Addis Ababa University

College of Business and Economics

School of Commerce Graduate Program

The Effect of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices on the Performance of Humanitarian Projects: The Case of Selected Local Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations in Ethiopia

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The Effect of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices on the Performance of Humanitarian Projects: The Case of Selected Local Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations in Ethiopia

A Thesis Submitted to Addis Ababa University, College of Business and Economics, School of Commerce in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Degree of Masters of Arts in Project Management

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Statement of Declaration

I, Wondwossen Shiferaw, declare that this thesis work entitled “The Effect of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices on the Performance of Humanitarian Projects: The Case of Selected Local Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations in Ethiopia” is my original work in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Degree of Master of Arts in Project Management. I also declare that it has never been presented in another university and that all resources and materials used in the thesis have been duly acknowledged.

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Signature Date

Statement of Certification

This is to certify that research undertaken by Wondwossen Shiferaw under my advisory entitled: “The Effect of Monitoring and Evaluation Practices on the Performance of Humanitarian Projects: The Case of Selected Local Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations in Ethiopia” submitted to Addis Ababa University, College of Business and Economics, School of Commerce in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Project Management complies with the regulations of the Addis Ababa University and meets the accepted standards for originality and quality.

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Abstract

The research aimed to explore the impact of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices on the performance of humanitarian projects undertaken by selected local NGOs in Ethiopia. The study examined eighteen projects funded by USAID and implemented by nine NGOs, evaluating various aspects of M&E practices such as staff skills, analysis and reporting procedures, M&E plan development, budget allocation, and stakeholder engagement. Project performance was assessed based on OECD criteria tailored for humanitarian projects, focusing on coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness. Additionally, the study explored the mediating role of management support in influencing M&E practices and project performance. Employing a descriptive and explanatory research design with a quantitative approach, data was collected from a sample of nine local NGOs and 150 respondents involved in the project, M&E, and management roles. The study revealed a positive correlation between M&E practices, management support, and project performance, underscoring the significance of effective M&E practices in driving project outcomes. Management support was identified as a partial mediator between M&E practices and project performance, emphasizing the pivotal role of leadership in maximizing the impact of M&E initiatives. Recommendations were put forth to strengthen stakeholder engagement, enhance M&E team capabilities, improve analysis and reporting procedures, promote transparency in budget management, and prioritize management support to enhance project performance in humanitarian endeavors. By addressing these areas, local NGOs in Ethiopia can enhance their M&E practices, foster sustainable project outcomes, and make a more substantial contribution to the success of humanitarian initiatives in the country.

Keywords: *Monitoring, Evaluation, Humanitarian Projects, Project Performance, Management Support*

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Acronyms

ALNAP	Active Learning Network for Accountability and Performance in Humanitarian Action
ASDEPO	Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization
CSA	Civil Society Agency
CSFs	Critical Success Factors
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DICAC	Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission
DPO	Development for Peace Organization
ECPE	Ethiopia Country Program Evaluation
EOC	Ethiopian Orthodox Church
ERC	Ethiopian Red Cross
FIDO	Fayyaa Integrated Development Organization
IASC	Inter-Agency Standing Committee
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
KPIs	Key Performance Indicators
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MCMDO	Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organizations
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORDA	Organization for Rehabilitation and Development
OWDA	Organization for Welfare and Development in Action
PAPDA	Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
PMI	Project Management Institute
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

The accomplishment of project success requires undertaking several project management practices ranging from project initiation to project controlling and closing (Thaddee, 2020; Zid *et al*., 2020). Since most NGOs are project-based, it is very beneficial to understand the various factors that determine project success or failure during project implementation (Tall *et al*., 2021). Successful project management depends on identifying key determinants of project success, usually termed critical success factors. Researchers have tried to develop some well-recognized lists of critical success factors (CSFs) in project management, which can be grouped into project context, technical, and behavioral dimensions (Aga, 2019). Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are among the technical factors that could explain the success of projects. Several studies also show M&E as one of the CSFs that contribute to project success (Kissi *et al*., 2019).

According to Khan (2012), monitoring and evaluation are defined as the systematic assessment and tracking of the operation and/or outcomes of a program or policy compared to a set of explicit or implicit standards to contribute to the improvement or adjustments of the program and policy. M&E is a systematic and ongoing process that involves collecting, analyzing, and using data to inform decision-making, improve program implementation, and enhance accountability (Patton, 2018). It provides a means to measure the progress, outputs, outcomes, and impact of interventions, allowing organizations to learn from their experiences and make evidence-based adjustments to their strategies (Bamberger *et al.*, 2019).

The significance of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) in achieving project success, particularly in NGO sector projects, is frequently highlighted in the literature on Project Management (Workneh & Aga, 2023). While empirical research indicates that M&E plays a critical role in project success, only a limited number of studies have specifically examined M&E in depth and in isolation (Kamau & Mohamed, 2020). Moreover, the value of M&E practices is often underestimated in the project implementation phase (Kissi *et al*., 2019).

According to findings from Papke-Shields *et al*. (2010) referenced by Workneh and Aga (2023), ongoing monitoring of project progress enhances the likelihood of project success, among other factors. M&E also enables project managers to showcase accountability and support project sustainability, key considerations in project-oriented organizations like NGOs.

There seem to be consensuses across M&E and project performance in such a way that monitoring and evaluation affect the performance of the projects and contribute towards their success (Kamau & Mohammed, 2020). Therefore, project monitoring and evaluation could be of great importance to numerous players including project officers, M&E officers, and all program staff (Marangu, 2019).

In the context of humanitarian organizations, the effectiveness of M&E practice is crucial for ensuring that resources are optimally utilized, interventions are responsive to community needs, and organizational performance is continuously improved (Bamberger *et al.,* 2019). Though empirical studies document that M&E is a major contributor to project success, only a few of them have focused on M&E in isolation and greater detail (Kamau & Mohamed, 2020). Besides, M&E practices are given less recognition in the project execution process (Kissi *et al*., 2019). A study by Muhammad *et al* (2012) on project performance noted project management offers an organization with control tools that advance its capability on Project manager multi-layered tasks that expressively influence the project performance.

This study explores the effect of the M&E practices on the project performance of selected local humanitarian NGOs in Ethiopia. The present study seeks to contribute to a better understanding of the mechanisms through which M&E practice influences project performance. Workneh and Aga (2023) call for more research to understand the relationship between M&E practices and project performance through mediators representing management support. The study assumes that management support facilitates M&E practice, which is reflected in project performance. Understanding the mechanisms that cause the effect of M&E practice on project performance helps us to articulate a better theoretical understanding of this relationship. Moreover, understanding how the effect comes about can provide practical guidance for project-based organizations that want to reap the effects of M&E practice to the fullest extent.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Humanitarian action, defined as the critical response to crises and disasters to save lives and uphold human dignity, encompasses a spectrum of challenges ranging from natural calamities to violent conflicts (ALNAP, 2016). Humanitarian agencies' monitoring and evaluation (M&E) needs are very different at different stages of a humanitarian response. In the immediate aftermath of a crisis, M&E might focus mostly on checking that goods and services are delivered, getting feedback from communities, and monitoring what is happening in the external environment. Later on, the focus might shift towards monitoring medium- to long-term changes in the lives of communities (ALNAP, 2016).

In developing countries like Ethiopia, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) face formidable obstacles, including limited resources and capacity constraints, hindering their ability to adapt to evolving needs. Reports such as the Ethiopia Country Program Evaluation (ECPE) (2020) highlight the weak M&E landscape in the country, with scant public dissemination of evaluation findings. Assessments by the World Bank (2019) reveal gaps in both institutional and individual M&E capabilities within Ethiopian NGOs, reflecting challenges stemming from internal capacity gaps and external stakeholder dynamics (Kissi *et al.*, 2019).

