believe it is imposed by management or donors, and they are concerned if it is implemented properly; If any flaws or difficulties are discovered by donors, the program will be canceled. This unfavorable attitude toward evaluation is present due to a lack of knowledge of its significance, which leads to a great deal of misunderstanding. M&E culture is new to Palestinian society, where NGOs have only just begun to adopt it. Not all NGOs understand the necessity of M&E and the value of having an M&E person; ask for and receive more cash from donors; and request expertise. M&E systems are still donor-driven; employees aren't self-motivated enough to

develop their own M&E plans and procedures; and there aren't enough M&E-focused employees. Other obligations, such as reporting and fundraising, have overburdened those in charge of M&E. There is no one who is solely dedicated to M&E; there is a lack of human resource who are experts in evaluating this subject unless it is external consultancy; there is no systematic documentation; and there is no coordination between the many systems and procedures enforced by various sponsors.

With the above statement in mind, projects under Oxfam GB in Ethiopia have a guide for monitoring and evaluating its projects in order to learn what succeeds and what doesn't in the fight against poverty and suffering, and to adapt their programs based on their results. monitoring and evaluation take place throughout the program cycle and Project's cost, time, scope, quality and resources are the major parameters which are assessed continuously. However, practically Oxfam GB lacks a proper Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability (MEAL) system, such as stakeholder expectations are not being met by program execution and stakeholders are not actively involved project monitoring and evaluation activities. Additionally, there is a problem in the organization is the failed to conduct reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, to match each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet, and person(s) responsible, and the failure to use decision logs to track significant project/program decisions. Furthermore, the organization failed to provide adequate funding for monitoring and evaluation activities, ensure timely funding for M&E Budget, and the failure to allocate a contingency budget for unforeseen costs, Due to the aforementioned problems, they have failed to have adequate MEAL staff and a clear job description, program staff misunderstood the MEAL purpose, perceive MEAL as an audit, have inaccurate/ poor data quality, have failed to effectively involve stakeholders throughout the entire process and Poor program staff engagement while using MEAL data for decision making and correction.

Therefore, it is required to explore Oxfam GB Project monitoring and evaluation practices in Ethiopia projects, with the goal of identifying gap between the existing practices and best practices in project monitoring and evaluation, which is critical in identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system. Regular project performance evaluations help project managers to take corrective action while also informing future project plans during the initiation and implementation phases.

1.4 Research Questions

In light of the problems discussed above the research specifically aims to answer the following key research questions:

1. How are the project monitoring and evaluation processes practiced at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia?
2. What are the challenges during the implementation of project monitoring and evaluation best practices at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia?

1.5 Objectives of the Study

1.5.1 General Objective

The overall objective of this study is to look into project monitoring and evaluation practices and identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia projects.

1.5.2 Specific Objective

The study was guided by the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the current project monitoring and evaluation practices at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia.
2. To examine and identify the challenges during the implementation project monitoring and evaluation practices at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Studying the project M&E practices of Oxfam organization allows identification of gaps in the use of tools and techniques. It also helps to uncover problems in putting M&E systems into practice. Therefore, this study enhances the understanding of M&E and other development practitioners on the issues to be addressed during design and implementation of M&E in projects.

The study shows the use of widely accepted M&E practices, and the factors affecting the project performance due to poor M&E practices at Oxfam GB. Thus, the results provide inputs for the organizations, covered under the study, to plan for building the M&E capacities of their members.

The study builds on previous studies on M&E practices of projects while drawing the lessons of for the organization. It examines the gap between the existing practices of M&E against best practices in project monitoring and evaluation, which is critical in identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system and it also sheds light on how M&E practices are effectively

leading to learning. Furthermore, this study serves as a basis for future studies on the M&E systems of NGOs.

1.7 Scope of the Study

In terms of geographical space, this study targeted NGO; Oxfam GB in Ethiopia which are carrying out their intervention in different regions of Ethiopia. Oxfam has head office in Addis Ababa the Capital of Ethiopia. The study was indebted to assess project monitoring and evaluation practices and identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system at Oxfam in Ethiopia projects. The major target population of the research were staff members of M&E department and project department.

1.8 Limitations

The study is limited to generalization of findings for Oxfam GB in Ethiopia project because the sample are taken from Oxfam GB in Ethiopia only. The study is also limited with sample size since respondents that can be an input to the study are few. There was delay in response to questionnaires by respondents and some staffs were not be able to send their response due to this reason. With all the challenges, all the necessary steps and efforts was made to collect the relevant information for the study. It never compromised the overall quality of data and information collected.

1.9 Organization of the Study

This study is composed of five chapters. In chapter is the introduction of the paper presented. It includes the background of the study, the background of the organization, statement of the problem, research question, the objective of the study, the significance of the study, scope of the study and limitation of the study. The next chapter discussed a review of related literature regarding the topic of the study. Then the research methodology and methods used were compiled in the third chapter. Chapter four presents the data analysis results and their interpretation. Finally, in line with the data analysis and interpretation in chapter four, the last chapter presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendation.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Overview

This chapter covers definitions of key concepts, theoretical and empirical literature review from different scholars to identify other researcher's weakness and gaps which was necessary behind this study by proposing some solutions. The chapter also presented conceptual frame work which depicted the relationship between independent and dependent variables of the study.

2.2 Definition of Key Concepts

Here the main concept of the study which presented the précised meaning to the reader was presented and thoroughly discussed. This is because different concept has different meaning depending on users and organizations concerned.

2.2.1 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is a legally formed organization run by natural or legal people that acts independently of any government and is a word used by governments to describe entities that do not have government status. When NGOs are supported entirely or substantially by governments, the group preserves its non-governmental character by barring government representatives from membership. The term is normally reserved for organizations that pursue a broader societal goal with political overtones but are not overtly political, such as political parties. Unlike "intergovernmental organization," "non-governmental organization" has no universally accepted legal definition. These types of organizations are referred to as "civil society organizations" in several jurisdictions (Bank et al., 1950).

The World Bank defines NGOs as "private groups that seek to alleviate suffering, promote the interests of the poor, protect the environment, provide basic social services, or engage in community development" (MALENA, 1995). Within the non-profit/non-government sector, there is a growing effort to describe itself in a more productive, accurate way. For at least three reasons, the "non-profit" designation is considered as particularly dysfunctional: 1) It says nothing about the organization's purpose, simply what it isn't; 2) It concentrates the mind on "profit" as the polar opposite of the organization's purpose; 3) It implies that the group has limited financial resources, increasing the risk that it will fail. Organizations are proposing new definitions rather than being

defined by "non-" terms. Some organizations are using the term "social benefit organization" (SBO). In terms of their good mission, this characterizes them. A growing number of organizations, like the Center for the Study of Global Governance, have begun to adopt the term "civil society organization" (CSO). The name "citizen sector organization" (CSO) has also been proposed as a way to describe the sector — as one run by and for citizens. These labels, SBO and CSO, distinguish the sector as a separate entity from the government and business sectors. Some contend, however, that CSOs are ineffective since most NGOs are supported by governments and businesses, and some NGOs are openly hostile to independently established people's organizations. The phrase "social benefit organization" appears to circumvent this issue by focusing on the organization's mission rather than its structure (Bank et al., 1950).

2.2.2 Project

A project is a one-time undertaking that consists of a series of operations that take time to complete, require resources, and incur costs or generate cash flows. Between activities, there may be precedence relations; these relations describe technical or organizational requirements for the sequence in which activities must be processed or their timing relative to one another. Furthermore, because the project's resources are limited, there are often implicit dependencies among the activities that share those resources, necessitating the development of additional precedence relationships between particular activities when the project is scheduled. A project is carried out by a project team, has a deadline, and is related with one or more people (Schwindt & Zimmermann, 2015).

2.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

Authors define monitoring and evaluation in a several ways, frequently as a result of diverse theoretical and practical approaches to evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation are two distinct yet complimentary processes, according to most sources (Goergens & Kusek, 2009). Monitoring is the process of gathering and analyzing data on a regular basis to track progress against goals and ensure compliance with established standards. It helps to discover trends and patterns, adapt strategies and inform decisions for project/program management (IFRC, 2011). Monitoring is defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) as a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide

management and key stakeholders with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives, as well as progress in the use of allocated funds (Kusek & Rist, 2004).

On the other hand, evaluation is defined as "a systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program, or policy, its design, implementation, and outcomes" (IFRC, 2011). According to (Barnett & Wedge, 2010), evaluation defines determining "if the piece of work's objectives were met and whether it had an impact." "Program evaluation consists of the systematic description and judgments of programs and, to the extent practical, systematic assessment of the extent to which they have the expected consequences," said (Newcomer et al., 2015). In essence, these two activities involve the systematic and continual collection and analysis of data on the progress of an ongoing or completed project, as well as a comparison of project intent against outcome/impact (Hunter, 2009). In Table 1, below, the definitions of M&E illustrate the complementary nature of monitoring and evaluation in M&E systems.

Table 2-1 A demonstration of the complementary nature of monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring	Evaluation
Clarifies program objectives.	Analyses why intended results were or were not achieved.
Links activities and their resources to objectives.	Assesses specific causal contributions of activities to results.
Translates objectives into performance indicators and sets targets.	Examines implementation process.
Routinely collects data on these indicators, compares actual results with targets.	Explores unintended results.
Reports progress to managers and alerts them to problems.	Provides lessons, highlights significant accomplishments or program potential and offers recommendations for improvement.

Source: (Kusek & Rist, 2004)

2.2.4 Project performance

Project performance is defined as a project's overall quality in terms of whether or not it has influenced recipients and whether or not the interventions are sustainable (Chandes & Paché, 2010). The project's performance can be evaluated on whether it is relevant, efficient, and effective, whether it has impacted the beneficiaries, and whether the interventions are sustainable (Hill, 2005).

Relevance refers to whether or whether the project activities are aligned with the priorities of the target group, beneficiary, donor, or sponsor. The key questions in determining relevance are whether the project's goals respond to the requirements of the beneficiaries and whether the project's activities and outputs are in line with those goals. The effectiveness of a project is determined by its ability to achieve its objectives. The project's impact examines both positive and negative developments. Inputs are compared to outputs to determine whether the project is using the most efficient resources feasible to accomplish the desired goals. The ability of project benefits to continue after the project ends is measured by sustainability (Chandes & Paché, 2010).

Project performance is defined as conduct that can be evaluated to see if it adds value or makes the organization more efficient. (Jackson, 2009) define performance as an individual's work accomplishment after exerting effort. According to the criteria above, project performance refers to workers' ability to do the duties they are responsible for and how those jobs contribute to the organization's goals.

2.2.5 Historical Development of Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation history are usually intertwined with program/project evaluation history. The evolution of M&E, according to modernists, began in western countries. Traditionalists, on the other hand, say that M&E is not a new concept in Africa; it has existed since the Stone Age in the form of traditional governance (Rugege, 1998).

Traditional governance, according to (Rugege, 1998), has been the foundation of local government. In this case, community engagement in decision-making and reporting was based on previously agreed-upon plans derived from traditional gatherings. Head chiefs from various locations were reporting on their respective locations' progress and actions. Based on the responsibilities entrusted by the king to the head Chiefs, the topic of accountability was heavily emphasized. The essence of traditional governance was that the community was represented in decision-making by head chiefs. The community was kept informed about the plans and progress in their respective locations.

In the context of Africa, a review of the literature reveals that Egypt is the world's father and founder of M&E. More than 5,000 years ago, the ancient Egyptians regularly monitored their

country’s outputs grain and livestock production. This demonstrates that M&E is not a new phenomenon in Africa (Kusek & Rist, 2004).

The modernist approach, on the other hand, argued that M&E is a short-lived knowledge management discipline, despite the fact that recording official statistics has evolved over centuries. M&E was first used in the public sector in the 1970s. M&E began as a discipline of applied research with an emphasis on "E," or evaluation. M&E was transformed into a budget and schedule performance management tool by those who saw it as a management tool. M&E was a project-based technique in those days, with the goal of tracking inputs and outputs to guide decisions. As a result, M&E units were created to support such functions in larger projects (Edmunds & Marchant, 2008).

Governments switched their focus from project to sectoral level in the 1980s to manage national development projects, this involves adopting a "Sector-wide approach (SWAP)". The implementation of new public sector management strategies attracted attention in improving the efficacy and efficiency of public service delivery. With a shift in focus from inputs and outputs to results, performance measurement and effectiveness criteria were widely adopted. As a result, result-based management was born, which included gathering data from recipients. M&E roles were developed in sectoral and ministerial offices as a result (Wolde, 2019). The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Danish International Development Agency had all adopted PM&E concepts by the 1980s. Project monitoring and evaluation began in the private sector, where there was a growing appreciation for individual and organizational learning, outside of the development field (Aklilu, 2018).

Growing income disparities prompted governments and civic society to pay more attention to poverty in the 1990s. These issues boosted the demand for poverty monitoring practices that included measuring and tracking changes in living standards. As a result, national poverty monitoring units were established by governments to lead the poverty monitoring activities (Edmunds & Marchant, 2008).

In the early 2000s, the emergence of poverty reduction measures such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) required the adoption of both project-based and sector-based M&E

practices. In this regard, a paradigm change in the way effectiveness was seen happened. Quality-based metrics and a comprehensive approach to performance evaluation have become commonplace. To aid in the monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction measures, national M&E programs were established. NGO's began to operate in an environment that required it to measure performance and ensure accountability. As a result of civil society's involvement, M&E has evolved from a tool for managing results and making decisions to a tool for ensuring accountability (Edmunds & Marchant, 2008).

Currently, a set of approaches for improving the use of monitoring and evaluation mechanisms has emerged and manifested, considering the fact that both internal and external stakeholders of a project are aware of the impact of implementing complete and coherent processes for monitoring and evaluation of project results (Abebe, 2021). Starting with the project lifecycle as defined by (Committee, 1996), theoreticians and practitioners concluded that each stage of the project lifecycle has certain characteristics that necessitate the use of monitoring and evaluation tools, and it is better to correlate monitoring and evaluation processes with the project lifecycle and correlate monitoring and evaluation tools in complex mechanisms designed to these projects' exertion

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is a research 'blueprint' or guidance. It evaluates an existing theory in a field of study that relates to and/or reflects the study's hypothesis. It is frequently 'taken' by researchers in order to create their own topic or study endeavor. It acts as the foundation for constructing a research. The theoretical framework directs the researcher to stay within the confines of acknowledged ideas in order to make a scholarly and academic contribution. The theoretical framework is a specific theory or theories regarding aspects of human endeavor that might be beneficial in the study of occurrences (Maturo, 2019). This research is based on theory-based evaluations, which allowed the researchers to focus on M&E and M&E practices.

2.3.1 Evaluation Theory

The researcher will guide this study with the Evaluation Theory. In evaluation practice, the Evaluation Theory plays several key roles. For initial needs assessment and program design, such theory and preceding research can be quite helpful. Evaluation Theory outlines useful techniques for addressing issues that arise during the evaluation process. It is possible that program designers

and evaluators will save time and costs by learning what does not work (Donaldson & Lipsey, 2001) Evaluation theory measures a project's success in meeting its objectives and establishing its relevance and long-term viability. It evaluates a project's success in meeting its objectives and influencing the project's importance and long-term viability. The impact of a project is compared to the objectives put forth in the project plan (McCoy, 2005). There are two types of evaluations, depending on when they take place. These are both formative and summative evaluations. (Shapiro, 2001), there are two types of evaluations, depending on when they take place. These are summative and formative evaluations. Formative evaluation (midterm evaluation) is primarily concerned with the efficient use of resources to produce outputs, and it focuses on the project's strengths, weaknesses, and challenges, as well as whether the project's current plan will be able to meet the project's objectives or whether it needs to be redesigned. Passia (2004). At the conclusion of the project, a summative evaluation is conducted with the goal of identifying how the project progressed, what went right and wrong, and capturing any lessons gained. The key rationale for using evaluation theory in this study is that the Monitoring & Evaluation System deals with monitoring the project implementation process as well as evaluating whether the impact is being accomplished as per project objectives or not in the case of Oxfam projects in Ethiopia.