Studies by Tengan *et al*. (2019) and Micah and Luketero (2017) underscore the pivotal role of M&E planning in enhancing project performance within humanitarian contexts. They further concluded that M&E practice influences the performance of projects in NGOs. Their research suggests that robust M&E planning and practice are cornerstones of successful humanitarian projects in Kenya. However, a discordant note is sounded by IASC (2021), who argues that M&E might seem less pressing in the immediate aftermath of a crisis. Further complicating the picture, Gaibo & Mbuguaa's (2019) study finds no clear correlation between M&E practices and project performance. They underscore the need for a deeper understanding of the role of M&E in the performance of projects. Tadele (2017) echoes this concern, highlighting Ethiopia's limited understanding of M&E's role in project performance. He further stated that optimizing the practice of M&E is provided with little priority, which in the end affects the expected performance of the project.

The existing literature highlights a range of issues that impede the successful integration of M&E into humanitarian projects in Ethiopia indicating a gap in translating M&E efforts into tangible project improvements.

Despite some existing research on M&E frameworks in Ethiopia, as of the knowledge of the researcher, limited attention has been given to the practical application of M&E within local humanitarian projects. To mention a few, a study conducted by Gashaw (2020), Mengistu (2020), Hailemariam (2020); and some others conducted on business and government organizations. However, these studies are undertaken on M&E frameworks and tools, rather than on the M&E practice within the existing M&E system. In addition, the available studies in Ethiopia focus particularly on the challenges faced during the implementation of M&E and factors affecting the effectiveness of M&E. Besides this, as of the knowledge of the researcher, there are no studies conducted on the effect of M&E practice on local humanitarian project performance.

The dearth of comprehensive studies specifically examining the impact of M&E practices on the performance of local humanitarian projects in Ethiopia underscores a critical knowledge gap. While some research has focused on M&E frameworks and challenges faced during implementation, there remains a paucity of empirical evidence linking M&E practices to project performance within the local NGO context. Workneh and Aga's (2023) call for further research on the relationship between M&E practices and project performance, particularly through the mediator variable i.e., management support, underscores the need for in-depth investigation into this domain.

This study aims to bridge this gap by examining the influence of M&E practices on project performance, focusing on humanitarian projects implemented by nine local humanitarian NGOs in Ethiopia. Effective M&E practices, as outlined by Kissi *et al*. (2019), encompass elements like M&E planning, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, adequate budgeting, and robust analysis and reporting systems. By assessing M&E practices across various dimensions such as the availability of funds/budgeting, stakeholder engagement, competency of the M&E team, the availability & process of the M&E plan, and analysis and reporting; and evaluating humanitarian project performance against established criteria by OECD DAC (2010) such as coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness, this study aims to examine the extent to

which M&E practice influences the performance of humanitarian projects. Furthermore, management support as a mediator variable will be considered. Through a systematic exploration of M&E practices and their effect on project performance, this research endeavors to provide valuable insights for enhancing the quality and impact of humanitarian interventions in Ethiopia.

1.3. Research Questions

1. How is M&E practiced in humanitarian projects by local humanitarian NGOs?
2. To what extent do the M&E practices affect the performance of humanitarian projects?
3. What is the relationship between M&E practice and management support in local humanitarian NGOs?
4. To what extent does management support influence the project performance in local humanitarian NGOs?
5. To what extent does management support mediate the relationship between M&E practices and project performance in local humanitarian NGOs?

1.4. Objective of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of M&E practices on project performance of humanitarian projects in selected local humanitarian NGOs in Ethiopia.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

1. To assess the M&E practice in humanitarian projects in local humanitarian NGOs.
2. To assess the effect of M&E practices on project performance in local humanitarian NGOs.
3. To examine the relationship between M&E practice and management support in local humanitarian projects.
4. To examine the influence of management support on the performance of humanitarian projects in local NGOs.
5. To determine the mediating effect of management support on the relationship between M&E practices and project performance on humanitarian projects in local NGOs.

1.5. Hypotheses

To achieve the above-listed objectives, the study attempts to test the following hypotheses that were developed based on the reviewed literature and research model or conceptual framework.

Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

Hypothesis 2: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support.

Hypothesis 3: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

Hypothesis 4: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs has a mediating effect on the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

1.6. Significance of the Study

This study may have the following significance:

1. **Improving Humanitarian Project Performance:** this study can provide valuable insights into how M&E practice can be optimized to enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of humanitarian projects in Ethiopia. This can ultimately lead to better outcomes for the communities being served. Hence, this study would particularly help the NGO's staff, donor agencies, and project managers a better understanding of the M&E systems and how to improve them to meet the expectations of the stakeholders.
2. **Enhancing Accountability and Transparency:** Effective monitoring and evaluation practices are crucial for ensuring accountability and transparency in humanitarian projects. This research can shed light on how these practices contribute to better governance and stewardship of resources within local humanitarian NGOs in Ethiopia.
3. **Informing Policy and Practice:** Findings from this study can inform the development of policies and guidelines related to M&E practices in the humanitarian sector. This can help organizations align their strategies with best practices, leading to improved project management and impact assessment.

It would inform policies towards setting up monitoring and evaluation systems, and show how M&E can be used as a powerful management tool to improve the way organizations and stakeholders can achieve greater accountability and transparency.

4. **Building Local Capacity:** By focusing on selected local NGOs in Ethiopia, this study can contribute to building the monitoring and evaluation capacity of these organizations. This can empower them to conduct more rigorous assessments of their projects and make data-driven decisions for future interventions.
5. **Fostering Research and Collaboration:** this research can serve as a foundation for future studies on monitoring and evaluation practices in humanitarian contexts. By sharing these findings with the academic and practitioner community, this thesis can stimulate further research and collaboration in this important field.

The study will be therefore beneficial to NGOs, donor agencies, project managers, and project management students who are involved in the designing and implementation of effective M&E systems.

1.7. Scope of the Study

This research will be delimited geographically, conceptually, and methodologically. **Geographically**, the study will concentrate on eighteen completed projects executed by nine different local humanitarian NGOs operating within Ethiopia, based in Addis Ababa. These are Fayyaa Integrated Development Organization (FIDO), Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA), Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development (MCMDO), Organization for Rehabilitation and Development (ORDA), Ethiopian Red Cross (ERC), Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization (ASDEPO), Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association (PAPDA), Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC/DICAC), and Development for Peace Organization (DPO). These lists of local NGOs are provided by CSA based on their higher reputation in the year 2023.

Among different projects implemented by these local humanitarian NGOs, the researcher has identified projects that were funded by USAID. Selecting projects funded by the same donor i.e., USAID will ensure consistency in data collection and project reporting across the selected NGOs, making comparisons between them more reliable. Besides this, the researcher can eliminate variations introduced by different funding sources and their specific M&E requirements. This allows the researcher to isolate the impact of M&E practices on project performance and this simplifies data collection and strengthens the research methodology.

Besides this, focusing on similar donors i.e., USAID allows the researcher to explore the effectiveness of a specific donor's M&E requirements on local NGO performance. While the findings may have broader implications, the primary focus is on understanding practices and challenges within these specific entities. The target population of this study is eighteen projects and respondents will be selected project teams, M&E teams, and organization managers.

Conceptually, this study will examine the specific M&E practices used by the identified local NGOs such as the budget allocated for M&E, the engagement of stakeholders, the competency of the M&E team, the availability of M&E plan, and the analysis and reporting will be considered. Besides this, for evaluating the project performance of the humanitarian projects, the evaluation criteria suited for humanitarian projects proposed by OECD DAC such as coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness will be considered.