2.3.2 Program Theory

Over the last decade, program evaluation theory has become more popular. It determines if a program is planned in such a way that its expected objectives may be achieved. The program theory is a guide theory in project evaluation because it demonstrates the program's ability to address specific problems that need to be addressed within projects. It also provides advice on what topics should be prioritized during the review process (Donaldson, 2012).

The researcher will use program theory because it has the advantage of providing information that could lead to additional explanations about the project's M&E practices, including baseline survey, M&E planning, M&E structural framework, M&E budget, frequency of data collection and use of ICT in monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, midterm and end evaluation, dissemination of M&E findings, documentation of lessons learned, and project performance in development. This theory can be used to propose suggestions and other actions to be taken in order to achieve the desired results for projects that are being reviewed.

It can also be used to improve decision-making and broaden solutions to any project's problems (Mcclintock, 1990). According to (Rossi et al., 2004), program theory consists of an organizational strategy that addresses how to gather, configure, and deploy resources, as well as how to coordinate program activities in order to construct and sustain the planned service system.

2.3.3 Theory of Change

Another theory that will guide the research was this one. Theory of change is an effective tool for increasing "accountability and transparency." It's a way of explaining why we fund what we fund." In the case of evaluation, it can assist grant makers and grantees in determining whether their activity is producing the desired results. Both grant makers and grantees employ theories of change to understand change, manage change progress, and evaluate their efforts. It clarifies what should be assessed, when, and how (Grantcraft, 2006). The notion and practices connected with theory of change emerged from the work of evaluators in the 1970s and 1980s. In the early 1990s, the term "theory of change" was coined, largely in the context of foundation-funded "comprehensive" research. The theory of change is utilized to create comprehensive M&E frameworks. During the project execution, changes in the Monitoring and Evaluation stage will provide feedback on whether the project is on track to achieve the desired change in the community and if the project is evolving as planned. According to (James, 2013), theory of change is commonly utilized by NGOs and donors to define long-term impact on projects.

2.3.4 Results Theory

According to (Maturo, 2019), organizations exist to achieve specific goals; therefore, project managers should not confuse activities with accomplishments, processes with results, and to-do lists with deliverables. Performance should be measured in terms of results rather than processes. This suggests that the end justifies the means, and it doesn't matter how or who gets the job done as long as the goal is met. If the knowledge we are generating through Monitoring and Evaluation is not yet contributing to real-time design and implementation decisions, we may need to take a closer look at our M&E system. This is why result theory should be used in the study to examine how M&E systems are determined by study variables in Oxfam projects in Ethiopia.

2.4 Empirical Literature Review

2.4.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Practices and Project Performance

M&E begins with tracking process and output performance at the start of a compact's life and continues to track high level outcomes and impacts at the conclusion to assess how its activities have impacted poverty and economic progress (millennium challenge cooperation USA). This would include budgeting, staff management, and legal and regulatory compliance with processes and procedures. Any deviation from the standards is grounds for punishment (Naidoo, 2011). M&E is considered as supporting a management role, which, according to (Cook, 2006), "encompasses an institution's whole management, operating systems, and culture."

There is a lot of disagreement on project performance; the only thing that seems to be agreed upon is what constitutes "project performance"(Gemuenden & Lechler, 1997; Lipovetsky et al., 1997; Murphy et al., 1974; Pinto & Slevin, 1988). Project performance was defined in this study as a project's overall quality in terms of impact, value to beneficiaries, implementation effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. M&E is examined for its impact on project performance, which is defined as the degree to which project objectives are met.

Monitoring and evaluating projects involve a series of steps that, when performed properly, can contribute to project improvement and successful delivery in the future (Msila & Setlhako, 2013). Monitoring and evaluation practices can assist in identifying problems and their causes, as well as suggesting potential remedies (Shapiro, 2001). As a result, even if there is insufficient information on this, M&E practices can have an impact on project performance. So, what exactly are the M&E practices?

According to (Webb & Elliott, 2000), Practitioners have accepted such practices as an effective way to integrate M&E into projects. M&E procedures begin with the acquisition of basic information regarding a project's baseline data (Estrella & Gaventa, 1997). This information is then utilized to create a comparison for evaluating the project's overall impact. The second practice deals with the planning that underpins the assumptions that project goals are based on. M&E planning was classified by Armstrong and Baron (2013) into budget, capacity, feasibility, timeframe, and ethics resources. The third practice is the M&E structural framework, which aims

to uncover the reasons for performance measurement and project aspects, how they are related, and their underlying principles (Muzinda, 2007). The fourth practice is the M&E budget, and it is critical for the project's budget to include a clear and enough provision for the activities in order to achieve proper M&E (Muzinda, 2007). The fifth M&E practice is scheduling, and according to McCoy et al. (2005), M&E must be scheduled so that it receives the attention it deserves and is not left to the project manager's whims. Following scheduling, specifying the frequency of data collection, a clear specification on how often M&E data collection should be done comes next. It is critical that all stakeholders participate at this level. The participatory approach to M&E is seen as a tool to empower participants in projects, according to (Muzinda, 2007). The seventh practice is the use of ICT, which has a significant role to play in the M&E process. M&E teams use computers and computer-aided tools to analyze data, which saves time & expense while also resulting in a more efficient construction design (Kelly & Magongo, 2004). The eighth practice is midterm and end evaluation, which determines the project's impact and how it contributed to the project's goal being met and determines how well the project performed in terms of input and product (Gyorkos, 2003). (Uitto, 2014) further said that these lessons should be shared with the implementation team. Finally, a plan for disseminating M&E findings should be included in the M&E effort. These findings should be distributed to stakeholders in the form of donor reports, community and beneficiary communication, and implementation staff training to help them improve their implementation procedures and tactics. Based on the above explanation, we will try to look in details on the most essential practices in relation to project performance here in below.

2.4.1.1 Baseline Surveys and Project Performance

A baseline survey is a research endeavor that involves examining the current environment to determine where to begin a project. Implementers should complete this survey before beginning a project because it will serve as a reference tool for all subsequent actions. Those in charge of the project could utilize this tool to make future decisions. This baseline survey aids in identifying the more critical elements of a project, which is particularly significant in projects with several objectives. The findings of such a study can reveal which areas demand more attention and which require less attention (Pico, 2013).

Ideally, if M&E planning has been done well and information about a situation has been collected at the beginning of the intervention, then one has baseline data. A baseline survey, simply put, is

a study that is done at the beginning of a project to establish the status quo before a project is rolled out (Estrella & Gaventa, 1997). In a baseline survey, values for the identified performance indicators are collected as well. The baseline survey, which aims at collecting baseline data about a situation, is an early element in the monitoring and evaluation plan whose information is used to systematically assess the circumstances in which the organization commences (Frankel & Gage, 2007). It provides the basis for subsequent assessment of how efficiently the activity is being implemented and the eventual results achieved (Armstrong & Baron, 2013), a very big contribution to influencing organization performance. A baseline survey gathers key information early in an organization so that later judgments can be made about the quality and development results achieved by the organization.

According to (Bamberger, 2009), baseline studies must be undertaken prior to project implementation, and doing so while a project is already in progress would not provide a genuine picture of the project's status, because an ongoing project will have an impact, no matter how minor. This will provide the managers with a metric to use to determine whether the project was successful. A baseline study must be undertaken before project implementation in accordance with best practices (Bamberger, 2009). The actual benchmarks against which comparisons are conducted with regard to the information provided by the Baseline Study include mid-term reviews, project completion reports, and other evaluations (IFAD, 2002).

The primary goal of gathering baseline data is to improve the quality of implementation and development outcomes. It should also meet all stakeholders' concerns. If this is not the case, it becomes pointless, or the approach may have been flawed. When a study only meets the needs of one stakeholder, it is necessary to broaden the scope of the study to make it more valuable and relevant (USAID, 2012). The target population is another factor to consider (Gosling & Edwards, 2015) and funds are required for conducting a baseline survey, just as they are for any other project implementation activity.

As the project continues, feedback from local staff provides an opportunity for those who benefit from the initiative to have a say in project operations, contributing to the quality of monitoring data (Hunter, 2009). According to a study on the impact of monitoring and evaluation on project performance, if you start a project without doing a baseline study, you'll have major problems

tracking its progress (Douglas, 2010). In order to collect real-time information, (Douglas, 2010), recommends that a baseline be designed and completed a year prior to the main project.

2.4.1.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Planning and Project Performance

According to a research undertaken by (Mackay, 2007) in Washington, planning for monitoring and evaluation was crucial in improving project performance on government projects. This research focused on government projects that are primarily funded by the World Bank, with the goal of determining how better governments might be achieved through project monitoring and assessment. The conclusions of this study were that the majority of respondents felt that there was a lack of monitoring and evaluation techniques in the various projects in which they were involved.

In contrast, (Javed et al., 2012) found that project management provides an organization with control tools that increase its capability of planning, implementing, and managing project activities in Malaysia College of Computer Sciences and Information, Aljouf University. The goal of the research was to find ways to improve project performance through planning, implementation, and monitoring. Variable models were utilized to figure out how each step contributes to project performance management. To reach this goal, data from various projects and models linked to project planning, execution, control, and proposal of project performance were examined; the findings revealed that project-planning processes influence project performance.

(Kerzner, 2013) defines design and planning as "the process of determining organizational objectives and developing the policies, processes, and programs required to achieve them." Setting a predetermined course of action within a projected environment can be regarded as M&E planning in a project environment. Project planning must be systematic, flexible enough to accommodate special activities, disciplined through reviews and controls, and capable of receiving multifunctional inputs (Maylor, 2010).

M&E planning should start during or soon after the project design phase. Early preparation will help to inform project design and provide enough time to secure resources and staff before the project begins. Those who use the M&E system should be involved in planning. The M&E method is more feasible, understandable, and owned when project staff and key stakeholders are involved. In terms of specific monitoring and evaluation functions, the plan should also address the goal of data gathering and analysis. Compliance, process, results, context, beneficiary, and organizational

monitoring are some of the most important functions of monitoring. A project will often use a combination of these monitoring functions, and data collection and analysis will be designed accordingly. For project evaluations, the discussion should include not only the methodologies employed, but also the timing of the evaluation event (i.e., baseline studies, annual reviews, midterm and final evaluations), as well as the rationale for selecting reviewers with specified skill sets and independence (i.e., internal versus external evaluators) (Caldwell, 2002).

Most complex organizations' planning systems are probably more developed than their monitoring and evaluation systems. Many organizations talk about PME (planning, monitoring, and evaluation) systems because planning is often considered integral to M&E. However, while good planning is necessary for good M&E, it is also done for a variety of other reasons. This can be a difficulty for system designers, who may find it difficult to make the necessary changes to planning systems to facilitate good M&E. One of the most common ways for an organization's M&E system to be tied with the development of consistent planning processes at various levels of the organization (Masudi, 2015).

Indeed, a complex organization's M&E system is frequently centered on the planning and reporting stages. The definition, collection, analysis, and use of data (the monitoring and evaluation process itself) becomes a "black box," with staff at all levels allowed to design their own practices and processes as long as enough data is generated to report against goals (Belassi & Tukel, 1996). The project team uses the Monitoring and Evaluation plan (M&E plan) to organize and manage all Monitoring and Evaluation activities during a project cycle. It should also be shared and used by all stakeholders, as well as provided to donors. It maintains track of what you should monitor, when you should monitor, who should monitor, and how frequently you should monitor and why you should monitor. The M&E plan should be strict enough to be well-thought-out and planned, but flexible enough to account for changes that can improve or identify new monitoring and evaluation procedures. This is especially crucial in today's ever-changing and fast-moving conflict environment (Belassi & Tukel, 1996).

In a nutshell, the M&E Plan is used for management and good practice. It is an essential tool for data collection planning, management, and documentation. The M&E Plan keeps track of our progress, as well as the indicators and their outcomes. As a result, it improves the monitoring and

evaluation system's efficacy by ensuring that data is collected on time. It also aims to increase project team ownership of the M&E system, resulting in increased responsibility and accountability for the M&E activities' success (Belassi & Tukel, 1996).

Monitoring and evaluation planning can aid an organization in extracting useful data from past and ongoing operations, which can then be utilized to fine-tune programs, realign them, and plan for the future. By establishing explicit ties between past, present, and future actions and development outcomes, good planning, monitoring, and evaluation increase UNDP's contribution. It would be hard to determine whether work is progressing in the proper direction, whether progress and success can be claimed, and how future efforts could be improved without adequate planning, monitoring, and evaluation (UNDP, 2009). Effective monitoring and evaluation, paired with good planning, can significantly improve the success of development programs and projects. Monitoring and evaluation planning help us learn from previous achievements and challenges and influence decision-making so that current and future efforts can better improve people's lives and increase their options (UNDP, 2009).

The M&E plan describes what determines project performance, according to the studies reviewed, an M&E plan outlines the underlying assumptions on which project goals are based, as well as the expected links between activities, outputs, and results (the logical framework). monitoring schedule, a list of data sources to be used, and cost estimates for monitoring and evaluation activities are also included in M&E plan. Most plans typically include a list of partnerships and collaborations that will aid in achieving the targeted outcomes, as well as a strategy for disseminating and utilizing the data gathered (Alcock, 2004; Mackay, 2007; Wysocki & McGary, 2003). This illustrates that monitoring and evaluation planning considers all factors that must be in place in order to notice progress or lack thereof early.

According to (Brignall & Modell, 2000), critical elements for an M&E plan are divided into resources and capability. **Resources** determine how much money and time will be required to complete the tasks, and **capacity** ensures whether the project has the internal capacity to complete the proposed monitoring and evaluation activities, including data analysis. Other factors considered by Armstrong & Baron (2012) include **feasibility** - are the proposed activities realistic? Can they be put into practice? **Time** - Is the suggested schedule reasonable for carrying

out the proposed activities? **Ethics** - What are the ethical issues and problems associated with implementing the proposed activities, and is there a plan in place to handle them? Has a protocol been submitted to a research ethics committee for review? With these factors in mind, M&E planning is complete in terms of coverage for the purposes of providing project direction monitoring during implementation.

Furthermore, according to (Gyorkos, 2003), project planners should include a clearly defined monitoring and evaluation plan as part of the overall project plan. He claims that the monitoring and evaluation plan should include the following elements: monitoring and evaluation activities, people to carry out the activities, frequency of activities, adequate budget for activities, and a specification of the use of monitoring and evaluation findings. Having a well-defined monitoring and evaluation plan ensures that monitoring and evaluation activities receive the attention they deserve and are not overlooked.

2.4.1.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Project Performance

The two basic frameworks used by NGOs are the result framework and the logical framework (Jaszczolt et al., 2010). A framework is an important tool for monitoring and evaluating a project since it lays out the procedures that must be taken to attain the desired outcomes. By identifying the relationships between important implementation components and articulating the internal and external elements that could affect the project's success, a framework improves understanding of the project goals and objectives. The M&E framework should also incorporate details about funding and technical expertise allocation, as well as inform donors and project management team about its implementation (IFAD, 2002)

The idea of the Result framework (also known as strategic framework) is to develop effective practical tools for strategic planning, risk management, progress monitoring, and outcome evaluation using a coherent framework (Jaszczolt et al., 2010). While the internationally recognized logical framework is a matrix that uses M&E indicators at each step of the project and identifies potential risks. The logical framework therefore demonstrates the conceptual underpinnings of the project M&E system (Chaplowe, 2008)(Chaplowe, 2008). It also integrates effectively with other M&E tools (Jaszczolt et al., 2010) and includes four columns and rows that connect the project goals and objectives to the required inputs, processes, and results.