Methodologically, this study will be delimited to a quantitative research approach. The participants are mainly from the project team, M&E department, and top management. After collecting, cleaning, and entering the data into the analytical system (SPSS), the data analysis will be conducted in descriptive statistics and inferential statistics such as a multiple linear regression model.

1.8. Limitations of the Study

While this research was conducted with thoroughness and rigor, it is important to acknowledge certain limitations. The findings may not be universally applicable beyond the selected local NGOs in Ethiopia funded by USAID, potentially limiting generalizability. Additionally, the study's cross-sectional design captured data at a single point in time, which might not fully capture the long-term impact of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices. The research primarily focused on specific criteria tailored for humanitarian projects, potentially overlooking other aspects of project performance and M&E practices. Furthermore, while the study examined the mediating role of management support, it did not deeply explore leadership styles or organizational dynamics that could have influenced these relationships. Addressing these limitations in future research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between M&E practices, management support, and project outcomes in humanitarian initiatives.

1.9. Definition of Key Terms

Table 1.1: Definition of Key Terms

Key Terms	Definition	Authors
Project	A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.	PMI (2017)
Project Management	The application of knowledge skills, tools, and techniques to undertake a project successfully to add value	PMI (2017)
Humanitarian Project	an organized initiative or endeavor that aims to alleviate suffering, assist, and promote the well-being of individuals and communities affected by crises, disasters, conflicts, or other challenging circumstances.	ALNAP (2016)
Monitoring	A continuing function that aims primarily to provide the management and main stakeholders with an ongoing intervention with early indications of progress, or lack thereof, in the achievement of results	OECD (2010)
Evaluation	The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed operation, program, or policy, its design, implementation, and results.	IFRC (2011)
Project Performance	The degree to which a project successfully achieves its objectives within the defined constraints of time, budget, quality, and scope. It involves measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of project implementation in terms of meeting deliverables, satisfying stakeholder expectations, and accomplishing the intended outcomes.	PMI (2017)

Source: Authors' computation

1.10. Organization of the Study

The report is structured in five chapters. The first chapter presents the background of the study, the background of the study area, the statement of the problem, the research question, and objectives, as well as the scope of the study. The second chapter provides the reader with both empirical and theoretical background about the study area. Theoretical Background provides insight into the concepts related to the study area. Empirical Background provides the findings of different studies conducted in related study areas. The third chapter presents the entire research process including its research design, approach, sampling design, & data collection methods. The fourth chapter i.e., Data Analysis & Discussion. The last chapter i.e., Summary of Findings, Conclusion & Recommendation, presents the summary of the findings, conclusion, and recommendations as well as limitations and further research direction.

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides an overview of literature pertinent to the study, organized into nine sections covering topics such as the concept of monitoring and evaluation, the purpose of M&E, M&E systems and practices, project performance measurements, management support in project performance, theoretical framework, empirical literature review and hypotheses, and conceptual framework.

2.1. The Concept of Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are a crucial tool for program management, involving the continuous gathering and assessment of information to track progress toward predefined goals and objectives, while also identifying any unintended project effects (UNDP, 2022). It focuses on efficiency, effectiveness, and impact, with efficiency ensuring correct input for output, effectiveness measuring goal achievement, and impact assessing project contributions to addressing the problem at hand (Crawford, 2003). M&E, integral to the project cycle, complements each other but varies in objectives and methodologies.

2.1.1. Monitoring

Monitoring is the continual assessment of a program or project against its established implementation timeline (World Bank, 2020). It involves providing information for management to assess intended and unintended effects and impacts, ensuring alignment with project objectives (Gyorkos, 2013). Monitoring, as described by UNDP (2022), is an ongoing process enabling stakeholders to receive regular feedback on progress towards achieving desired goals. While some definitions focus on reviewing action enforcement, monitoring is fundamentally about measuring progress against predetermined objectives.

Monitoring, as per OECD (2020), involves systematically collecting data on specific indicators to inform stakeholders about the progress and achievement of objectives in a development project. MorraImas and Rist (2019) describe monitoring as a regular internal activity that gathers information on a program's activities, outputs, and outcomes to track its performance. This aligns with McCoy's (2005) definition.

While various sources concur that monitoring tracks progress in policies, programs, or plans, Stephenson & Stengel (2020) emphasize that monitoring goes beyond routine tracking to provide in-depth insights for early assessment and informed decision-making, ultimately enhancing performance.

Drawing from the literature, monitoring is a structured and continuous assessment process that tracks progress, activities, outputs, and outcomes of a project against set goals. It entails collecting data on specific indicators to offer stakeholders and management valuable insights into progress, goal attainment, and resource utilization. More than routine oversight, monitoring is a vital assessment tool that enhances decision-making, boosts performance, and fosters continuous learning during project implementation.

2.1.2. Evaluation

UNDP (2022) defines evaluation as a thorough and unbiased assessment of completed or ongoing activities to determine the level of achieving set objectives and inform decision-making. Otieno (2019) describes evaluation as a method of objectively assessing the importance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of project activities, focusing on progress toward stated objectives.

Evaluation, as defined by Montano, *et al* (2016), is a systematic and objective process that assesses the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of project activities, focusing on progress towards achieving objectives. It helps in adjusting objectives, policies, and strategies within projects/programs (Lipsey & Freeman, 2020). Additionally, evaluation is sometimes utilized to address non-program issues among different donors, such as assessing collaboration potential between organizations with similar programs (Lipsey & Freeman, 2020). Ultimately, evaluation serves to determine the feasibility of programs/projects and guide decisions on further resource allocation (Shapiro, 2017). Goldman and Mathe (2019) characterize evaluation as a scheduled and periodic process designed to offer credible insights to decision-makers, staff, and policymakers. It evaluates project relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. As OECD (2020) outlined, evaluation involves a systematic and unbiased assessment of ongoing or completed projects, programs, or policies to gauge their alignment with objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability.

In the realm of project management, monitoring centers on real-time tracking against set goals, offering continuous feedback to stakeholders. In contrast, Evaluation occurs at specific intervals, typically at project completion, focusing on overall impact and effectiveness. While monitoring addresses progress and process adjustments, evaluation delves into project success, relevance, and sustainability, analyzing outcomes and strategies comprehensively.

2.2. Purpose of M&E

2.2.1. General Purpose of M&E

While both monitoring and evaluation are crucial for achieving project targets, the emphasis on evaluation is often overlooked, impacting project closure and future endeavors. Mackay (2017) emphasizes that M&E supports sound governance and evidence-based decision-making, while the World Bank (2020) highlights its role in learning from experience, improving service delivery, and demonstrating accountability. MorraImas and Rist (2019) also stress that evaluation provides vital information for better decision-making in projects, programs, or policies.

Biwott, *et al.* (2017) defined monitoring as a tool providing continuous feedback on project implementation, and identifying achievements and limitations to inform decision-making. It assesses the effectiveness of activities and output production, measuring initial responses and immediate impacts. Otieno (2019) highlighted the evaluation's various purposes, including assessing objective success and identifying planning and implementation challenges. M&E plays a vital role in project oversight, facilitating institutional learning, and establishing an evidence base for present and future projects by systematically collecting and analyzing project implementation data (MorraImas & Rist, 2019).

2.2.2. Purpose of M&E for Humanitarian NGOs

The role of M&E in assessing the performance of humanitarian organizations has been a subject of debate among scholars. While some scholars view M&E as a means to evaluate humanitarian organizations' performance, Medina-Borja and Triantis (2017) proposed a framework focusing on revenue generation, capacity building, customer satisfaction, and efficient results for NGOs, including humanitarian organizations.