- **Logical Framework**

The logical framework approach has been used to improve the methodical planning of development projects since the 1960s. They've progressed from simple frameworks for defining project objectives to more sophisticated, process-oriented ways to integrating stakeholders in project design and management throughout time (European Integration Office, 2011). The logical framework approach (LFA) aids in identifying the logic behind project elements and performance measurement, as well as how they are related and the assumptions that underpin them. The LFA forces project planners to think about evaluating performance from the start, i.e., monitoring and evaluation, by determining the metrics and criteria for success during the planning stage (Aune, 2000).

Despite the donor community's request that log framing to be considered, the majority of Ethiopian nongovernmental organizations fail to do so due to a lack of knowledge (Taddesse et al., 2010). Though the terminologies used in building log frames vary by organization, the basic four by four matrixes constitute a common pattern. The vertical logic, as illustrated in the table 2.2, clarifies the causal links between the various levels of objectives and specifies the significant assumptions and uncertainties beyond the control of the activity manager. The horizontal logic specifies how the activity objectives stated in the log frame's columns will be measured and how that measurement will be verified.

The logical framework (Log frame) is a popular project management approach for both planning and monitoring projects. The log frame matrix is a tool that can be used by all development organizations, including government and non-government (Martinez, 2011; Middleton, 2005). Despite various objections, (Hummelbrunner, 2010) affirms the continuous use of Log frame and he claims that critics have not significantly damaged Log Frame's Approach. Even though many donors recognize its limitations and flaws, they continue to utilize it as a planning and monitoring tool. According to (Myrick, 2013), a pragmatic approach to M&E is ideal, but that in the real world, practitioners may be limited by constraints that prevent them from continuing to adopt either a log frame or an overly pragmatic approach to M&E. He goes on to say that regardless of the approach taken, the core M&E principles are a measurable objective, performance indicator,

target, and periodic reporting should all be included in a reporting tool. Data gathering, recording, and reporting are all made easier and more efficient using a Log frame.

Table 2-2 The Logical Framework Matrix Structure

Program/project logic at different levels	Performance or objective verifiable indicators (OVIs)	Sources of verification (SOV)	Assumptions or risks
Goal/Overall Project Objectives: What are the wider problems which the Project will help to resolve? This is the development impact to which the project contributes - at a national and/or sectoral level.	The measures for judging whether or not the goal has been achieved. Measures of the extent to which a sustainable contribution to the goal has been made.	Sources of information and methods used to collect and report on the goal /overall objectives	What are the external factors needed to sustain the goal achievement? What are the risks that might prevent this sustainable achievement?
Purpose/Objective Outcome What are the expected benefits (or dis-benefits) and to whom will they go? What improvements or changes will the project bring about?	Measures by which achievements at the end of the project can be quantified - indicating that the purpose has been achieved and that these benefits are sustainable.	Sources of information and methods used to collect and report on achieving the purpose	What are the assumptions and hence risks concerning the purpose/goal linkage i.e. achievement of the project purpose towards the project goal or overall objectives
Project Outputs: The direct measurable results (goods and services) of the project which are largely under project management's control	Measures of the quantity and quality of outputs and the timing of their delivery.	Sources of information and methods used to collect and report on achieving the project outputs	What are the assumptions and hence risks concerning the output/purpose linkage. What are the external factors outside of the control of the project which, if not present, will restrict or stop the project achieving its purpose
Project Activities: The activities or tasks that need to be undertaken to accomplish or deliver the identified project outputs.	Implementation/work program targets.	Sources of information & methods used to collect & report on project activities	What are the assumptions /risks concerning the activity/output linkage? What external factors are needed to achieve the project outputs?
Project Inputs The resources needed to deliver the project activities (funds, people equipment etc)	Implementation/work program targets.	Sources of information to report on inputs are needed to produce the projects activities	What are the assumptions /risks concerning the input/ activity/ linkages? What external factors are needed to achieve the project activities

Source:(IFC Advisory Services, 2008)

2.4.1.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Budgeting and Project Performance

Budgeting in an organization can have a variety of purposes other than planning and controlling activities. M&E budgeting can be used to measure performance and forecast the uncertain future ahead of time. Organizational accountability concerns the allocation of resources for monitoring and evaluation. A participative approach to budgetary planning, allocation, and review is required for effective M&E implementation (Khale & Worku, 2013). Monitoring and evaluation budgeting is a comprehensive and coordinated plan developed by an organization's management and represented in financial terms for the organization's activities and resources over a defined time period (Isaac et al., 2015).

M&E budgeting is simply a method that can assist management in planning and controlling resources in developed countries. A budget is a detailed document that details the economic and non-economic activities that a government intends to pursue, with a particular focus on policies, objectives, and strategies for achieving goals that are supported by revenue and expenditure projections (Raghunandan et al., 2012).

A budget is one of the most useful management tools in project implementation, with tremendous rewards if properly understood and implemented (Suberu, 2010). M&E budgeting is a modern management tool for allocating available resources to meet private and public needs. Budgeting is crucial for NGOs for a variety of reasons, including planning, control, and assessment (Abogun & Fagbemi, 2012). Planning, control, coordination, evaluating and directing performance improvement, communication, and decision making are all important aspects of budgeting in project implementation.

Budgeting is a fundamental predictor of M&E system effectiveness. Budget limitations may have an impact on the quality of information gathered because of the issue of credibility, and valuable information may be overlooked. This is extremely harmful to the data's value (Kithinji et al., 2017). Budget allocation for M&E and its relationship with the effectiveness of M&E systems have been explored in previous research. According to a survey done by (KPMG International, 2014) on the M&E practices of 35 of the world's leading development organizations, 53% of the organizations spend less than 2% of their overall program expenditure on M&E. Furthermore, (Karani et al.,

2014) found a favorable link (r= 0.229, p0.05) between financial adequacy and M&E system effectiveness in HIV/AIDS projects of 24 Kenyan organizations.

(Mushori, 2015) found that while M&E practices are normally budgeted for, there is no explicit provision for its operations in Nairobi County. The study collected primary data from county government officials in Nairobi County via questionnaires, with a sample size of 150 county officials drawn using stratified sampling, concluding that the M&E budget is critical in the strategic plan, and that some projects have stalled or performed poorly due to underfunding. As a result, it is recommended that the budget be all-inclusive, taking into consideration all costs and expenses that are expected to occur. Implementing and maintaining a strong and effective monitoring and evaluation system should start with financial resources.

2.4.1.5 Frequency of Data Collection and Use of ICT in Monitoring and Evaluation and Project Performance

When conducting monitoring and evaluation, a clear timetable should be provided to ensure that data is collected properly and that the entire process of analysis and report writing is completed in a timely and efficient manner. It allows for the determination of how frequently data will be collected as well as who will be in charge of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and assessment might take place on a monthly, semiannual, or annual basis. There should also be guidelines for writing monitoring and evaluation reports. Monitoring should be done on a regular basis to determine how well the adopted program is working. The size of the program will determine the frequency of periodic monitoring, however monthly monitoring is recommended (Kusak & Rist, 2001).

Computers can be extremely useful in the monitoring and evaluation process, and data analysis should be aided by computers whenever possible. For example, if a questionnaire was distributed as a monitoring and evaluation tool, software such as Microsoft Excel or SSPS can be used to analyze the responses. Numerical data such as the number of persons served, attendance at activities, and the quantity of IEC materials delivered can be aggregated and stored more efficiently over the project's lifetime, reducing paper work and its related disadvantages (Kelly & Magongo, 2004). This is an excellent practice since it improves the effectiveness and efficiency of managing monitoring and evaluation data.

Many new tools and methodologies for monitoring and evaluation (M&E) have been available over the last two decades. Some are truly novel, while others are based on tried-and-true study procedures. Unfortunately, many are essentially repackaged and re-labeled old ideas. In this section, we'll look at some of the tools and approaches based on a paper called "Innovations in Monitoring and Evaluating Results," published by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2013). That paper goes into the tools and approaches in greater depth and recommends additional reading see (UNDP, 2013).

Beneficiary feedback mechanisms (BFMs): BFMs are "systems and processes that allow aid beneficiaries to comment on, make ideas for, show thanks for, or criticize the products, services, or targeting of an aid project in which they may be recipients". Suggestion boxes, group discussions, and one-on-one interviews are examples of mechanisms used to stimulate beneficiary feedback. Texting and voicemail from mobile phones are increasingly being used to facilitate BFM. This, in principle, should make it much easier for various stakeholders to communicate directly with project or program staff (INTRAC, 2017).

Crowdsourcing: is the process of gathering data from large groups of individuals, particularly an online community. Using mobile phone technology or open source software platforms, this may be done fast and easily nowadays. When an organization has to produce quantitative data quickly, crowdsourcing is the best option. However, it can also be used to gather information on sensitive topics such as corruption, where a huge amount of anonymous data is required (INTRAC, 2017).

Data exhaust: Data exhaust is the term used to describe the passive consumption of data by people who access digital services. People leave traces behind them whenever they use their phones or access the internet, and these can occasionally be utilized for M&E purposes. Many websites, for example, keep data of who visits them, when they visit them, and how often they visit them. Another example is the examination of social media interactions, which can reveal how well a company's campaign messages are received (INTRAC, 2017).

Data visualization: Data visualization tools allow data to be graphically and interactively represented. Interactive webpages, info graphs, data dashboards, and maps are all examples of this type of content. Data visualization can be utilized in M&E to aid in the analysis of trends and

patterns. It can also help a development organization better communicate with institutional funders, supporters, and partners (INTRAC, 2017).

Intelligent Infrastructure: Roads, bridges, and buildings can all be provided with remotely available electronic senses to offer information about access. The information can be utilized to figure out when and how infrastructure or services are utilized. Intelligent infrastructure, for example, can be used to track how many people are visiting hospitals or resource centers. Intelligent infrastructure can help with automatic monitoring and decision-making in specific circumstances. It is conceivable, for example, to construct wells that self-report when they are broken (INTRAC, 2017).

Micro-narratives: Micro-narratives are brief anecdotes or testimonies recorded by various stakeholders. Personal stories are usually created through discussions or social media platforms. The qualitative data can be converted into quantitative data using pattern detecting tools. Micro-narratives have the ability to allow development agencies to acquire qualitative data from a huge number of citizens while still gaining valuable insights (INTRAC, 2017).

Mobile data collection: Mobile data collection (MDC) is the process of gathering structured data using specially built software programs on mobile phones, tablets, or Personal Digital Assistants (PDAs). MDC is frequently used to conduct surveys. MDC has a number of advantages over traditional paper-based survey methods: (INTRAC, 2017)

It can capture audio, picture, video, or geographic information;

- It can increase the accuracy of data gathering since software can be built to facilitate question-making or uncover inconsistencies;
- It allows data collected during a survey to be processed quickly, eliminating the need to enter data twice - once on a paper sheet and then again on a central computer;
- It enables real-time modifications to sampling design or questionnaire design as data is received.

Real-time, simple reporting: This entails creating regular reports that include text, images, audio recordings, and videos and may be prepared and sent via computers or mobile devices. Real-time, simplified reporting can help project managers decrease formal reporting requirements while also

making reports more appealing. The ability to record beneficiaries' faces and voices can also help bring reports to life. Project managers can deliver more regular updates with real-time reporting, which might possibly improve real-time decision-making. Beneficiaries may be encouraged to participate in real-time reporting by using social media to provide project status updates (INTRAC, 2017).

Remote sensing: Remote sensors can be used to observe distant targets using information from satellites or other airborne devices. This can be useful when access to an area is limited because of physical or security issues. Potentially, remote sensing can be used during humanitarian disasters when some locations become completely isolated. Remote sensing can also be used to observe major, physical changes in fields of work such as deforestation, climate change and natural resources (INTRAC, 2017).

2.4.1.6 Midterm and End Evaluation and Project Performance

During the project's implementation, formative evaluation (midterm evaluations) takes place. They are primarily focused on the implementation process, analyzing the project's overall performance in terms of input use, project schedule, and outcomes. They also consider the project's strengths, weaknesses, and obstacles, as well as whether the current project plan will be able to meet the project's objectives or if it needs to be redesigned (Nabris, 2002). This form of evaluation may also consider the project's continued relevance and long-term viability. The goal is to increase the project's performance during implementation (Shapiro, 2001). A summative evaluation, on the other hand, takes place at the end of the project and seeks to determine how the project progressed, what went right and wrong, and any lessons gained.

Another practice is midterm evaluation. This method aids in evaluating the project's outcome in relation to the project's invested inputs (Gilliam et al., 2003). As a result, midterm evaluation can be used to assess the project's impact and how it contributes to the project's overall goal. Midterm evaluation, according to donors such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), allows project managers to assess the project's performance before it is completed. Midterm project evaluations assist the organization in avoiding problems that may arise as the project progresses toward completion (Abera Regassa, 2017).

2.4.1.7 Stakeholders Involvement and Project Performance

Participation of stakeholders in development projects has evolved over time. Its origins can be traced back to the 1950s and 1960s, when non-governmental organizations (NGOs) emphasized community and popular participation. Multilateral agencies like the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Labor Organization (ILO) began to encourage stakeholder participation in development projects and programs in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Many development programs have failed due to a failure to involve people in the adoption of project management monitoring and evaluation mechanisms (FAO, 1990; World Bank, 1999). It is impossible to expect that stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation will continue unless it is institutionalized. The UNDP's M&E for Results handbook recommends incorporating particular elements into program and project management processes to guarantee effective and continuous stakeholder involvement (UNDP, 2002).

All stakeholders, including donors, community members, beneficiaries, and people, should be included in the development and implementation of the project at all phases of monitoring and evaluation. They determine what will be monitored and evaluated, how it will be monitored and evaluated, including the identification of indicators, they analyze the data and assess the project's performance, and they also provide guidance on how to proceed with the project in consultation and collaboration with all of these (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002). Monitoring and evaluation, along with project planning and design, should be integral components of the project management cycle. Thinking about monitoring and evaluation during the design stage allows project stakeholders to think about performance assessment even before implementation begins, giving them a clear picture of what a successful project should look like (Nabris, 2002).

Involving stakeholders in the tool design process from the beginning guarantees that the project meets all of the stakeholders' needs and is thus more responsive to their expectations. Stakeholder project ownership is also created and encouraged through interactive approaches (Clarke, 1999). These are critical factors that affect the project's performance and long-term viability. The project's outcome is more likely to be approved by stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries. Because the development and implementation processes demand community members' reflection and analysis of their own culture, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, the participatory method can sometimes encourage change in individual attitudes and community culture and norms.

Participatory methods reveal the tools needed for monitoring and evaluation, which is a capacity-building activity in and of itself (Clarke, 1999).

All stakeholders (beneficiaries, implementation personnel, donors, and wider communities) must be included in the project's monitoring and evaluation process. The use of a participatory approach to monitoring and evaluation is seen as an empowerment tool for project beneficiaries and other stakeholders, who are often left out of this process. It also demonstrates downward accountability, that is, accountability to the beneficiaries. There is a great deal of emphasis on upward responsibility, i.e. the donor, with little concern for beneficiaries and communities, in this case HIV/AIDS-affected and infected people (Aune, 2000). In terms of monitoring and evaluation, this concern with upward responsibility creates a barrier between the project and other stakeholders, resulting in the process being directed toward satisfying the donor's needs at the expense of other stakeholders. Beneficiaries' participation in monitoring and evaluation provides them a sense of ownership and adds to long-term sustainability long after the project donor has stopped funding it, as well as increasing the likelihood of more beneficiaries using the project's services.

Other key stakeholders who are often overlooked include the project's field workers. They regularly take a passive role in gathering monitoring data and relaying it to higher offices, rather than actively participating in monitoring and evaluation. According to (CORE, 2006), beneficiaries do not stand to benefit optimum from monitoring and evaluation since monitoring and evaluation information is not shared with them, limiting their opportunities to learn and improve project implementation practices. He goes on to say that when the monitoring plan and indicators are defined at the highest level, such as by monitoring and evaluation officers and the project manager, or externally, it is difficult for beneficiaries and implementing employees to use that information for learning purposes.

Overall efficiency, cost effectiveness, and performance are becoming increasingly important, according to (Reed, 2008). This required active stakeholders to have skills that would allow them to contribute to the best of their abilities. Participation of stakeholders in decision-making about the program's what, how, and why. This approach was required in order to empower them as well as promote inclusion and facilitate meaningful participation across various stakeholders. According to (Proudlock et al., 2009), the impact evaluation process, particularly the review and

analysis of data, can be considerably improved by involving the target beneficiaries. He stated that involving stakeholders is a critical approach, and that its management should be well-formulated to avoid derailment of decision-making. This is because over-involving stakeholders could lead to conflict of interest (Jugdev & Muller, 2005).

2.4.1.8 Dissemination of M&E Findings, Documentation of Lessons Learned and Project Performance

Communication of M&E results to key stakeholders, such as project employees, beneficiaries, and funders, is connected with dissemination of M&E results. This is crucial because it keeps all key stakeholders informed about the project's progress, allowing them to make informed decisions about what should be altered or kept. "Monitoring and evaluation results assist stakeholders understand what the program is doing, how effectively it is reaching its objectives, and whether there are ways that progress can be improved," argue (Adamchak et al., 2000). This is possible if results are shared with stakeholders. Furthermore, Adamchak et al. state that communicating results is vital in securing critical social, financial, and political support. Furthermore, making outcomes public recognizes the stakeholders and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make the project/program a success, which is a surefire way to attract new funders. Based on the discussion above, it can be stated that dissemination of M&E results is critical, and every effort should be taken to ensure that the process runs smoothly. According to the (Asian Development Bank, 2011), effective project communication is critical to the project's success. (Muszyńska, 2015) shares this viewpoint, citing effective communication as a vital aspect in project success. To this aim, project success depends on the dissemination of M&E results, which is a component of project communication.

A M&E report must be generated, and a dissemination plan must be established in order to accomplish successful result distribution. Oral presentations and the distribution of an M&E report to stakeholders are examples of dissemination. It's worth noting that stakeholder satisfaction with the dissemination process is an indication that the dissemination was done correctly. The notion of M&E result distribution encompassed the clarity of the M&E report, the clarity of the dissemination plan, the usefulness of dissemination feedback, and stakeholder involvement in this regard (Winiko, 2018).

Given the importance of communicating M&E results in a project, (Hobson et al., 2016) emphasize the importance of communicating results to relevant project stakeholders in Britain by providing a framework of communication that includes the following elements in their article "a step by step guide to monitoring and evaluation." 1) determining the target audience 2) customizing the results to key stakeholders 3) identifying key lessons for key stakeholders from the results. It is important to note that the communication framework outlined above is significant, and Project Management Institute describes communication as one of the most important success elements in project performance.

According to (Umhlaba Development Services, 2017), publishing M&E findings is critical for promoting accountability and motivating stakeholders to act. (Richardson, 2005) echoes this notion, concluding that communication problems are one of the reasons for project failure. Furthermore, communicating M&E results assures that the results are valid because the feedback gained from the communication will be used to increase the results' credibility. On the same vein, (UNDP, 2009) supports the idea of disseminating monitoring and evaluation findings by listing techniques that should be used during dissemination, such as printed reports, PDF versions of the results posted on internal and external websites, and the media.

Lessons learned from the implementation should be documented and incorporated into future projects, as well as shared with other stakeholders. The lessons would cover what went well during execution as well as what went wrong and why, so that the same mistakes be avoided in future initiatives (Pasta et al., 2013). These lessons should be communicated to the implementation team. The project's long-term viability should be established. It is difficult to establish sustainability, but the level of community involvement can indicate if project activities will continue after the funding period ends.

The lessons learned method has five steps: identification, documentation, analysis, storage, and retrieval (PMI, 2017). The parts that follow go over each of these five processes in greater depth.

- **Identify Possible Lessons**

Lessons learned can be identified by utilizing an integrated method that incorporates lessons learned early, often, and consistently throughout your project. Any lessons learned should be recorded as soon as possible by project team members. Every three to six months, time is set out to discuss and share these lessons with the rest of the team. Another option is to identify lessons after the project is completed. This is more complex and resource-intensive, according to (MacKay, 2020), because it often involves external reviewers and multi-pronged data collecting, such as interviews, documents, and meeting minutes. When you collect lessons after a project is over, you run the danger of overlooking some crucial lessons. It also means that improvements based on past learning cannot be introduced during the project.

- **Document Lessons in A Register**

To ensure that the relevant information is documented correctly, lessons learnt should be recorded in a uniform manner in a pro forma register. Make sure lessons are conveyed as recommendations for future initiatives rather than passive or past-tense remarks for both what went well and what went wrong. The goal is to bring tangible improvements to processes and project workflows (MacKay, 2020). The final responsibility is to collect and document all lessons learned in a detailed report, regardless of whether they were captured during the project or after it was completed. The report should include suggestions for future projects' improvements.

- **Analyze Lessons**

The third phase in the lessons learned process is to analyze, organize, and decide how you'll share what you've learned with the rest of your team and organization. Conduct a root cause analysis for each lesson learned for failed projects or project stages to better understand what should be improved. Once the reason has been determined, specify what process or organizational adjustments are required to prevent the problem from occurring again. A root cause analysis may not be necessary for project success. Rather, consider this a lesson learnt and see if it can be used to future improvements. It's just as vital to learn from project achievements as it is from project failures (Steyn & Walt, 2021).

- **Store Lessons in A Repository**

Store lessons learned in an easily accessible location, such as a shared drive, so that the project team and other teams in the organization can access them. The lessons learned repository should be carefully designed to avoid becoming a "black hole" from which nothing can ever be recovered. The categorizing of lessons learned in the repository is critical for retrieving and using tips, guides, processes, workflows, and best practices in future projects. The following are some examples of broad classifications: Scope/Requirements management, Schedule management, Budgets management, Quality management, Issues & risk management, Resources & vendor management, Communications management, Stakeholder management, Reports Management

- **Retrieve Applicable Lessons for New Projects**

The most critical aspect of a lessons learned repository is the ability to retrieve the valuable historical information stored in the repository to continually improve the organization's ability to implement projects. The value of successful retrieval of relevant lessons learned data is two-fold: firstly, the value to the project manager and his/her ability to successfully complete the new project, and secondly, the value realized by the incorporation of best practices and process improvements into the corporate culture (Steyn & Walt, 2021).

For the repository to be helpful to the project manager, he/she must be able to search using keywords to help narrow down the search in the repository. A search of the lessons learned repository should be done by the project manager prior to the new project's kick off meeting and can be the first pass in identifying potential project risks and mitigation strategies (Steyn & Walt, 2021). According to (Paranagamage et al., 2012), accessibility and publicity of lessons learned need to be resolved if company objectives in investing in lessons learned are to be realized.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains how the research methodology for this study guided data collection, analysis, and theory development. In order to provide relevant research outcomes, research methodology considers the research framework and the findings. Furthermore, selecting an appropriate research design involves a series of steps, beginning with identifying the problem, the study's purpose, and a thorough literature review. As a result, this chapter covers the methodologies utilized in this study.

3.2 Overview of the Research Design

A descriptive research design was adopted in this study. "A descriptive survey has a predetermined aim, allowing for the collection of data that is relevant and useful to the study subject" (Kothari, 2004). According to many studies, the goal of most descriptive research is to describe the current condition of situations at the time of the study. As a result, the goal of this study is to evaluate and describe project monitoring and evaluation Practices in the instance of Oxfam GB in Ethiopia projects, as well as provide recommendations based on best practices in the field.

According to (Creswil, 2014), research approaches are plans and research methodologies that include everything from general concepts to systematic data collecting, analysis, and interpretation methods. In order to evaluate the existing M&E practices of Oxfam GB projects in Ethiopia, a cross-sectional study using quantitative methods was conducted. The study aimed to define and infer how it is carried out while also highlighting the challenges in current M&E practices, which aids in finding areas for improvement. The researcher used a quantitative approach to assess or measure numerical data acquired via questionnaire and analyzed through statistical procedures.

To generate information on examining the M&E practices of the selected organization, a survey was used with a structured questionnaire. A literature review was carried out on the most important M&E practices that have an impact on project performance. This covers book, publication, website, and journal reviews connected to the subject. Following that, descriptive statistics were used to assess the data, which would be used to investigate competency gaps (challenges) in the specific organization's M&E practice.

3.3 Target Population

According to (Oliver, 2013) defines target population as " the total group of individuals or objects for which researchers are interested in generalizing their findings." The researcher was used the Census method for this study because it is a statistical tool that examines all of the units or members of a population when the total population size is often small. The study's target populations were drawn from the total population of program workers at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia's in different region office, which totals 31 people. Project managers program and project workers and M&E professionals from head office and different regional offices are included in the study.

3.4 Methods of Data Collection

The research was look at both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire from the people in the organization who are involved in the implementation of the M&E system to generate information for the specific topic. To avoid ambiguity and facilitate data analysis, the questionnaire includes instructions on how to respond to questions.

For the purpose of assuring the information filled by the respondents, secondary data was used which included organizational documents like the M&E framework or plan, the M&E manual, monthly and yearly update reports, field reports, and other documents. Secondary data were acquired from other research papers and publications on the subject.

3.5 Data Presentation and Analysis

Statistical Package for Social Sciences were used to analyze the survey data (SPSS). The researchers were used descriptive and inferential statistical analysis approaches in this research. Frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation will be derived as a result of the descriptive analysis. Univariate charts and tables were used to present the findings. The descriptive analysis was used to evaluate current M&E practices. Composite means were developed for each category of variables in order to aggregate the data.

3.6 Reliability and Validity

Reliability

According to (Saunders et al., 2009), reliability refers to how closely the items in a questionnaire are related to one another, as well as whether or not the questionnaire would yield consistent results at different times and under different settings. Cronbach's alpha is one of the most widely used measures of reliability. It determines the internal consistency of a scale's elements, or how closely a group of items are related. It is regarded as a scale dependability indicator. Cronbach's coefficient alpha values typically range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency and values less than 0.5 being unsatisfactory. Correlating replies to each item in the questionnaire with responses to other questions in the questionnaire is what internal consistency is all about. Thus, a scale is said to have a good reliability, if the Cronbach's value is higher than 0.7. As shown in the table below the Cornbrash's Alpha for each item is presented. Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.700, 0.707, 0.830, 0.828, 0.862, 0.885, 0.759, 0.748, 0.772 and for the baseline study, M&E planning, M&E framework, M&E budget, Mid-term and end term evaluation, stakeholder's engagement, documentation of lesson learned, dissemination of monitoring and evaluation findings and project performance respectively.

Table 3-1 Result of Reliability Test

Item	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
BS	.700	8
MEP	.707	10
MEF	.830	7
MEB	.828	6
METE	.862	8
SE	.886	8
DLL	.759	9
DMEF	.748	7
PP	.772	9
Overall reliability statistics	.962	72

Validity

Validity refers to the ability of an instrument to measure what it was designed to measure. According to (Saunders et al., 2009), validity refers to the strength of our conclusions, implications, or propositions. It's about determining whether an instrument is measuring what it's supposed to measure. To determine whether the instrument is genuine, the researcher was collaborated with the adviser as an expert to determine whether the instrument is valid. To assure the validity of the results, the survey and interview questionnaire were also constructed based on the literature research and frame of reference.

After the variable pass the reliability test the next step is too check the validity of the instrument by using total item factor analysis of the research questionnaire. The critical value r is taken from table and before that degree of freedom should be determined by using the following formula;

N = number of samples = 25

Degree of freedom (DF) = N - 2 = 25-2 = 23

The critical value at 23 DF (0.05) = 0.396

If obtained value of Pearson correlation (r) is greater than the critical value (r) it is highly significant and it is valid.

If obtained value r > critical value r = Valid

obtained value r < critical value r = Invalid

Based on the questionnaire, validity test has been measured at 23DF (0.05) was 0.396 and the result which is obtained from the analysis of validity on SPSS 25 is greater than the critical value (0.396).

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	Critical Value r@ df (23)
BS	0.949	**0.396**
MEP	0.757	
MEF	0.630	
MEB	0.818	
MTEE	0.401	
SE	0.603	

DLL	0.901
DMEF	0.913
PP	0.574

3.7 Ethical consideration

The respondents were not forced to participate in the research. And every respondent was informed about the research topic and the expected goal of the research. Besides, the respondents were kept anonymous and their response is handled confidentially. They were also informed that their response were analyzed scientifically to recommend the possible solutions for the research problem.

Chapter Four: Result and Discussions

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results of questionnaires, interviews and secondary data analysis conducted on Monitoring &Evaluation Practices of Oxfam sponsored projects in Ethiopia. Oxfam has a wide network throughout the country.

The Headquarter in Addis Ababa is relatively more robust and leads the various organizational functions in addition to project activities. Among the different organizational functions, Oxfam has a department called Monitoring, Evaluation, Learning and Accountability (MEAL). MEAL is the focal section in the organization with respect to Project Monitoring and Evaluation which is also the main subject of this study. The respondents are mainly M&E officers, Project managers and Technical experts (field officers). Thus, almost all members of the Oxfam staff who are working closely in M&E and other staff who work related activities with the PMER section at the main Headquarter office in Addis Ababa have participated on questionnaire and interviews.

The presentation starts by presenting the respondents characteristics and general background. This section also looks in to the Monitoring and Evaluation practices Baseline survey, monitoring and evaluation plan, M&E framework, M&E budget, Mid-term and end evaluations, Stakeholders engagement, documentation of lesson learned and dissemination of monitoring and evaluation findings.

4.2 Findings of the study

4.2.1 Response Rate of Respondents

According to the information in table 4.1 above on response rate, 25 of the 31 questionnaires that were given to respondents were correctly completed and returned, yielding an 80.6 percent response rate. The response rate was deemed adequate for analysis in order to draw conclusions for the study (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). According to (Lietz & Zayas, 2010), a response rate of more than 70% is regarded as very good.

Table 4-1 Respondents' Response Rate

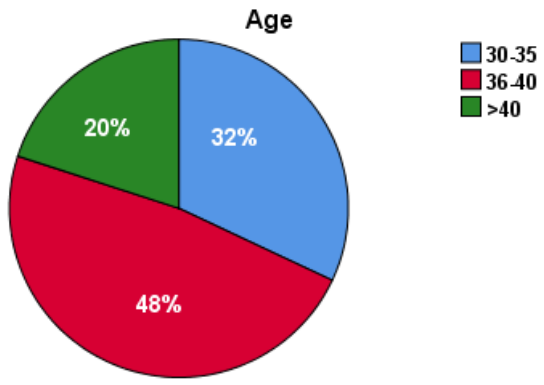
Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Returned	Percentage
31	25	80.6 %

There was a high response rate (80.6 percent), as shown on the above Table 4.1, because the researcher personally emailed the questionnaires via their individual email addresses and confirmed that they had been received. The researcher also had the opportunity to address the respondents' questions via phone calls and emails while taking the appropriate precautions not to influence the results. As a result, there was a smaller impact of the language barrier, which helped to guarantee a high instrument response and scoring rate.

4.2.2 Demographic Characteristics of The Study

The demographic details of the study's respondents are covered in this section. These consist of the distribution of respondents based on their age, gender, academic qualifications, work experience, and position within the company, and the results are given in terms of the study's goals.

According to the respondents' age distribution (figure 4.1a), the majority of respondents (48 percent) were found to be between the ages of 36 and 40. About 32% of the respondents were between the ages of 30 and 35, and the remaining 20% have been over the age of 40. This revealed that almost all of the respondents were of a mature age and capable of providing the research reasonable information. Figure 4.1b shows that 96 percent of respondents were male and 4 percent were female in terms of gender(sex).