However, Abidi *et al.* (2020) noted that this framework does not explicitly address M&E's role in measuring performance in humanitarian organizations.

Stephenson, *et al* (2020), Abidi, *et al* (2020), and Bbosa, *et al* (2023) highlighted the key benefits of M&E for humanitarian NGOs.

1. **Greater Transparency and Accountability:** M&E enables organizations to track, analyze, and report information throughout a project's lifecycle, providing evidence for actions and decisions to stakeholders, donors, and communities. It fosters collaboration, informed decision-making, and helps donors assess fund efficacy.
2. **Improved Project Performance:** M&E aids in understanding target population needs, defining project scope, setting measurable objectives, and planning interventions for desired outcomes. It facilitates progress tracking, gap identification, and timely adjustments for success.
3. **Effective Resource Allocation:** All project operations are interwoven around project budgets. The amount of available cash dictates the duration and magnitude of interventions, choices of resources, number of employees, etc. M&E enhances financial efficiency by estimating project component values, identifying effective investments, and adjusting budgets as needed to optimize resources.
4. **Promotes Learning & Data-driven Decision Making:** M&E data fosters learning from successes and challenges, enabling adaptive responses and evidence-based decision-making for project improvement and sustainability.
5. **Systematic Management of Organization:** M&E acts as a performance management tool, aiding in information utilization, internal improvement, innovation, and constructive coordination among stakeholders and organizational units. M&E also streamlines organizational procedures to achieve constructive coordination among different stakeholders and organizational units.

Projects have varying M&E requirements based on factors like the operational environment, the organization's capabilities, and donor specifications. Hence, it is crucial to determine suitable methods, processes, and instruments to fulfill the project's M&E needs during the planning phase (Chaplowe, 2018).

Various tools and methodologies are available to assist project managers in organizing and overseeing project tasks, such as project selection and risk management tools, project initiation tools, project management planning tools, project execution tools, and project monitoring and control tools.

According to the experience drawn from USAID, best M&E practices not only include linking M&E to strategic plans and work plans, but also focusing on efficiency and cost-effectiveness, employing a participatory approach to monitoring progress, utilizing both international and local expertise, disseminating results widely, using data from multiple sources, and facilitating the use of data for program improvement (Mulwa, 2018). This is because the M&E systems that are set based on acceptable best practices aid in making data-based decisions as well as provide donors with evidence-based project results. Hence M&E is a project asset (Ibid).

2.3. M&E System and Practice

2.3.1. Monitoring and Evaluation System

M&E systems, previously considered traditional tools, have transformed to address contemporary needs for accountability and transparency, guided by stakeholders, including governmental entities (Gorgens, *et al.*, 2019). An M&E system is a structured collection of elements crafted to monitor project progress and outcomes, functioning as a unified mechanism for reflection, dissemination, and assistance. It consists of four interconnected segments: establishment, execution, engagement with stakeholders, and communicating results (Guijt *et al.*, 2022; Worku, 2018). A monitoring and evaluation system encompasses interrelated tasks that are synchronized to plan, gather, analyze data, present findings, and facilitate decision-making and the implementation of improvements (UNDP, 2020).

The project M&E system, as outlined by UNDP (2020), consists of six key components. Firstly, it involves defining clear, measurable objectives for the project and its various elements. Secondly, it includes a structured set of indicators that encompass inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, impact, and external factors. Thirdly, the system incorporates data collection mechanisms capable of monitoring progress over time, establishing baselines, and facilitating comparisons against targets.

Fourthly, where relevant, it builds upon baselines and data collection by incorporating an evaluation framework and methodology that can determine causation, attributing observed changes to specific interventions or external factors. Fifthly, it includes transparent mechanisms for reporting M&E findings and utilizing them in decision-making processes. Lastly, it entails establishing sustainable organizational structures for data collection, management, analysis, and reporting.

The design of an M&E system should start at the same time as the overall project preparation and design, and be subject to the same economic and financial appraisal, at least to achieve the least-cost means of securing the desired objectives. Such practice has been followed for projects in recent years (UNDP, 2020). Problems arose with earlier M&E systems that were set up after the project had started. The 'supply side' of M&E design should not be overlooked. Skilled and well-trained people are required for good-quality data collection and analysis (Guijt *et al.*, 2022). They may be a very scarce resource in developing countries and should be 'shadow-priced' accordingly when appraising alternative M&E approaches (Ibid).

2.3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation Practice

In the contemporary context, numerous organizations continue to view M&E as a requirement imposed by donors rather than recognizing it as a management tool exclusively utilized for monitoring intervention progress and identifying and rectifying issues during project planning and implementation stages (Armstrong & Baron, 2018). Donors are mainly concerned with having comprehensive knowledge of the allocation and utilization of project funds, whereas M&E primarily serves the function of assessing project or organizational performance and facilitating learning. Naidoo (2011) emphasized that the efficacy of project monitoring and evaluation significantly enhances the foundation for making evidence-based decisions in project management.

Monitoring and Evaluation, when utilized as a function, is an integral aspect of project management that encompasses reflection and communication to bolster efficient and effective project execution through well-informed and evidence-based decision-making (Nuguti, 2019). Project M&E comprises a range of processes and activities that, when implemented correctly, result in successful project delivery and enhance project performance (Msila & Setlhako, 2020).

The monitoring and evaluation of projects involve a series of complementary activities that commence with the development of an M&E plan (UNDP, 2022). As highlighted by Msila et al. (2020), Singh et al. (2017), UNDP (2022), and PMI (2017), key practices in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) include:

1. **Planning and Design:** During the planning and design phase, key steps include developing an M&E Plan to delineate the monitoring and evaluation processes, data collection methods, and information utilization. Setting SMART objectives is fundamental for effective M&E practices. Additionally, creating measurable indicators to track progress toward the objectives is vital for monitoring performance accurately.
2. **Data Collection:** In the data collection phase, selecting appropriate data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, focus groups, data collection tools, project document reviews, and observations, is crucial for assessing progress and outcomes effectively. Implementing an M&E Information System within the broader M&E framework becomes imperative to ensure well-organized data for analysis. The initial step in the analysis process involves organizing data systematically. Analyzing data transforms raw data into valuable information by presenting it in coherent patterns, identifying trends, and providing meaningful interpretations.
3. **Analysis and Reporting:** In the realm of analysis and reporting, the process involves meticulously cleaning, organizing, and interpreting the gathered data to unveil meaningful trends and insights that can guide informed decision-making and drive program enhancements. Subsequently, effectively communicating the findings of the M&E endeavors to stakeholders, donors, and project teams is paramount to foster transparency and ensure accountability within the humanitarian ecosystem.
4. **Mid-Term Reviews and Evaluations:** Conducting mid-term reviews and evaluations to assess progress, identify challenges, and make necessary adjustments to improve project performance.
5. **Learning and Knowledge Sharing:** Encouraging a culture of learning and knowledge sharing within the organization to leverage insights from M&E activities for continuous improvement.

6. **Utilization:** The effective utilization of M&E goes beyond just data collection. M&E findings should be actively used to inform decision-making. This means using data and evaluation results to guide strategic planning, policy development, and resource allocation for future projects and programs. Transparency is also crucial. Sharing M&E results with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, and government partners, builds trust and fosters collaboration, ultimately contributing to project success.
7. **Quality Assurance:** Ensuring that M&E activities adhere to established standards and best practices to maintain the credibility and reliability of the evaluation process.
8. **Participatory M&E:** Involving stakeholders in the M&E process can improve data quality and ownership.
9. **Ethical Considerations:** Ensuring data privacy and respecting participant rights is crucial.
10. **Capacity Building:** Providing training and support to staff members and partners involved in M&E activities to enhance their skills and knowledge in monitoring and evaluation practices.