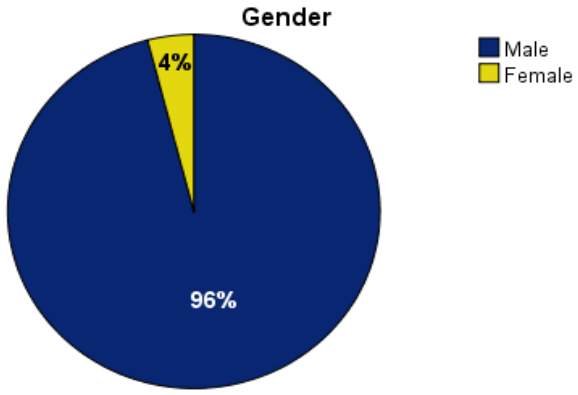


Figure 4.2-a Age distribution **Figure 4.2-b Gender distribution**

Regarding respondents' educational backgrounds, there were zero respondents with a BSC or BA degree, 96 percent with an MSC or MA, and the final 4 percent with a PhD. (figure 4.1c). According to the respondents' educational levels, the study can expect them to supply knowledge-based information about project monitoring and evaluation.

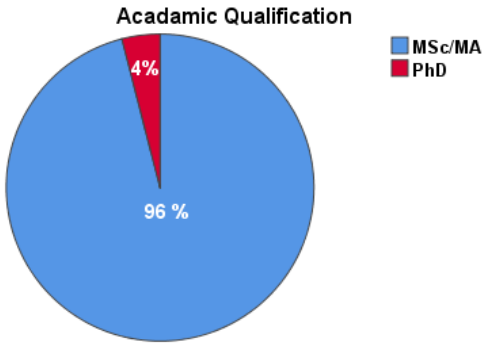


Figure 4.2-c Academic Qualification

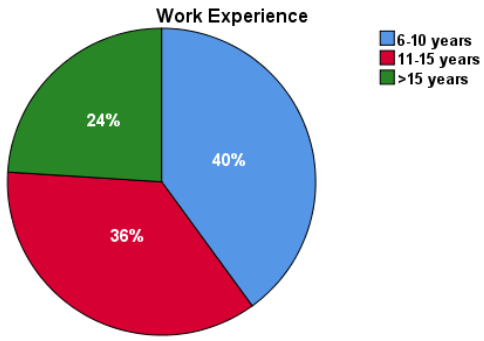


Figure 4.2-d Work Experience

In terms of the respondents' work experience (figure 4.1d), only 40% have 6–10 years of experience, 36% have 11–15 years of experience, and the remaining 24% have more than 15 years of experience. Therefore, it is possible to assume that the majority of respondents had significant work experience to provide accurate information to the study.

According to Figure 4.1e, which is clearly displayed, about 56% of respondents were technical experts or field officers from regional Oxfam offices, 24% were project managers from Oxfam's Addis Ababa headquarter, and the remaining 20% were monitoring and evaluation specialists from both the regions and Addis Ababa. From this, it is feasible to draw the conclusion that these respondents were able to provide accurate information about monitoring and evaluation practices that were used at each of Oxfam's projects due to their high level of experience with the project and the study's theme.

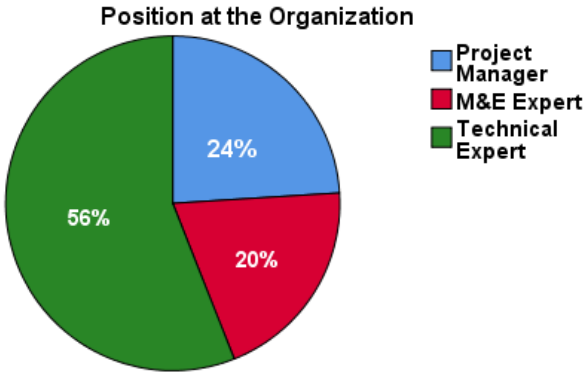


Figure 4.2-e Position at the organization

4.2.3 Data Analysis of how project monitoring and evaluation practiced at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia Projects

The first research question aimed at considering/assessing practice of project monitoring and evaluation is presented in the following consecutive tables with the findings.

The participants of the research were asked to give their opinion on the monitoring and evaluation practice, challenges encountered and the possible proposed solution for the existing system. The respondents were given options on a rate of 5-point Likert's scale with 1= Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5= strongly Agree.

The collected study data was analyzed using descriptive statics such as Frequency, mean and Percentage and standard deviation as shown below in the table.

Where: Frequency (f) = Number of respondents who agreed on the corresponding rating.
Mean = Average rating given by respondents.
Percentage (%) = Percentage of respondents to be agreed from total respondents
Standard deviation= tell how measurements for a group are spread out from the mean.

- **Baseline Study**

The first step in M&E procedures is to gather baseline information on a project (Estrella & Gaventa, 1997). This study tried to investigate how baseline study were practiced and what are the gaps during the practicing baseline study. The respondents were asked to state whether baseline study is done prior to project implementation. Table 4.2 shows the responses as indicated below:

The mean value for the statement in which the organization performs comprehensive baseline study (BS) before the implementation of the project is calculated 4.08 and the standard deviation is 0.27. For this statement 92 % agreed, the remaining 8% agreed strongly. This indicates most of the respondents strongly agreed that the organization conducts a comprehensive BS before the implementation of the project. Therefore, it is concluded that the organization has a practice of a holistic baseline study before the project implementation. Therefore, the practices of performing a base line study at the organization that is used to generate a comparison for evaluating the effect of the project.

Table 4-2 Baseline study data results

Baseline studies	Frequency of respondents		Percentage	Mean	S. D
The Organization performed a comprehensive baseline study before the implementation of project	SD	0	0	4.0800	.27689
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	23	92		
	SA	2	8		
The project team designs the plan for performing the baseline study	SD	0	0	4.04	0.200
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	23	92		
	SA	2	8		
The baseline study was done in accordance with the designed plan	SD	0	0	4.08	0.400
	D	0	0		
	N	1	4		
	A	21	84		
	SA	3	12		
There are adequate collections and capturing of data on project demands	SD	0	0	2.76	0.925
	D	14	56		
	N	3	12		
	A	8	32		
	SA	0	0		
Data's were captured from project beneficiaries	SD	0	0	3.40	0.500
	D	0	0		
	N	15	60		
	A	10	40		
	SA	0	0		
Data were captured on the environment and impact of project on environment	SD	0	0	2.44	0.583
	D	15	60		
	N	9	36		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
collected and captured data were analyzed and results were reviewed	SD	0	0	4.12	0.439
	D	0	0		
	N	1	4		
	A	20	80		
	SA	4	16		
The baseline reports were formulated and shared among stakeholders	SD	0	0	3.28	0.613
	D	2	8		
	N	14	56		
	A	9	36		
	SA	0	0		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.51					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

For the statement the project team designs the plan for performing the BS, statement 92 % of respondents agreed while 8 % of respondents chose strongly agreed with the statement. The mean value of this is 4.04 and the standard deviation value is 0.2. The result shows that most percentages of the respondents agreed with the practice. This entails that, the practice of designing the plan before performing baseline studies is also practicing very well.

Eighty four percent (84 %) of the respondents agreed, 12 % respondents strongly agreed and 4 % of respondents were neutral that a baseline study is done in accordance with the design plan. The mean value is 4.08 and the standard deviation is 0.04. Therefore, the organization is performing baseline study in accordance with the designed plan.

The other statement posed to the respondents was, there are adequate collection and capturing of data on the project demand. From the total respondents 32 % agreed with the statement while 56 % disagreed that adequate collection and capturing of data on the project demand exists in the organization. While the remaining 12 % of the professionals stayed neutral for the statement. The mean value is 2.76 and the standard deviation is 0.925. This mean value is less than the arithmetic mean value of 3, Therefore, according to the responses, it is concluded that the organization lacks adequate collection and capturing of data on the project demand.

For the project data are captured on the beneficiaries, 40 % agreed and 64 % neutral with mean value of 3.40 and standard deviation of 0.50. This implies that the majority of data are captured on the project beneficiaries.

Out of twenty-five participants 4 % agreed, and 36 % neutral to that the data are captured on the environment and impact of the project on the environment, but 60 % disagree with this statement. The mean value and standard deviation are 2.44 and 0.583 respectively. This mean value is less than the arithmetic mean value of 3, Therefore, according to the responses, it is concluded that the organization lacks data capturing on the environment and impact of the project on the environment.

The other statement given for the participants was, data collected and captured are analyzed and results are reviewed. For this statement 80 % agreed and 16 % strongly agreed that the project data collected are analyzed and results are reviewed. But 4 % of the respondents were neutral with the statement. The mean and standard deviation is calculated 4.12 and 0.439, respectively. This value

indicates there is a practice of data collection and captured for the project monitoring and evaluation analysis and result reviewing.

The mean value for the time in which the baseline reports are formulated and the results are shared among stakeholder's data of the project, is 3.28 and the standard deviation was 0.61. Since 36 % agreed, 8 % disagreed and 56 % stayed neutral for this statement. The majority of respondents chose neutral for the given statement based on the mean value. Therefore, it is concluded with that the practice baseline reports are formulated, and the results are shared among stakeholders.

The aggregated mean for the practice of base line studies gives 3.51. This value compared with the arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. Therefore, Oxfam has a solid baseline study practice for its operations. Before beginning any intervention, projects should have knowledge about the situation's initial starting point, according to an M&E introduction guideline published by the European Commission's civil society fund in Ethiopia. These preliminary criteria make it easier to examine any changes over time and determine whether or not they are consistent with the project's goals. (European Commission Civil Society Fun in Ethiopian, 2017,) According to baseline standards established by (Kissi et al., 2019), midterm and end-term reviews of M&E procedures have a direct relationship to project scope management and continue to be successful.

- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan**

According to a research undertaken by (Mackay, 2007) in Washington, planning for monitoring and evaluation was crucial in improving project performance on government projects. This research focused on government projects that are primarily funded by the World Bank, with the goal of determining how better governments might be achieved through project monitoring and assessment. The conclusions of this study were that the majority of respondents felt that there was a lack of monitoring and evaluation techniques in the various projects in which they were involved. The mean value for the statement there is an Involvement of project/program staff and key stakeholders in M&E planning is 3.84 and the standard deviation is 0.62. These are calculated from the number of respondents who strongly agreed with the statement which is 4 %, respondents who agreed are 84%, neutral 4 % and disagreed with the statement and 8 % respectively. From the mean value, it is concluded that the project team undertakes comprehensive planning for all projects.

According to the data collected 48 % of the respondents disagreed Planning of M&E system was based on stakeholder needs and expectations and 48 % of respondents were also neutral to this statement. the remaining 4 % agreed with the statement. Then mean value and the standard deviation were generated by SPSS, 2.56, and 0.58 respectively. This mean value shows there is a practice of involving project members in the planning process of the project monitoring and evaluation. This mean value (2.56) is less than the arithmetic mean value of 3, Therefore, according to the responses, it is concluded that the planning of M&E system in organization were not included stakeholder needs and expectations. Involving stakeholders in the tool design and planning of M&E from the beginning guarantees that the project meets all of the stakeholders' needs and is thus more responsive to their expectations. Stakeholder project ownership is also created and encouraged through interactive approaches (Clarke, 1999). These are critical factors that affect the project's performance and long-term viability.

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Table 4-3 Monitoring and evaluation Plan data results

Monitoring and Evaluation Planning	Frequency of respondents		Percentage	Mean	S. D
There is an Involvement of project/program staff and key stakeholders in M&E planning	SD	0	0	3.84	0.62
	D	2	8		
	N	1	4		
	A	21	84		
	SA	1	4		
Planning of M&E system was based on stakeholder needs and expectations.	SD	0	0	2.56	0.58
	D	12	48		
	N	12	48		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
M&E plan were developed based on a project/program's logframe	SD	0	0	4.04	0.20
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	24	96		
	SA	1	4		
There is data collection, data analysis tools and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan	SD	0	0	4.04	0.20
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	24	96		
	SA	1	4		
There is a data management tool and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan	SD	0	0	3.44	0.92
	D	6	24		
	N	3	12		
	A	15	60		
	SA	1	4		
The potential risks and unexpected circumstances that might arise during project implementation have been clearly identified.	SD	0	0	4.04	0.20
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	24	96		
	SA	1	4		
Monitoring and evaluation framework have been defined	SD	0	0	4.04	0.20
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	24	96		
	SA	1	4		
M&E work plan were reviewed in a periodic basis	SD	0	0	2.80	0.50
	D	6	24		
	N	18	72		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
A reporting schedule, reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible were clearly stated in the reporting plan	SD	0	0	3.48	0.92
	D	6	24		
	N	2	8		
	A	16	64		
	SA	1	4		

M&E plan include a strategy for internal dissemination of data among the project team, stakeholders, donors and external audiences.	SD	0	0	2.60	0.96
	D	17	68		
	N	2	8		
	A	5	20		
	SA	1	4		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.49					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

The mean value for the statement, M&E plan were developed based on a project/program's log frame, are 4.04 and the standard deviation is 0.20. This was calculated using SPSS; having 96 % of respondents agree, 4 % of the respondent strongly agreed with the given statement. The mean value is greater than Likert's mean value of 3. Therefore, it is concluded that most of the respondents believe M&E plan were developed based on a project/program's log frame.

The mean value for the statement, there is data collection, data analysis tools and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan, is 4.04 and the standard deviation value are 0.20. These were derived from the data that 96 % of the respondents agreed and 4% selected strongly agreed. The mean value compared to Likert's mean value of 4.04 is greater than 4 and indicates that most of the professionals strongly agreed with the given statement. Therefore, the project has a practice of putting data collection, data analysis tools and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan.

The other statement given for the participants was, there is a data management tool and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan. For this statement 60 % agreed and 4 % strongly agreed that there is a data management tool and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan. But 24% of the respondents do not agree with the statement and 12 % of respondents were neutral to this statement. The mean and standard deviation is calculated 3.44 and 0.92, respectively. This value indicates there is a practice of putting data management tool and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan.

The mean value for the two statements, the potential risks and unexpected circumstances that might arise during project implementation have been clearly identified and Monitoring and evaluation framework have been defined, is the same 4.04 and 0.20 for the standard deviation. For those statements out of 25 respondents 96% of respondents agreed and 4 % of respondents strongly agreed that the potential risks and unexpected circumstances that might arise during project implementation have been clearly identified and Monitoring and evaluation framework have been

defined. Therefore, all of the employees in the project believe that the potential risks and unexpected circumstances that might arise during project implementation have been clearly identified and also, they believe Monitoring and evaluation framework have been defined during M&E planning.

Four percent of the respondents selected agreed for M&E work plan were reviewed in a periodic basis. The remaining 24 % disagreed with the statement and 72 % of respondents were neutral for M&E work plan were reviewed in a periodic basis. Calculating the mean value and standard deviation value for this statement gives 2.8 and 0.5. From, this value that most of the respondent preferred neutral for the given statement.

Sixty four percent of the participants agreed and 4 % of participants strongly agreed that a reporting schedule, reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible were clearly stated in the reporting plan. While 24 % disagreed and 8 % stayed neutral for the given statement respectively. The mean value is 3.48 and the standard deviation is 0.92. The mean value (3.48) indicates agreement in Likert's scale since it is greater than arithmetic mean value of 3. This implies that the participants agreed that there is a reporting schedule, reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible were clearly stated in the reporting plan.

Sixty eight percent of the participants disagreed that M&E plan include a strategy for internal dissemination of data among the project team, stakeholders, donors and external audiences. While 20 % agreed, 4 % strongly agreed and 8 % stayed neutral for the given statement respectively. The mean value is 2.60 and the standard deviation is 0.96. The mean value (2.96) indicates disagreement in Likert's scale. This implies that the organization lacks practice of including a strategy for internal dissemination of data among the project team, stakeholders, donors and external audiences in the M&E plan.

The aggregated mean for the monitoring and evaluation plan practice is 3.49. This value compared with the Likert scale mean value is greater than 3. Therefore, the project executes a practice of monitoring and evaluation planning. A project plan that lacks to incorporate a planning of M&E elements is likelihood not to be as effective and negatively affect the project process and outcome. (European Comission Civil Society Fun in Ethiopia, 2017). And the M&E method is more feasible, understandable, and owned when project staff and key stakeholders are involved. In terms of

specific monitoring and evaluation functions, the plan should also address the goal of data gathering and analysis. Compliance, process, results, context, beneficiary, and organizational monitoring are some of the most important functions of monitoring. A project will often use a combination of these monitoring functions, and data collection and analysis will be designed accordingly.

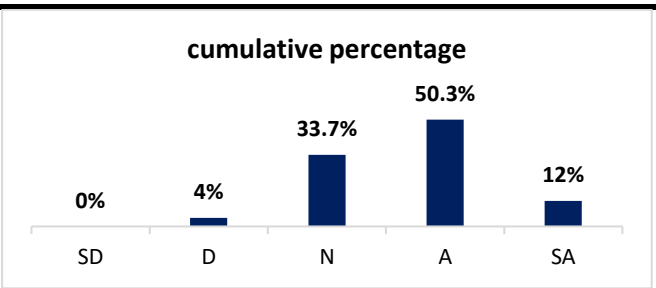
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

The idea of the Result framework (also known as strategic framework) is to develop effective practical tools for strategic planning, risk management, progress monitoring, and outcome evaluation using a coherent framework (Jaszczolt et al., 2010). While the internationally recognized logical framework is a matrix that uses M&E indicators at each step of the project and identifies potential risks. The logical framework therefore demonstrates the conceptual underpinnings of the project M&E system (Chaplowe, 2008).

Moving to specific issues under integrating monitoring and evaluation framework on projects, it can be seen from the below table 4.4 that Oxfam is doing well on aiding a structured framework on each project (72% of respondents agreed), conducting Framework preparation during the project/ program's design stage (72% of respondents agreed), clearly identifying of planned outputs, outcomes and impact of the program in the logical Framework (40% of respondents agreed), project goals, objectives and inputs/activities were identified and defined in the log frame (68% of respondents agreed and 32% strongly agreed), using of a combination of standardized and locally customized process, outcome and impact indicators on the project M&E process (60% of respondents neutral), the logical frameworks clearly define the indicators to track progress of the program (64% of respondents agreed), the framework was reassessed and revised according to the realities and changing circumstances in the field (64% of respondents neutral).

The aggregated mean for the practice of M&E framework gives 3.69. This value compared with the Arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. Therefore, the practice of M&E framework in the organization's project is exercised in a good manner. Researches state that M&E framework is targeted at identifying the reasons behind performance measurement and project elements, how related they are, and their underlying fundamentals (Mark, 2007).

Table 4-4 Monitoring and evaluation Framework data results

Monitoring and evaluation Framework					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
The project is aided by a structured framework	SD	0	0	3.72	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	7	28		
	A	18	72		
	SA	0	0		
Framework preparation is conducted during the project/ program's design stage.	SD	0	0	3.72	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	7	28		
	A	18	72		
	SA	0	0		
The planned outputs, outcomes and impact of the program were clearly identified in the logical Framework	SD	0	0	4.04	0.79
	D	0	0		
	N	7	28		
	A	10	40		
	SA	8	32		
project goals, objectives and inputs/activities were identified and defined in the log frame	SD	0	0	4.32	0.48
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	17	68		
	SA	8	32		
A combination of standardized and locally customized process, outcome and impact indicators was being used.	SD	0	0	3.52	0.71
	D	0	0		
	N	15	60		
	A	7	28		
	SA	3	12		
The logical frameworks clearly define the indicators to track progress of the program	SD	0	0	3.72	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	7	28		
	A	16	64		
	SA	2	8		
The framework was reassessed and revised according to the realities and changing circumstances in the field.	SD	0	0	2.8	0.58
	D	7	28		
	N	16	64		
	A	2	8		
	SA	0	0		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.69					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

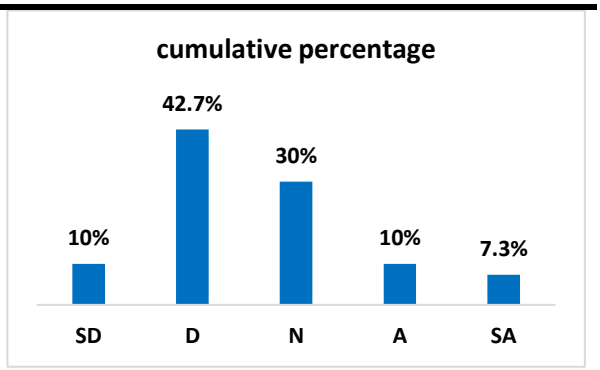
➢ Monitoring and Evaluation Budgeting

Budgeting is a fundamental predictor of M&E system effectiveness. Budget limitations may have an impact on the quality of information gathered because of the issue of credibility, and valuable information may be overlooked. This is extremely harmful to the data's value (Kithinji et al., 2017). Budget allocation for M&E and its relationship with the effectiveness of M&E systems have been explored in previous research.

Coming to specific issues under the practices monitoring and evaluation Budget on projects, it can be seen from the below table 4.5 that Oxfam is not doing well on providing sufficient funds for monitoring and evaluation activities (60% of respondents disagreed), The M&E budgeting lists the activities and costs associated with M&E (72% of respondents neutral), The organization ensures there is timely provision of funds for M&E Budget (40% of respondents disagreed), Costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations were included in the project/program budget(32% of respondents disagreed and 32% neutral), There is contingency budget for unexpected contingencies such as inflation, currency devaluation, equipment theft or the need for additional data collection/analysis to verify findings (60% of respondents strongly disagree), M&E budget performance, schedule performance and quality performance has led to project success in our organization (48% of respondents disagreed).

The aggregated mean of the project for the practice of M&E budget is 2.64. This value compared with the arithmetic mean value is less than 3. Therefore, the practice of M&E budget in the organization is not good enough. To ensure proper M&E, it is important for the budget of the project to make a clear and adequate provision for the activities (Muzinda, 2007). The M&E budget is critical in the strategic plan, and that some projects have stalled or performed poorly due to underfunding. As a result, it is recommended that the budget be all-inclusive, taking into consideration all costs and expenses that are expected to occur. Implementing and maintaining a strong and effective monitoring and evaluation system should start with financial resources (Mushori, 2015).

Table 4-5 Monitoring and evaluation Budgeting result data

Monitoring and evaluation Budgeting					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
The organization provides sufficient funds for monitoring and evaluation activities	SD	0	0	2.92	1.25
	D	15	60		
	N	2	8		
	A	3	12		
	SA	5	20		
The M&E budgeting lists the activities and costs associated with M&E.	SD	0	0	3.32	0.90
	D	2	8		
	N	18	72		
	A	5	20		
	SA	0	0		
The organization ensures there is timely provision of funds for M&E Budget	SD	0	0	2.20	0.50
	D	21	84		
	N	3	12		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
Costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations were included in the project/program budget.	SD	0	0	3.28	1.17
	D	8	32		
	N	8	32		
	A	3	12		
	SA	6	24		
There is contingency budget for unexpected contingencies such as inflation, currency devaluation, equipment theft or the need for additional data collection/analysis to verify findings	SD	15	60	1.56	0.77
	D	6	24		
	N	4	16		
	A	0	0		
	SA	0	0		
M&E budget performance, schedule performance and quality performance has led to project success in our organization	SD	0	0	2.64	0.70
	D	12	48		
	N	10	40		
	A	3	12		
	SA	0	0		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 2.64					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

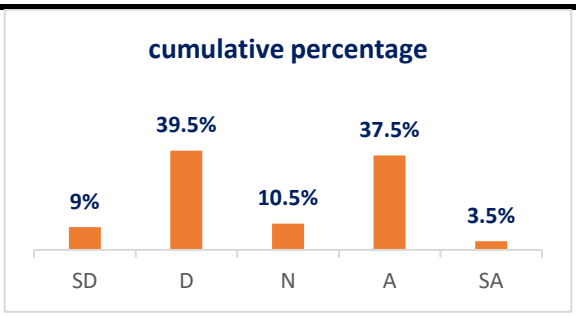
➢ Mid-Term and End Term Evaluation

Formative evaluation (midterm evaluations) occurs while the project is being implemented. The implementation process is their main area of attention, and they evaluate the project's overall performance in terms of input usage, project schedule, and results. They also consider the project's advantages, disadvantages, and challenges, as well as whether the present project plan can accomplish the project's goals or if a redesign is necessary (Nabris, 2002). On the other hand, a summative evaluation occurs at the end of the project and aims to ascertain how it went, what went well and poorly, and any lessons learned.

Coming to specific issues under the practices of mid-term and end term evaluation, it can be seen from the below table 4.6 that Oxfam is doing well on time management and performance reviews by Staff/volunteer (72% of respondents agreed and 28% strongly agreed), on having monitoring process based on the relevant objectives from the project/program's log frame (60% of respondents neutral), regular tools and forums were utilized to track and review time management and performance for their key activities and/or deliverables (52% of respondents agreed). Under the practices of mid-term and end term evaluation the performance is measured through how resources; money, human and other assets are used (60% of respondents disagreed and 24% strongly disagree) and clearly indicated there is a gap on measuring performances through how resources; money, human and other assets are used. Furthermore, in the organization there is a gap on measuring performances through the following criteria's; the performance is measured through the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies adopted to meet the organization's role (44% of respondents disagreed and 24% strongly disagree), the performance is measured through the lasting change happening in the lives of the people the organizations intends to serve (36% of respondents disagreed and 24% strongly disagree), the performance is measured through achievements of mission, objectives and goals of the organization (60% of respondents disagreed), the organizational performance is measured through the change adopted for the best project implementation (76% of respondents disagreed). Evaluation theory measures a project's success in meeting its objectives and establishing its relevance and long-term viability.

The aggregated mean for the practice of midterm and end term evaluation gives 2.87. This value compared with the arithmetic mean value is less than 3. This practice determines the impact of the project and the way it contributed to the attainment of the project goal (Gyorkos, 2003).

Table 4-6 Mid-term and End Term Evaluation result data

Mid-term and End Term Evaluation					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
There is time management and performance reviews by Staff/volunteer	SD	0	0	4.28	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	18	72		
	SA	7	28		
There is a monitoring process based on the relevant objectives from the project/program's logframe	SD	0	0	3.40	0.50
	D	0	0		
	N	15	60		
	A	10	40		
	SA	0	0		
Regular tools and forums were utilized to track and review time management and performance for their key activities and/or deliverables.	SD	0	0	3.12	0.97
	D	10	40		
	N	2	8		
	A	13	52		
	SA	0	0		
The performance is measured through how resources; money, human and other assets are used	SD	6	24	1.96	0.73
	D	15	60		
	N	3	12		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
The performance is measured through the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies adopted to meet the organization's role	SD	6	24	2.40	1.19
	D	11	44		
	N	0	0		
	A	8	32		
	SA	0	0		
The performance is measured through the lasting change happening in the lives of the people the organizations intends to serve	SD	6	24	2.56	1.26
	D	9	36		
	N	0	0		
	A	10	40		
	SA	0	0		
The performance is measured through achievements of mission, objectives and goals of the organizations	SD	0	0	2.80	1.00
	D	15	60		
	N	0	0		
	A	10	40		
	SA	0	0		
	SD	0	0		
	D	19	76		

The organizational performance is measured through the change adopted for the best project implementation	N A SA	1 5 0	4 20 0	2.44	0.82
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 2.87					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

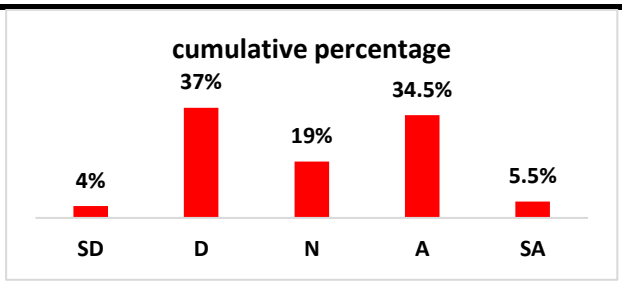
The midterm and end evaluation help in ascertaining how project fared in terms of the input and in terms of the level of output (Gilliam, et al., 2003). Evaluation theory measures a project's success in meeting its objectives and establishing its relevance and long-term viability. The key rationale for using evaluation theory in this study is that the Monitoring & Evaluation System deals with monitoring the project implementation process as well as evaluating whether the impact is being accomplished as per project objectives or not in the case of Oxfam projects in Ethiopia. Therefore, the organization practices of midterm and end term evaluation is weak.

Stakeholders Involvement

All stakeholders, including donors, community members, beneficiaries, and people, should be included in the development and implementation of the project at all phases of monitoring and evaluation. They determine what will be monitored and evaluated, how it will be monitored and evaluated, including the identification of indicators, they analyze the data and assess the project's performance, and they also provide guidance on how to proceed with the project in consultation and collaboration with all of these (Bradley & Corwyn, 2002).

Moving to specific issues under the practices of stakeholder engagement on monitoring and evaluation of projects, it can be seen from the below table 4.7 that Oxfam is doing well on identifying key stakeholders for each project (72% of respondents agreed and 24% strongly agreed), creating awareness on stakeholders about the program's vision, mission, and goal (76% of respondents agreed and 20% strongly agreed). However, in the organization there is a gap on some practices of stakeholder engagement such as active participation of stakeholders in planning, data analysis, M&E process and implementation of the program and in result validation & performance review (32% of respondents strongly disagreed and 48% disagreed), utilization of different strategies by the management to increase engagement of stakeholders (80% of respondents disagreed), meeting the expectation of stakeholders through implementation of program (56% of respondents disagree), established set of procedures for stakeholders were place

Table 4-7 Stakeholders Involvement result data

Stakeholders Involvement					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
key stakeholders are identified for each project	SD	0	0	4.2	0.5
	D	0	0		
	N	1	4		
	A	18	72		
	SA	6	24		
Stakeholders are aware of the program's vision, mission, and goal	SD	0	0	4.16	0.47
	D	0	0		
	N	1	4		
	A	19	76		
	SA	5	20		
Stakeholders participate actively in planning, data analysis, M&E process and implementation of the program and in result validation & performance review	SD	8	32	1.92	0.81
	D	12	48		
	N	4	16		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
The management uses strategy to increase engagement of stakeholders	SD	0	0	2.28	0.61
	D	20	80		
	N	3	12		
	A	2	8		
	SA	0	0		
Stakeholders expectation is met in the implementation of program	SD	0	0	2.72	0.89
	D	14	56		
	N	4	16		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
There is an established set of procedures for stakeholders to safely voice grievances or concerns that are addressed objectively against a standard set of rules and principles	SD	0	0	2.68	0.85
	D	14	56		
	N	5	20		
	A	6	24		
	SA	0	0		
The information required by stakeholder, why, when, how (in what format) were defined	SD	0	0	2.72	0.89
	D	14	56		
	N	4	16		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
There is a clear understanding of the priorities and information needs of people	SD	0	0		
	D	0	0		
	N	16	64		

interested in or affected by the project/program.	A SA	9 0	36 0	3.36	0.49
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.005					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

to safely voice grievances or concerns that are addressed objectively against a standard set of rules and principles (56% of respondents disagreed), defining the information required by stakeholder, why, when, how (56% of respondents disagreed), clear understanding of the priorities and information needs of people interested in or affected by the project/program (60% of respondents neutral). These are critical factors that affect the project's performance and long-term viability. The project's outcome is more likely to be approved by stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries. Because the development and implementation processes demand community members' reflection and analysis of their own culture, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, the participatory method can sometimes encourage change in individual attitudes and community culture and norms. Participatory methods reveal the tools needed for monitoring and evaluation, which is a capacity-building activity in and of itself (Clarke, 1999).