This study focuses on five key M&E components to examine the practice of M&E in the identified local humanitarian NGOs, which includes the availability of an M&E plan, M&E skills/capacity (competency of M&E team), analysis and reporting, involvement of stakeholders (stakeholder engagement), and availability of funds/budgets.

2.3.3. M&E in Humanitarian Action

M&E practices vary significantly between the initial phases of humanitarian crises and standard social development projects. M&E approaches can differ across various stages of a humanitarian response, with a rising amount of aid directed towards these emergencies. Humanitarian crises encompass sudden natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, and hurricanes, as well as disruptions in community livelihoods due to droughts, famine, or climate change, and instances of violent conflicts. These crises may involve a combination of factors such as famine, conflict, and forced migration simultaneously. Humanitarian action involves actions aimed at saving lives, reducing suffering, and preserving human dignity during and after crises caused by humans or

natural disasters, along with efforts to prevent and prepare for such events (ALNAP, 2016).

Aid organizations have distinct M&E requirements at various phases of a humanitarian response. In the initial aftermath of a crisis, M&E may primarily concentrate on verifying the delivery of goods and services, gathering input from communities, and observing external environments. Subsequently, the emphasis may transition to monitoring lasting changes in the well-being of communities over the medium to long term (Reliefweb, 2021). During a crisis, M&E may not be the primary focus due to the immediate requirement to offer assistance to affected communities. Nevertheless, neglecting M&E could result in unintended outcomes, as humanitarian actions may not always reach their desired objectives and could potentially exacerbate the situation. In crisis scenarios, the importance of M&E is amplified, as mistakes can have swift and crucial consequences, potentially influencing life-or-death scenarios for individuals (Bakewell *et al*., 2013).

Monitoring and evaluating humanitarian action during the initial stages presents unique challenges as outlined by Bakewell *et al*. (2013), ALNAP (2016), and Dillon and Sundberg (2019). Amid a crisis, aid agencies are often focused on swiftly delivering aid to affected communities, leaving little time for detailed planning beyond determining the necessary aid and its delivery logistics, thus relegating M&E to a lower priority (Bakewell *et al*., 2013). Staff members, grappling with long hours and immediate relief efforts, may struggle to engage effectively in M&E tasks, further complicated by high turnover rates due to burnout, trauma, or exhaustion.

Engaging affected communities in M&E is crucial as they possess valuable insights into their needs and the effectiveness of aid efforts. However, crisis-affected communities may be displaced, traumatized, lack established institutions, or be embroiled in conflicts, hampering their capacity or willingness to participate in M&E activities (ALNAP, 2016). Even when communities are willing, they might be hesitant to provide candid feedback. The rapidly evolving crisis context can render early M&E plans obsolete, with formal methods potentially yielding outdated results. Operating in conflict zones with poor security, damaged infrastructure, limited access, and communication challenges further complicates M&E efforts (Bakewell *et al*., 2013).

Coordinating M&E activities among numerous aid agencies simultaneously operating in a crisis can be arduous. The high visibility of emergency relief work, coupled with media scrutiny and donor pressure for demonstrable results, adds another layer of complexity (Dillon & Sundberg, 2019). Establishing a robust M&E system requires time for piloting and adaptation, a luxury often unavailable in emergencies. Addressing ethical concerns, such as ensuring no harm, data protection, confidentiality, and consent, becomes paramount during crises, particularly in sensitive areas like protection and safeguarding (Bakewell *et al.*, 2013, ALNAP, 2016, and Dillon & Sundberg, 2019). These multifaceted challenges collectively impede the effective development and implementation of M&E practices in humanitarian interventions.

2.4. The Concept of Project Performance Measurements

2.4.1. Project Performance Measurements in Developmental Projects

A successful project delivers its planned objectives while staying on track with budget and timeline constraints (World Bank, 2012). One key factor contributing to this success is a strong Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system and practice. M&E ensures accountability by keeping stakeholders informed, and it fuels organizational learning by capturing valuable lessons learned during project execution. These lessons can then be applied to improve future projects, either within the same organization or shared with others for broader benefit (Ibid). While some define project performance solely by meeting budget, schedule, and quality (Kariuki, 2015), others emphasize long-term benefits and client satisfaction (Serra & Kunc, 2014). Effective projects deliver not just on time and on budget but also create lasting value.

Project performance measurement is a critical aspect of project management that involves assessing and evaluating the success of a project based on predefined criteria and key performance indicators (KPIs) (Kerzner, 2017). By monitoring and measuring project performance, organizations can track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that project objectives are being met efficiently and effectively (Ibid). Project performance measurement is a crucial aspect of successful project management. It involves establishing metrics and collecting data to assess how well a project is progressing toward its objectives within the constraints of time, budget, and scope (PMI, 2017).

2.4.2. Project Performance Measurements in Humanitarian Projects

Evaluations are covered within the Core Humanitarian Standard on Quality and Accountability. Many other frameworks and guidelines also exist that can be used to guide humanitarian evaluations. Perhaps the most common evaluation framework is the OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria (OECD, 2010). This is regularly used in many evaluations, but the criteria have been adapted for humanitarian evaluations to reflect their slightly different nature.

The criteria are a list of different aspects of a project or program that an evaluation ought to cover. They are designed to be a checklist to ensure that key issues are considered in each evaluation, although not all criteria are designed to be applied in every evaluation. The criteria do not replace the need to develop individual evaluation questions. As stated by OECD-DAC Evaluation Criteria (OECD, 2010), the first five criteria – relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability – apply to all work, whether carried out in humanitarian settings or not.

The next four are specifically designed to address evaluations of humanitarian action. They are designed to ensure that humanitarian evaluations also look at who is or is not covered by humanitarian support; how well aid agencies are connecting with other agencies; the coherence of humanitarian support; and whether short-term emergency support is properly joined up with longer-term issues. The definition of the above evaluation criteria is elaborated in the table below (OECD, 2010).

Table 2.1: Definition of Humanitarian Project Performance Evaluation Criteria

No.	OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria	Definition
1	Relevance	Relevance means the extent to which a development intervention was suited to the priorities and policies of the target group, recipient, and donor.
2	Effectiveness	Effectiveness is a measure of the extent to which a development intervention has attained its objectives.
3	Efficiency	Efficiency is an economic term that signifies that the development intervention used the least costly resources possible to achieve the desired results.
4	Impact	Impact includes the positive and negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended.
5	Sustainability	Sustainability is concerned with assessing whether the benefits of an intervention are likely to continue (or have continued) after donor funding has been withdrawn.

No.	OECD DAC Evaluation Criteria	Definition
	Additional Criteria for Humanitarian Evaluations	
1	Coverage	Coverage means the extent to which major population groups facing life-threatening suffering were reached by humanitarian action.
2	Coherence	Coherence is the extent to which humanitarian action is consistent with relevant policies (e.g. humanitarian, security, trade, military, and development), and takes account of humanitarian and human-rights considerations.
3	Coordination	Coordination means the extent to which the interventions of different actors were harmonized with each other, promoted synergy, and avoided gaps, duplication, and resource conflicts.
4	Connectedness	Connectedness assesses the extent to which activities of a short-term emergency nature were carried out in a context that took longer-term and interconnected problems into account.

In this study, the performance of the identified local humanitarian NGOs will be examined based on the evaluation criteria designed to evaluate only humanitarian projects which is stated as "Additional criteria for humanitarian evaluations" in the above OECD DAC criteria table. These criteria are coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness.