The aggregated mean for the practice of stakeholder's engagement on each project gives 3.005. This value compared with the arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. This mean value might show there is a practice to some extent and respondents agreed with the availability of good stakeholder engagement practice on each project, however, based on the analysis of the questionnaire of this specific topic most of the practices were not exercised in the organization. Therefore. overall efficiency, cost effectiveness, and performance are becoming increasingly important, according to (Reed, 2008). This required active stakeholders to have skills that would allow them to contribute to the best of their abilities. Participation of stakeholders in decision-making about the program's what, how, and why. This approach was required in order to empower them as well as promote inclusion and facilitate meaningful participation across various stakeholders. According to (Proudlock et al., 2009), the impact evaluation process, particularly the review and analysis of data, can be considerably improved by involving the target beneficiaries and involving stakeholders is a critical approach, and that its management should be well-formulated to avoid derailment of decision-making.

➢ Documentation and Lesson Learned

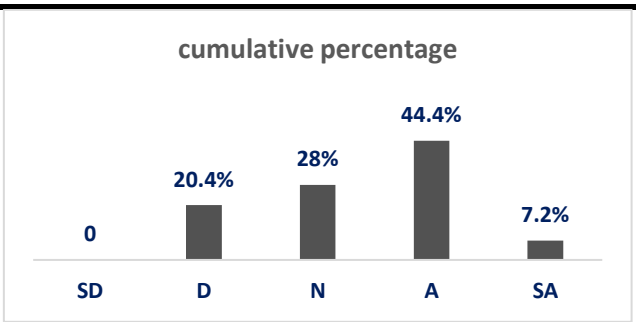
Lessons learned from the implementation should be documented and incorporated into future projects, as well as shared with other stakeholders. The lessons would cover what went well during execution as well as what went wrong and why, so that the same mistakes be avoided in future initiatives (Pasta et al., 2013).

Moving to specific issues under the practices of lesson learned and documentation, it can be seen from the below table 4.8 that Oxfam is doing well on the following practices of lesson learned and documentation, they have a systematical and reliable method for store, manage and access M&E data from the project/program (96% of respondents agreed), Key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report of projects (68% of respondents agreed and 24% strongly agreed), There is identified security considerations for confidential data, as well as any legal requirements with governments, donors and other partners (72% of respondents agreed and 20% strongly agreed), Computer technology has been used for recording, storage and usage of information (80% of respondents agreed and 20% strongly agreed).

However, in the organization there is a gap on some practices of lesson learned and documentation such as organization of information's into logical with key reporting criteria's, easily understood categories (56% of respondents disagreed), conducting reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, matching each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible (40 of respondents disagreed), utilizing decision log to keep a record of key project/program decisions (56% of respondents disagree), utilization of action log by project/program managers to ensure that follow-up action is taken and utilization and application of lesson learned log to catalogue and prioritize key lessons (60% of respondents neutral for both practices).

The aggregated mean for the practice of documentation and lesson learned gives 3.38. This value compared with the Arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. Therefore, the practice of lesson learned and documentation in the organization's project is exercised.

Table 4-8 Documentation and Lesson Learned result data

Documentation and Lesson Learned	

	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
There is a systematical and reliable method for store, manage and access M&E data from the project/program	SD	0	0	3.96	0.2
	D	0	0		
	N	1	4		
	A	24	96		
	SA	0	0		
Information's were organized into logical with key reporting criteria's, easily understood categories	SD	0	0	2.48	0.58
	D	14	56		
	N	10	40		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
Reporting is done based on a realistic reporting schedule, matching each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible.	SD	0	0	2.88	0.83
	D	10	40		
	N	8	32		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
Key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report	SD	0	0	4.16	0.55
	D	0	0		
	N	2	8		
	A	17	68		
	SA	6	24		
There is identified security considerations for confidential data, as well as any legal requirements with governments, donors and other partners.	SD	0	0	4.12	0.52
	D	0	0		
	N	2	8		
	A	18	72		
	SA	5	20		
Computer technology has been used for recording, storage and usage of information	SD	0	0	4.2	0.41
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	20	80		
	SA	5	20		
There is a decision log to keep a record of key project/program decisions.	SD	0	0	2.45	0.58
	D	14	56		
	N	10	40		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
	SD	0	0		

There is an action log used by project/program managers to ensure that follow-up action is taken.	D	0	0	3.4	0.50
	N	15	60		
	A	10	40		
	SA	0	0		
There is a lesson learned log to catalogue and prioritize key lessons.	SD	0	0	2.76	0.59
	D	8	32		
	N	15	60		
	A	2	8		
	SA	0	0		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.38					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

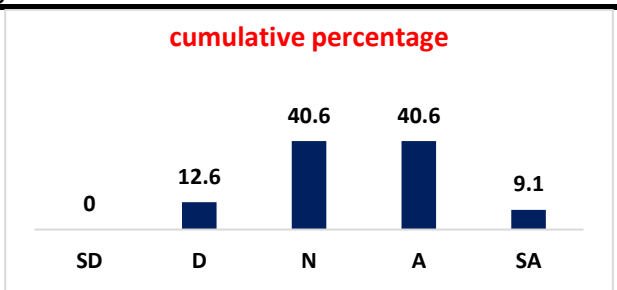
- **Dissemination of M&E Findings**

Communication of M&E results to key stakeholders, such as project employees, beneficiaries, and funders, is connected with dissemination of M&E results. This is crucial because it keeps all key stakeholders informed about the project's progress, allowing them to make informed decisions about what should be altered or kept. "Monitoring and evaluation results assist stakeholders understand what the program is doing, how effectively it is reaching its objectives, and whether there are ways that progress can be improved," argue (Adamchak et al., 2000). This is possible if results are shared with stakeholders.

Moving to specific issues under the practices of dissemination of M&E findings, it can be seen from the below table 4.9 that Oxfam is doing well on the following practices of dissemination of M&E findings, during distribution there is the security of internal or confidential information (88% of respondents agreed), key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report (68% of respondents agreed and 24% strongly agreed.

However, as it is showed in the table 4.9, in the organization there is a gap on some practices of dissemination of M&E findings such as incorporating stakeholder discussion and feedback on the prepared report (56% of respondents disagreed), there are meetings, seminars, or workshops with key stakeholders where they can reflect and provide feedback on the prepared report (56% of respondents disagreed), having a selected reporting medium which is guided by what is most efficient in terms of time and resources, as well as what is most appropriate for the audience (72% of respondents neutral), Information is disseminated in multidirectional (72% of respondents neutral).

Table 4-9 Dissemination of M&E Findings result data

Dissemination of M&E Findings					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
There is a selected reporting medium which is guided by what is most efficient in terms of time and resources, as well as what is most appropriate for the audience	SD	0	0	3.28	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	18	72		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
Information is disseminated in multidirectional	SD	0	0	3.28	0.46
	D	0	0		
	N	18	72		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
Information is disseminated upwards to management, senior management, and donors, as well as to field staff, partners, and beneficiaries.	SD	0	0	3.60	0.82
	D	0	0		
	N	15	60		
	A	5	20		
	SA	5	20		
During distribution, there is the security of internal or confidential information.	SD	0	0	3.88	0.33
	D	0	0		
	N	3	12		
	A	22	88		
	SA	0	0		
On the prepared report, there is a stakeholder discussion and feedback.	SD	0	0	2.56	0.71
	D	14	56		
	N	8	32		
	A	3	12		
	SA	0	0		
With key stakeholders, there are meetings, seminars, or workshops where they can reflect and provide feedback on the prepared report	SD	0	0	2.56	0.71
	D	14	56		
	N	8	32		
	A	3	12		
	SA	0	0		
Key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report.	SD	0	0	4.16	0.55
	D	0	0		
	N	2	8		
	A	17	68		
	SA	6	24		
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.4					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

Based on these results, here in the dissemination of monitoring and evaluation there are some opportunities for improvement. Because communicating results is vital in securing critical social, financial, and political support. Furthermore, making outcomes public recognizes the stakeholders and volunteers who have worked tirelessly to make the project/program a success, which is a surefire way to attract new funders. Based on the discussion above, it can be stated that dissemination of M&E results is critical, and every effort should be taken to ensure that the process runs smoothly.

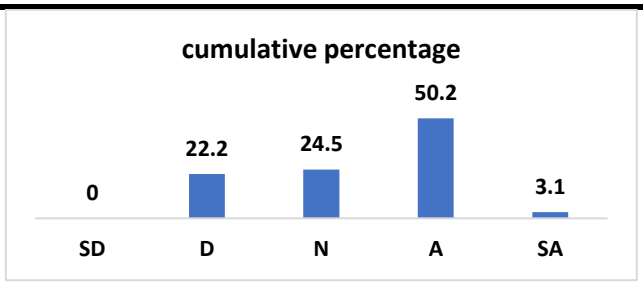
The aggregated mean for the practice of dissemination of M&E findings 3.4. This value compared with the Arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. Therefore, the practice of lesson learned and documentation in the organization's project is exercised.

- **Project Performance**

Project performance is defined as a project's overall quality in terms of whether or not it has influenced recipients and whether or not the interventions are sustainable (Chandes & Paché, 2010). The project's performance can be evaluated on whether it is relevant, efficient, and effective, whether it has impacted the beneficiaries, and whether the interventions are sustainable (Hill, 2005).

In this specific issue the performance of Oxfam projects was analyzed against some criteria which are related to the practices of M&E. Based on the results showed in below table 4.10 which is obtained from the respondents, 40% of respondents were neutral to that the organization is performing effective utilization of resources; money, human and other assets due to M&E system, regarding the organization has achieved its Mission, objectives and goals through their M&E practices (48% of respondents disagreed and again 48% of respondents neutral), 64% of respondents were disagreed with the existing practices of M&E helped them to make progresses on the projects/programs according to planned quality, time frame and cost estimated, 48% of respondents were neutral to the statement that the organizational performance was improved through the change adopted for the best project implementation through M&E.

Table 4-10 Project performance result data

Project performance					
	Frequency of respondents		**Percentage**	**Mean**	**S. D**
The organization performed effective utilization of resources; money, human and other assets due to M&E system	SD	0	0	2.32	0.75
	D	6	24		
	N	10	40		
	A	9	36		
	SA	0	0		
The organization achieved its Mission, objectives and goals	SD	0	0	3.12	0.78
	D	12	48		
	N	12	48		
	A	1	4		
	SA	0	0		
projects/programs were going according to planned quality, time frame and cost estimated	SD	0	0	2.64	0.90
	D	16	64		
	N	2	8		
	A	7	28		
	SA	0	0		
There was improved change happened in the lives of the people the organizations intend to serve	SD	0	0	3.88	0.33
	D	0	0		
	N	3	12		
	A	22	88		
	SA	0	0		
The organization is positioning itself to create an indelible mark in the community or society it is working	SD	0	0	4.24	0.43
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	19	76		
	SA	6	24		
The organization has improved the performance through identified, captured and share lessons learned information.	SD	0	0	3.48	0.87
	D	6	24		
	N	1	4		
	A	18	72		
	SA	0	0		
Donor requirements were met after the project completion	SD	0	0	4.04	0.20
	D	0	0		
	N	0	0		
	A	24	96		
	SA	1	4		
	SD	0	0	3.4	0.50
	D	0	0		
	N	15	60		

The positive social transformation made in the community by the organization	A SA	10 0	40 0		
The organizational performance was improved through the change adopted for the best project implementation	SD D N A SA	0 10 12 3 0	0 40 48 12 0	2.72	0.68
Total N=25, Aggregate Mean (u)= 3.31					

Source: survey result of SPSS (2022)

The aggregated mean for the project performance due to the practice of M&E practices 3.31. This value compared with the Arithmetic mean value is greater than 3. Based on the aggregate mean value it is showing above 3. However, the performance of the organization has affected of impact, value to beneficiaries, implementation effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability due to the gaps on the practices of M&E in the organization.

4.2.4 Challenges during the implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation practices at Oxfam GB In Ethiopia projects

Project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is challenged by a variety of (soft, hard, and mixed) elements, from the individuals who communicate or carry out the M&E to the systems or controls in place for coordination and control. Based on the analysis of this research, herein below the main challenges through their implementation of project monitoring and evaluation practices will be discussed.

Under the practices monitoring and evaluation Budgeting on projects, projects were not getting sufficient funds for monitoring and evaluation activities there is no timely provision of funds for M&E Budget the costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations were not included in the project/program budget and the organization does not allocate contingency budget for unexpected contingencies such as inflation, currency devaluation, equipment theft or the need for additional data collection/analysis to verify findings. Therefore, the practice of monitoring and evaluation budgeting is one the main challenge in the organization.

Under the practices monitoring and evaluation budgeting on projects, projects were not receiving sufficient funds for monitoring and evaluation activities, there is no timely provision of funds for M&E budget, the costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking

evaluations were not included in the project/program budget and the organization does not allocate contingency budget for unexpected contingencies such as inflation, currency devaluation, equipment theft or the need for additional data collection/analysis to verify findings. Therefore, one of the biggest challenges the organization has is the practices of monitoring and evaluating.

Since our goal is to improve the project's performance during implementation, having excellent mid-term and end-term evaluation methods is one of the crucial elements to consider. These evaluations strive to ascertain how the project progressed, what went right and wrong, and any lessons learned. This study found that organizations don't typically evaluate their performance based on how resources, including money, people, and other assets, are used, whether the strategies they use are relevant and effective for fulfilling their mission, whether they make a lasting difference in the lives of the people they aim to serve, or whether they measure performance through achievement. Therefore, one of the primary challenges at Oxfam is having weak mid-term and end-term evaluation practices.

Stakeholder engagement practices in project monitoring and evaluation are the other significant problems the study revealed. Stakeholders do not actively participate in the organization's planning, data analysis, M&E process, implementation of the program, result validation, or performance review; management does not use various strategies to increase stakeholder engagement and meet stakeholder expectations through program implementation; and there is no established system in place for stakeholders to safely air concerns. These are crucial elements that have an impact on the project's long-term success.

The organization's practices for lessons learned and documentation present another significant challenge in terms of monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, the organization of information’s was not arranged logically into categories that met important reporting criteria and were simple to understand. It also failed to conduct reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, matching each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience, purpose, format, and responsible party. It also used decision logs and action logs insufficiently to keep track of important project and program decisions. Therefore, the fundamental challenge that faces poor monitoring and evaluation practices is the organization's weak practices on lesson learnt and documentation. M&E can only contribute significantly to the accountability process if efforts are taken to improve learning. Information from M&E can be fed back into the learning process and planning through regular

exchange of information, reporting, knowledge products, learning sessions, and the evaluation management response system(UNDP, 2009).

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the summary of the findings of the research. The conclusion derived from the data analysis, summary of findings, and the recommendations for the existing gaps and challenges in the area are presented. Finally, the gaps for further study in the area are suggested.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The purpose of this study is to look into project monitoring and evaluation practices and identifying opportunities for improved project MEAL system at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia projects. The questions the research targeted to answer were: -

1. How are the project monitoring and evaluation processes practiced at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia?
2. What are the challenges during the implementation of project monitoring and evaluation best practices at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia?

From the data analysis and interpretation in the previous chapter, the following summaries of findings are derived.

- The baseline study was carried out in accordance with the designed plan, collected and captured data were analyzed, and results were reviewed, according to the data analysis in Table 4.2, which demonstrates that the organization conducts thorough baseline studies before the implementation of projects. However, there is a lack of adequate data collection and capture on project demands, data from project beneficiaries, and data on the environment and the project's impact on the environment.
- The research also discovered that there is a good, thorough monitoring and evaluation planning practices. This conclusion was drawn from 25 respondents, where the average mean value was 3.49 (Table 4.3). Additionally, the project stakeholders were actively participated in planning to ensure that all project specifics, dates, risk assessment, and mitigation plans are included in the project plan.
- As can be seen in Table 4.4, Oxfam is doing well at integrating monitoring and evaluation framework on projects. For example, each project is helped by a structured framework,

framework preparation is done during the project/program design stage, planned outputs, outcomes, and impacts of the program are clearly identified in the logical Framework, and the project's goals, objectives, and inputs/activities are identified and defined in the log frame. The practice of the M&E framework's aggregate mean is 3.69. This value is more than 3 when compared to the arithmetic mean value. As a result, the M&E framework is actively used in the organization's project.