2.5. M&E Practice and Project Performance

As indicated in the previous section, in examining the M&E practice in the identified local humanitarian NGOs, the five components of M&E system such as M&E plan, M&E skills/capacity (competency of M&E team), analysis and reporting, involvement of stakeholders (stakeholder engagement), and availability of funds/budgets. The following section presents the relationship between these components with project performance.

2.5.1. M&E Plan

A crucial part of the M&E system is M&E planning, which entails organizing the project or program to track and assess the goals and indicators of the log frame (IFRC, 2011). In particular, the M&E plan outlines indicators, who is in charge of gathering them, the forms and instruments that will be employed, and how the data will be distributed throughout the company (Kerzner, 2017).

A project's progress toward reaching its outputs and objectives can be monitored and reported on, and evaluation issues that need to be addressed can be determined using the M&E plan (UNFPA, 2016). As a result, many M&E systems will become obsolete without M&E plans since insufficient consideration is given to specifics during the planning phase (Simister, 2015).

Effective M&E practices involve creating documented plans shared with all stakeholders, especially donors (Simister, 2015). This transparency encourages broad participation in the planning process, particularly from those responsible for implementing the M&E activities (Simister, 2015). Furthermore, UNFPA (2016) emphasizes the importance of ongoing review and updates to the M&E plan throughout the project cycle (e.g., annually). This ensures the project remains adaptable and responsive to evolving needs within the community.

2.5.2. M&E Skills/Capacity

Effective M&E relies on a diverse team, including staff, beneficiaries, and volunteers who may not have formal M&E expertise (Emmanuel, 2015). To ensure successful implementation, investing in capacity building for everyone involved in M&E is crucial (Emmanuel, 2015). This is particularly important for technical staff entrusted with monitoring duties, as their expertise directly impacts the development of effective M&E systems (UNFPA, 2016). Studies by Ngatia (2015) highlight that strong technical skills among staff are essential for donor-funded projects within NGOs. These skills allow staff to provide valuable guidance in designing robust performance monitoring systems based on results.

Beyond technical skills, staff with M&E experience are critical for the success of interventions. Effective human resource planning for M&E should begin by assessing the existing experience within the team, partner organizations, target communities, and other potential participants (IFRC, 2011). This experience can come from various sources, including ongoing training, long-term work in similar roles, or experience across different organizations.

As Odhiambo (2013) emphasizes, continuous learning through training and capacity building is essential for M&E staff to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and approaches in the field. Successful M&E relies on skilled personnel who can

competently carry out their assigned M&E tasks (Khuha, 2018). This often means involving highly skilled M&E professionals, either as staff or consultants (Khuha, 2018). The core of a strong M&E system lies in identifying the necessary skills, assessing the capabilities of those involved, and addressing any skill gaps through structured training programs (Hubert & Mulyungi, 2018).

2.5.3. Analysis and Reporting

While M&E reports are routinely generated and shared throughout projects (Shapiro, 2017), few studies have explored their impact on project performance. This research aims to fill that gap by examining the effect of M&E reports on project performance through the lens of Results-Based Management (RBM) theory. As Molapo (2019) suggests, result-based management (RBM) inherently emphasizes reporting, as it promotes strong management, accountability, and clear communication of results and resource use.

KPMG (2014) conducted a study that revealed that to effectively synthesize and act upon lessons learned, better and more timely feedback loops are required. The poll further explained that reports that are not prepared in a timely way lose out on the chance to share results and acquire insights. Additionally, Hubert and Molapo (2019) clarified that regular project reporting provides opportunities to compare project performance to the project plans (Hubert & Mulyungi, 2018), which explains why M&E activities have a substantial impact on the initiatives' success.

2.5.4. Stakeholder Engagement

As the emphasis on participation grows within NGOs, the importance of participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is gaining recognition (World Bank, 2020). This approach enriches the quality of information gathered. Hubert and Mulyungi (2018) highlight the futility of complex M&E systems if partners cannot collect the necessary data. Participation is a process where stakeholders at all levels actively contribute to M&E activities, such as data collection or evaluation. This includes sharing control over the content, process, and results, as well as collaborating on corrective actions.

Through participatory monitoring and evaluation (PM&E), stakeholders at different levels can take part in corrective action identification or taking, as well as share control over the content, process, and outcomes of M&E activities. They can also monitor or

evaluate specific projects, programs, or policies (Kerzner, 2017). According to Simister (2015), including stakeholders in M&E guarantees that service users have the right to participate in all areas of work that have an impact on their lives and also produces better M&E data and analysis. This raises the likelihood that a project or program will succeed since successful programs and projects depend on high levels of user, client, and stakeholder engagement (UNFPA, 2016).

Involving stakeholders in M&E (monitoring and evaluation) boosts project delivery by providing richer, more relevant information (UNFPA, 2016). This includes program users, decision-makers, implementers, and communities. Their participation improves program quality and ensures local needs are addressed.

Stakeholder engagement during M&E empower participants and encourage meaningful contributions (Guba & Lincoln, 2011). This provides the M&E team with richer, more relevant information (Wayne, 2010). Effective stakeholder engagement from the outset, involving key stakeholders and interested parties, is crucial for selecting the most appropriate M&E tools (Wayne, 2010). Research by Karanja (2014) further emphasizes the importance of including the right people. This not only improves the quality of recommendations but also ensures they are well-received and implemented promptly.

2.5.5. Availability of Budget

A project budget should clearly allocate sufficient resources for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities, separate from the main project budget (Gyorkos, 2013). This autonomy allows the M&E unit to manage its resources effectively. While ideal M&E allocations range from 5% to 10% of the total project budget (Njama, 2015), the specific percentage can vary depending on project complexity and overall budget size (Gitonga, 2012). Notably, Gitonga (2012) also suggests that a more participatory M&E approach may require a higher budget allocation. While specific allocations can vary, most donors and organizations recommend dedicating 3-10% of the project budget to M&E (Chaplowe, 2018). This ensures sufficient resources for accurate and credible results without hindering other project activities. Crucially, M&E activities and costs should be factored into project design to guarantee adequate funding allocation from the outset (Chaplowe, 2018).

To flourish, a project's monitoring and evaluation system needs careful resource allocation, like a gardener cultivating a delicate bloom. This is especially true for donor-funded programs, where funding isn't entirely in the organization's hands. Just as a flower withers without nourishment, M&E systems starved of resources struggle to thrive. Njama (2015) warns that inadequate funding cripples the entire process, while Kamau (2012) echoes this concern, highlighting the negative impact on performance. Sadly, some organizations, despite having sufficient project funds, neglect to allocate any specifically for M&E. Chaplowe (2018) decries this shortsightedness, which inevitably leads to a wilting M&E system and ultimately, project failure. By ensuring proper resource allocation from the start, organizations can nurture robust M&E systems that guide them toward blooming success.

2.6. Management Support in Project Performance

Project success hinges on effective project management, as outlined by PMBOK (2001). This includes strong leadership and organization of the project team (PMBOK, 2001). Many studies, including Kamau & Mohammed (2015), highlight the critical role of management support in achieving project success. This research explores how management support acts as a bridge between M&E practices (independent variable) and project performance (dependent variable) in humanitarian projects. By investigating this mediating effect, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how M&E practices influence project performance through the lens of management support.

A project's performance blossoms under the sunshine of strong management support. Effective leaders go beyond oversight; they actively guide the project forward, like a skilled conductor leading an orchestra (Kamau & Mohammed, 2015). Their participation in M&E, as highlighted by Singh *et al.* (2017), fosters a positive team spirit. This engagement ignites clear communication among stakeholders, ensuring everyone plays in harmony. Management also acts as a strategic reservoir, mobilizing resources to address shortfalls and ensuring lessons learned are translated into actionable insights for future endeavors (Wattoo, *et al.*, 2010). In essence, supportive management cultivates a fertile ground for the M&E team to flourish.