- According to the findings (presented in table 4.5), Oxfam is not doing well when it comes to M&E budgeting. There are gaps in a number of areas, including the lack of adequate funding for monitoring and evaluation activities, the failure to ensure timely funding for M&E Budget, the failure to include costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations, and the failure to allocate a contingency budget for unexpected costs.
- The organization uses tools and forums regularly to track and review time management and performance for their key activities and/or deliverables, which is the other research finding related to Oxfam's practices of mid-term and end-term evaluation of projects. This conclusion is supported by the data in Table 4.6. However, one of the primary challenges at Oxfam is having weak mid-term and end-term evaluation practices. the organization doesn’t typically evaluate its performance based on how resources, including money, people, and other assets, are used, whether the strategies they used are relevant and effective for fulfilling their mission, whether they make a lasting difference in the lives of the people they aim to serve, or whether they measure performance through achievement.
- The study's findings point to practices for stakeholders' involvement in project monitoring and evaluation. It is clear from table 4.7 below that Oxfam is doing a good job of identifying key stakeholders for each project and creating awareness on stakeholders about the program's vision, mission, and goal. However, the study also found additional critical challenges with how project monitoring and evaluation practices involve stakeholders. The management does not use various strategies to increase stakeholder engagement and meet stakeholder expectations through program implementation, and there is no established system in place for stakeholders to safely air concerns. Stakeholders do not actively participate in the organization's planning, data analysis, M&E process, implementation of the program, result validation, or performance review.

- The research's other result is that Oxfam is doing well in terms of the following practices of lesson learnt and documentation, as shown in the table 4.8 below: they have a systematic and reliable method for storing, managing, and accessing M&E data from the project or program, the projects' final report contained important insights and practical recommendations. As well as any legal requirements with governments, funders, and other partners, unpatched vulnerabilities for confidential data have been recognized. However, there are some practices of lesson learned and documentation that are lacking in the organization, such as the failure to organize information into easily understood categories with key reporting criteria, the failure to conduct reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, the failure to match each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet, and person(s) responsible, and the failure to use decision logs to keep track of significant project/program decisions.
- The other research finding relates to practices for disseminating M&E findings. It is clear from table 4.9 below that Oxfam is performing on including key lessons and realistic recommendations in the final report and ensuring the security of internal or confidential data while doing so. However, there are some gaps in the organization's dissemination of M&E findings practices, including the failure to include stakeholder discussion and feedback on the prepared report, the failure to schedule meetings, seminars, or workshops with key stakeholders where they can reflect and provide feedback on the prepared report.

5.3 Conclusion

In line with the objective of the study the data collected was analyzed and interpreted. Hence the study aimed to assess the monitoring and evaluation practice of the Oxfam GB project in Ethiopia and to identify opportunities for improved project MEAL system at Oxfam GB in Ethiopia projects. Consequently, to conclude, a quantitative research was used. Plus, both primary and secondary data were collected in the research. Accordingly, the data interpretation and summary of the study the researcher has concluded are presented below.

Researches show that although monitoring and evaluation are implemented widely on developmental projects, the result is not satisfactory. This study showed that the projects implemented by Oxfam were guided by monitoring and evaluating practices. However, there are challenges in the implementation of M&E practices in the projects. These include monitoring and evaluation budgeting, midterm and end term evaluation, stakeholder involvements, lesson learned

and documentation and dissemination of M&E findings. Due to the aforementioned problems, they have failed to have adequate MEAL staff and a clear job description, program staff misunderstood the MEAL purpose, perceive MEAL as an audit, have inaccurate/ poor data quality, have failed to effectively involve stakeholders throughout the entire process and Poor program staff engagement while using MEAL data for decision making and correction.

According to (Kissi et al., 2019) best practices of project M&E includes major ten practices. Compared to these practices monitoring and evaluation practices at Oxfam GB has the following challenges, lack of adequate funding for monitoring and evaluation activities, the failure to ensure timely funding for M&E Budget, the failure to include costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations, and the failure to allocate a contingency budget for unexpected costs, lack of a monitoring process based on the relevant objectives from the project or program's log frame, the failure to measure performance through the use of resources, including money, people, and other assets, stakeholders are not actively involved in data analysis, the M&E process, program implementation, result validation, or performance reviews and the failure to conduct reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, the failure to match each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet, and person(s) responsible, and the failure to use decision logs to keep track of significant project/program decisions. Therefore, to gain the total benefit from the best practice, the organization should improve the sub-practices that are loosely exercised (Kissi et al., 2019).

The M&E practice implemented at the organization comprises a good structured M&E framework, with a practice of baseline study, M&E Planning and disseminating M&E findings.

Although the project has the above limitations the overall result implies that Oxfam GB is exercising best practices on its projects. The organization conducts baseline studies, the baseline study was carried out in accordance with the designed plan, collected and captured data were analyzed, and results were reviewed, according to the data analysis. In addition, there is a good practice of monitoring and evaluation planning (MEP). The best sub-practice of MEP such as the project stakeholders were actively participated in planning to ensure that all project specifics, dates, risk assessment, and mitigation plans are included in the project plan. Furthermore, projects are aided by a structured framework and planned outputs, outcomes, and impacts of the program

are clearly identified in the logical Framework, and the project's goals, objectives, and inputs/activities are identified and defined in the log frame.

5.4 Recommendations

Generally, the study made the following recommendations.

Allocation of sufficient funds to see the benefits of M&E practices, organizations should allocate sufficient budget, include costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations and allocate a contingency budget for unexpected costs. The costs incurred to M&E practice is an asset for the organization.

Oxfam GB must apply monitoring and evaluation best practices since they help to determine how the project is performed in terms of input and output levels, as well as the impact of the project and how it contributed to the achievement of the project goal.

Stakeholders should be involved adequately in M & E activities. Participation should be in both lower and higher-level activities from the initial to the last stage. This will ensure ownership of findings and ensure projects are relevant to the beneficiaries needs. Organization leaders should take active part in designing M & E system and offer timely support and guidance to projects' staff and ensure M&E activities are well executed and results and findings communicated and used in decision making and planning. Need for more participatory approach so that Stakeholders, specifically the beneficiaries should be involved adequately in M&E activities. The stakeholders should be part and parcel of the activities. Their participation should range from initial planning to opinion and decision making. This will ensure ownership of M&E results and also ensure those projects are having relevance to the beneficiaries' needs.

Based on finding of this study, lesson learned from development projects implemented were not documented adequately. An effective Lessons Learned process should prevent the project from repeating mistakes and repeat the project successes. Therefore, the project should have to organize information into easily understood categories with key reporting criteria, conduct reports based on a realistic reporting schedule, match each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet, and person(s) responsible and utilize properly decision logs to keep track of significant project/program decisions.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Study

- This study outlines a number of promising areas for additional investigation. The researcher has also noted that there are very few secondary sources and publications about Oxfam Ethiopia, both inside and outside of the organization, as well as in the web. In light of the limitations indicated in this study, this research can be utilized as a starting point for future studies that are more comprehensive.
- The current research focused on assessing project monitoring and evaluation practices and identifying the challenges experienced while putting M&E processes into practice. As a result, the report advised conducting additional research on the impacts of M & E practices on the performance of projects in terms of impact, value to beneficiaries, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR FILLING THE (

As part of my MA degree partial fulfillment in Project Management at Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce, I am conducting research on the topic **"Assessment of M & E Practices: The Case of Projects of Oxfam Ethiopia"**. This data will be used as primary data, and it will have a big impact on coming up with a strong conclusion and recommendation for future ongoing projects.

This research project requires your voluntary involvement. The researcher is seeking for genuine and honest responses, which will greatly improve the quality of the study's findings. Therefore, the researcher would like to respectfully request that you complete this questionnaire as completely as possible, while also informing you that the information you make will be kept totally confidential and used solely for

Consider the following abbreviation and use where appropriate:

SA= Strongly Agree **(5)** **AG**= Agree **(4)** **N**= Neutral **(3)** **DA**= Disagree **(2)** **SD** = Strongly Disagree **(1)**

Thank you for being so cooprative !

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1	**Age Category**	☐	**<30**	☐	**30-35**	☐	**35-40**	☐	**>40**
2	**Sex**	☐	**Male**	☐	**Female**				
3	**Academic Qualification**	☐	**Certificate**	☐	**Diploma**	☐	**BSC/BA**	☐	**MSC/MA**
		☐	**PhD**						
4	**Work Experience**	☐	**<5 years**	☐	**6-10 years**	☐	**11-15 years**	☐	**>15 years**
5	**Position in the Organization**	☐	**Top management**	☐	**Middle Management**	☐	**Project Manager**	☐	**M&E Expert**
		☐	**Technical Expert**	☐	**Other**	_____			

Section B: Information Pertaining to the Study

	Baseline Studies	SD (1)	DA (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1	The Organization performed a comprehensive BS before the implementation of project					
2	The project team designs the plan for performing the baseline study					
3	The baseline study were done in accordance with the designed plan					
4	Organization designs research materials for undertaking baseline study					
5	There are adequate collections and capturing of data on project demands					
6	Data's were captured from project beneficiaries					
7	Data were captured on the environment and impact of project on environment					
8	collected and captured data's were analyzed and results were reviewed					
9	The baseline reports were formulated and shared among stakeholders					

	Monitoring and evaluation planning	SD (1)	DA (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1	There is an Involvement of project/program staff and key stakeholders in M&E planning					
2	Planning of M&E system was based on stakeholder needs and expectations.					
3	M&E plan were developed based on a project/program's logframe					
4	There is data collection, data analysis tools and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan					
5	There is a data management tool and techniques for M&E data's in the M&E plan					
6	The potential risks and unexpected circumstances that might arise during project implementation have been clearly identified.					
7	Monitoring and evaluation framework have been defined					
8	M&E work plan were reviewed in a periodic basis					
9	A reporting schedule, reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible were clearly stated in the reporting plan					
10	M&E plan include a strategy for internal dissemination of data among the project team, stakeholders, donors and external audiences.					
	Monitoring and evaluation Framework	**SD (1)**	**DA (2)**	**N (3)**	**A (4)**	**SA (5)**
1	The project is aided by a structured framework					
2	Framework preparation is conducted during the project/ program's design stage.					
3	The planned outputs, outcomes and impact of the program were clearly identified in the logical Framework					
4	project goals, objectives and inputs/activities were identified and defined in the logframe					
5	The logframe reflects the informational needs of the project/program.					
6	A combination of standardized and locally customized process, outcome and impact indicators was being used.					
7	The logical frameworks clearly defines the indicators to track progress of the programme					
8	The prepared framework helped to identify reasons behind project performance.					
9	The framework summarizes the logical sequence of objectives to achieve the project/program's intended results (activities, outputs, outcomes and goal), the indicators and means of verification to measure these objectives, and any key assumptions.					
10	The framework were reassessed and revised according to the realities and changing circumstances in the field.					
	M&E Budget	**SD (1)**	**DA (2)**	**N (3)**	**A (4)**	**SA (5)**
1	The organization provides sufficient funds for monitoring and evaluation activities					
2	The M&E budgeting lists the activities and costs associated with M&E.					
3	For itemizing budget items, there is a standard format.					
4	A budget has been allocated for baseline surveys and evaluations.					
5	The organization ensures there is timely provision of funds for M&E Budget					
6	Costs associated with regular project/program monitoring and undertaking evaluations were included in the project/program budget.					
7	When multiple funding sources are utilized, the budget is broken down by donor source.					
8	There is contingency budget for unexpected contingencies such as inflation, currency devaluation, equipment theft or the need for additional data collection/analysis to verify findings					
9	M&E budget performance, schedule performance and quality performance has led to project success in our organization					

	Midterm and End Term Evaluation	SD (1)	DA (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1	There is time management and performance reviews by Staff/volunteer					
2	There is a monitoring process based on the relevant objectives from the project/programme's logframe,					
3	Regular tools and forums were utilized to track and review time management and performance for their key activities and/or deliverables.					
1	The performance is measured through how resources; money, human and other assets are used					
2	The performance is measured through the relevance and effectiveness of the strategies adopted to meet the organization's role					
3	The performance is measured through the lasting change happening in the lives of the people the organizations intends to serve					
8	The performance is measured through achievements of mission, objectives and goals of the organizations					
9	The organizational performance is measured through the change adopted for the best project implementation					
	Stakeholders Engagement	**SD (1)**	**DA (2)**	**N (3)**	**A (4)**	**SA (5)**
1	key stakeholders are identified for each project					
2	Stakeholders are aware of the program's vision, mission, and goal					
3	Stakeholders participate actively in planning, data analysis, M&E process and implementation of the program					
4	The management uses strategy to increase engagement of stakeholders					
5	Stakeholders expectation is met in the implementation of program					
6	Stakeholders are engaged to address potential problems					
7	There is an established set of procedures for stakeholders to safely voice grievances or concerns that are addressed objectively against a standard set of rules and principles					
8	The information required by stakeholder, why, when, how (in what format) were defined					
9	Stakeholders were involved in result validation and performance review					
10	There is careful consideration and consultation with key stakeholders and in compliance with any donor requirements for changing the logframe					
11	There is a clear understanding of the priorities and information needs of people interested in or affected by the project/programme.					
	Documentation of Lessons Learned	**SD (1)**	**DA (2)**	**N (3)**	**A (4)**	**SA (5)**
1	There is a systematical and reliable method for store, manage and access M&E data from the project/program					
2	Information's were organized into logical with key reporting criteria's, easily understood categories					
3	Reporting is done based on a realistic reporting schedule, matching each reporting requirement with its frequency, audience/purpose, format/outlet and person(s) responsible.					
4	Key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report					
5	There is identified security considerations for confidential data, as well as any legal requirements with governments, donors and other partners.					
6	Computer technology has been used for recording, storage and usage of information					
7	There is a procedure for checking and cleaning data, and to treat missing data					

	Dissemination of M&E Findings	SD (1)	DA (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
1	There is a selected reporting medium which is guided by what is most efficient in terms of time and resources, as well as what is most appropriate for the audience.					
2	Information is disseminated in multidirectional					
3	Information is disseminated upwards to management, senior management, and donors, as well as to field staff, partners, and beneficiaries.					
4	During distribution, there is the security of internal or confidential information.					
5	On the prepared report, there is a stakeholder discussion and feedback.					
6	With key stakeholders, there are meetings, seminars, or workshops where they can reflect and provide feedback.					
7	Key lessons and realistic recommendations were included in the final report.					
8	There is a decision log to keep a record of key project/program decisions.					
9	There is an action log used by project/program managers to ensure that follow-up action is taken.					
10	There is a lesson learned log to catalogue and prioritize key lessons.					
	project Performance	**SD (1)**	**DA (2)**	**N (3)**	**A (4)**	**SA (5)**
1	The organization performed effective utilization of resources; money, human and other assets due to M&E system					
8	The organization achieved its Mission, objectives and goals					
	projects/programes were going according to planned qulity, time frame and cost estimated					
2	Relevance and effective strategies adopted to meet the organization's role					
3	theres was improved change happened in the lives of the people the organizations intends to serve					
4	The organization is positioning itself to create an indelible mark in the community or society it is working					
5	The organization has impoved the performanceb through identified, captured and share lessons learned informations.					
6	Donor requirements were met after the project completion					
7	The positive social transformation made in the community by the organization					
9	The organizational performance were improved through the change adopted for the best project implementation					
10	There is an effective communication among different stakeholders.					