Effective communication, unwavering dedication, a collaborative leadership style, and the ability to navigate complex situations (politics, community needs) are the seeds that nurture this supportive environment (Kamau & Mohammed, 2015). By nurturing these elements, management can cultivate a robust M&E system that guides projects toward success.

In summary, management has a role in enhancing project success through supporting monitoring and evaluation teams. Such support may be achieved through factors such as communication, commitment, leadership style, managing politics, managing societal demands, and motivation.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

This section discusses the theoretical foundation on which the study is anchored. A theoretical review is a foundation for the parameters, or boundaries, of a study. Once these themes are established, studies have sought answers to the topical questions they have developed on broad subjects (Wigboldus & Woodhill, 2011). Therefore, this study will be conducted based on the following three theories namely; theory of change, results-based management theory, and program theory.

2.7.1. Result-Based Management Theory (RBM)

A well-constructed study thrives on a sturdy theoretical foundation, much like a grand building necessitating a strong base (Coopers & Schindler, 2014). This research will be guided by the philosophy of Results-Based Management (RBM). As its name implies, RBM is a management strategy that relentlessly pursues impactful outcomes. It empowers project leaders to craft performance-monitoring tools that directly influence project success (Jurevicius, 2013).

Considering RBM as a perpetual cycle, constantly propelling projects forward. It commences with meticulous planning, outlining the project's vision, and mission; and establishing a framework focused on achieving results (UNDP, 2012). M&E is intricately woven into the fabric of RBM, ensuring steady progress towards long-lasting accomplishments. This cyclical approach emphasizes recording performance and gleaning knowledge from past experiences to illuminate future endeavors (UNDP, 2012).

The variables to be explored in this study – the planning process, technical expertise, stakeholder engagement, and management participation – all flourish within the fertile ground cultivated by RBM theory. Proponents of RBM believe that an organization's internal strengths are the seeds of its success (Jurevicius, 2013). RBM encourages organizations to look inward, to cultivate their inherent capabilities, rather than solely focusing on external competition.

At its core, RBM prioritizes measuring the impact and long-term outcomes of projects, not just immediate outputs (UNDP, 2012). It provides a structured framework for performance measurement through clearly defined objectives, outcomes, and indicators. By demanding clear targets and progress tracking, RBM fosters accountability. Furthermore, it emphasizes the importance of learning from M&E data, ensuring continuous improvement in future project implementation (Jurevicius, 2013).

In essence, utilizing RBM as the theoretical framework of this study establishes a firm foundation for exploring the relationship between M&E and project performance. RBM offers a systematic and results-oriented approach, ultimately enhancing the rigor and practical relevance of this research.

2.7.2. Theory of Change (ToC)

Theory of Change is a powerful tool used in social initiatives across philanthropy, non-profits, and government (Brest, 2010). It guides planning, participation, and evaluation with a focus on achieving lasting social change. This approach starts with defining long-term goals and then works backward, identifying the essential building blocks needed to reach that desired future state. In essence, the Theory of Change explains the "how" of change, outlining the chain reactions triggered by an initiative – the short-term results, the intermediate impacts, and ultimately, the long-term goals (Clark & Taplin, 2012). It visually maps these outcomes as a pathway, highlighting the logical connections and chronological flow between each step.

This Theory will be used in relation to the monitoring and evaluation data collection and analysis and M&E planning. Theory of Change can begin at any stage of an initiative, depending on the intended use. A Theory developed at the outset is best at informing the planning of an initiative. Having worked out a change model, practitioners can make more informed decisions about strategy and tactics.

As monitoring and evaluation data become available, stakeholders, and management teams can periodically refine the Theory of Change as the evidence indicates. Therefore, by incorporating the Theory of Change into the thesis, the researcher can provide a clear and structured framework for examining the relationship between monitoring and evaluation practices and project performance.

2.7.3. Program Theory

The Program Theory, conceptualized by Chen *et al* (1995), delves into the mechanisms of instigating change and delineates the agents responsible for driving this change. Typically depicted through logical models, the Program Theory elucidates the underlying rationale behind an intervention. For years, the Program Theory has served as a practical instrument in monitoring and evaluations, renowned for its efficacy in problem-solving and its emphasis on conducting assessments to complement findings. It equips evaluators with tools to manage critical aspects of evaluations effectively (Sethi & Philippines, 2012). Serving as an expanded rendition of the logic model, the Program Theory is often visualized through graphical representations that align with the logical model. This model supports engagement from stakeholders, facilitates oversight from senior management, and aids in the review of outcomes (Hosley, 2009).

The Theory serves as a practical and anticipated model outlining how a program is theoretically designed to operate. Lipsey (2011) describes it as a proposition detailing the conversion of inputs into outputs, with the transformation measured by comparing the expected outcomes against the inputs. It elucidates how the components of a program are intended to impact the results. According to Rossi (2012), a Program Theory encompasses an organizational strategy for resource deployment and activity coordination to ensure the establishment and sustainability of the planned service system. This Theory is integrated into the input-output model to monitor performance, communicate findings, and enhance project effectiveness. Effective utilization of M&E practices forms the foundational inputs essential for processing these inputs and generating measurable outcomes. Program Theory elucidates how influencing inputs and processes can lead to improved outputs and favorable results. The inputs in this process encompass variables affecting performance, such as the M&E planning process, availability of funds, staff capabilities of M&E team, stakeholder engagement, and management involvement (Uitto, 2010).

By providing insights into the operational logic of a program and its intended outcomes, Program Theory aids in comprehending how a program is envisioned to function and achieve its goals. In this thesis, the Program Theory will be employed to articulate the fundamental assumptions regarding how monitoring and evaluation practices are envisioned to impact project performance.

2.8. Empirical Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.8.1. M&E Practice and Project Performance

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) have been growing in importance for assessing project performance. The efforts made by M&E to improve transparency and accountability build trust among donors and organizations, increasing the likelihood of securing funding and ensuring the economic sustainability of their projects (Waithera & Wanyoike, 2015). An effective M&E system plays a crucial role in project management and accountability. Through timely and reliable planning, M&E provides essential information to support project implementation, enabling evidence-based reporting that guides decision-making and enhances project performance (Muhammad, 2016). Moreover, it facilitates organizational learning and knowledge sharing by reflecting on experiences and lessons, maximizing the benefits of actions and approaches (Gaibo & Mbugua, 2019). Research by Tengan *et al*. (2019) emphasized the importance of M&E in improving government project performance, while Micah and Luketero's study (2017) highlighted how M&E practices influence NGO project performance. Based on these insights, we propose the following research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 1: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

2.8.2. M&E Practice and Management Support

The involvement of management boosts the credibility of the M&E process and enhances the acceptance of the findings (Tengan *et al*., 2019). Management plays a crucial role in resource allocation, system design, results communication, and decision-making that impact projects and M&E activities. Their dedication to implementing an M&E system is vital to ensure adequate funding and resources are allocated. Without the organization's management goodwill and support, the M&E system may underperform, resulting in inefficiency (World Bank, 2011).

Management support is a crucial factor in preparing for the implementation of monitoring and evaluation plans as they serve as key decision-makers in projects (Magondu, 2016). The involvement of organizational leaders throughout the project or program cycle ensures ownership, learning, and sustainability of results, facilitating effective communication and resource mobilization to address gaps (Chaplowe, 2008). An efficient M&E system should furnish information for both short-term and long-term decision-making and planning by management (Crawford, 2003). Utilizing M&E results to enhance project strategies and operations is essential, and sharing project progress and challenges with stakeholders promotes collective learning and problem-solving (Njama, 2015). Monitoring and evaluation should be integrated throughout the project, program, or policy life cycle and even after completion, providing valuable insights from design to impact (Njama, 2015). Hence, the following research hypothesis is proposed.

Hypothesis 2: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support.

2.8.3. Management Support and Project Performance

Oakley (2018) examined the impact of top management involvement in project management on project performance. The study compared the specific levels of key and minor support processes provided by managers. It was discovered that essential top management support processes played a significant role in enhancing project performance. Management support and dedication can be categorized into project sponsorship and project life-cycle management. The primary responsibility of the project sponsor is to address any obstacles faced by project managers and consistently emphasize to the project team the importance of achieving excellence in project performance (Bickman, 2007). Management support can enhance the efficiency of decision-making processes within a project. Active involvement and support from managers enable them to make well-timed and well-informed decisions that have a positive impact on project results (Njama, 2015). This involvement encompasses decisions regarding resource allocation, problem-solving approaches, and task prioritization, all of which play a role in boosting project performance. With management support, project teams gain access to seasoned guidance, leadership, and endorsement, ultimately resulting in enhanced project performance (Ibid).

Moreover, management support creates a nurturing atmosphere for project teams, enhancing morale, motivation, and efficiency (Micah & Luketero, 2017). When team members perceive backing from their managers, they are inclined to be more involved, dedicated, and willing to exert additional effort to guarantee project triumph. This favorable workplace environment, established through management support, can profoundly influence project performance by encouraging collaboration, creativity, and a feeling of responsibility among team members (Ibid). Consequently, we put forth the following research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 3: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

2.8.4. The Mediating Role of Management Support

In this study, management support acts as a mediating variable in the relationship between M&E practices and project performance. As Pequegnat *et al* (1995) articulated, a mediating variable is an intermediate factor that must change to observe a transformation in the dependent variable. In simpler terms, a mediator is how an independent variable affects a dependent variable. In the realm of research, a mediating variable elucidates the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable. It helps in comprehending the underlying process or mechanism through which the independent variable influences the dependent variable (Kothari, 2004).

Management support can serve as an intermediary factor between Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Project Performance as it plays a critical role in ensuring the effective implementation of findings and recommendations from M&E endeavors to enhance project performance (Kamau & Mohammed, 2015). The involvement of management is vital in interpreting the outcomes of M&E activities. Managers can offer insights and perspectives on how the results should be comprehended and what steps should be taken based on those results. Additionally, management support is crucial for resource allocation in alignment with the recommendations from M&E activities. If M&E outcomes indicate the necessity for more resources in specific project aspects or the reallocation of resources, management support is indispensable in making these decisions and ensuring resource utilization is optimized to enhance project performance (Wattoo, *et al.,* 2010). The implementation of recommendations derived from M&E activities heavily relies on management support. Managers play a pivotal role in

advocating for the changes proposed by M&E findings, ensuring the involvement of relevant stakeholders, and supervising the implementation process. Moreover, management support is essential for monitoring the progress of actions taken based on M&E recommendations. Managers can oversee the execution of changes, identify any obstacles or challenges, and make requisite adjustments to guarantee that the project is progressing toward its objectives (Ibid). In summary, management support serves as a mediator between M&E and project performance by facilitating result interpretation, resource allocation, recommendation implementation, and progress monitoring. Therefore, we posit the following research hypothesis.

Hypothesis 4: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs has a mediating effect in the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

2.9. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework is a theorized display recognizing the model under investigation and the connections between the needy variable and the autonomous factors (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2006). The framework is summarized in a schematic diagram that presents the variables and their hypothesized relationship. It shows the relationship of the variables under study and helps to keep the research work focused on the objectives of the study. This study followed the conceptual framework suggested by Kamau and Mohammed (2015) and used by Jahaf (2021). Both authors used management support as a mediating variable affecting the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

This study will focus on M&E practice and seek to establish the extent M&E practice influences the performance of projects in local humanitarian NOGs. The dependent variable is the Project performance while management support is the mediating variable.

Figure 2.1 depicts the conceptual framework of the study which shows the relationship between the independent variable (monitoring and evaluation practices) and the dependent variable (project performance) with a mediating variable of management support.

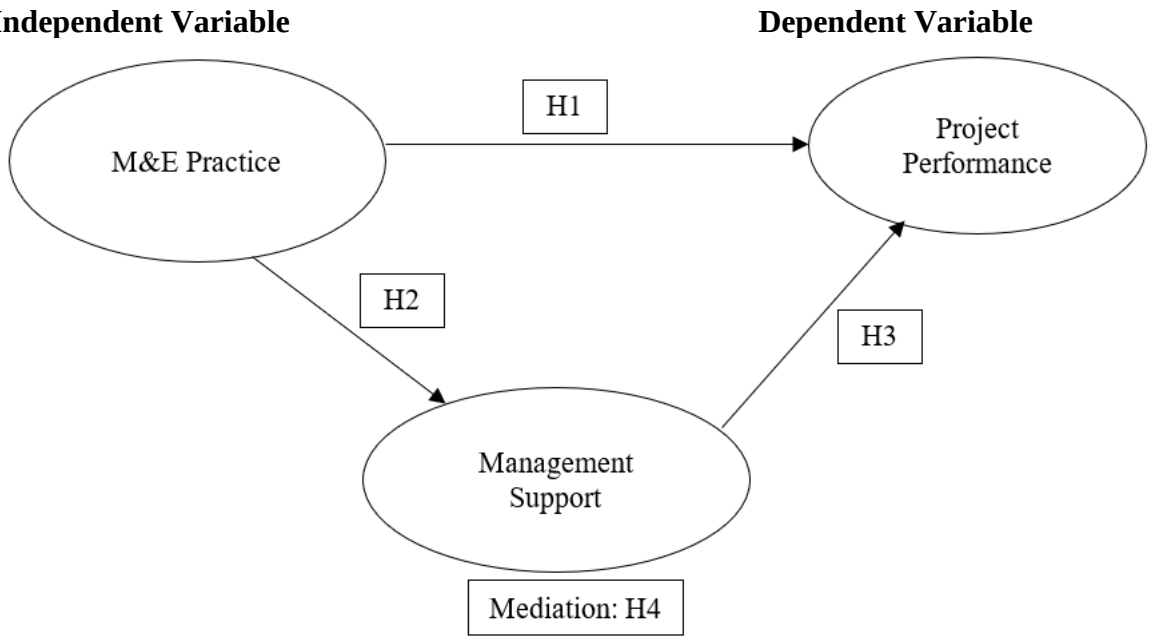

Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework Adopted from Kamau & Mohammed (2015) and Jahaf (2021).

The independent variable i.e., M&E Practice will be assessed by five attributes such as M&E system such as M&E plan, M&E skills/capacity, analysis and reporting, involvement of stakeholders, and availability of budget will be examined. The dependent variable i.e., Project Performance will be examined based on the Evaluation Criteria developed by (OECD, 2010) which is designed for humanitarian projects. The specific criteria designed to address evaluations of humanitarian action are coverage (who is or is not covered by humanitarian support), coherence (the extent to which humanitarian action is consistent with relevant policies), coordination (the extent to which the interventions of different actors were harmonized with each other), and connectedness (the extent to which activities of a short-term emergency nature were carried out in a context that took longer-term and interconnected problems into account). Hence, the project performance of local humanitarian NGOs will be examined based on these attributes developed by (OECD, 2010) i.e., coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter explains the methodology used for conducting the research as well as the research approaches that were used to address the objectives of the study. This section has ten sub-sections such as description of the study area, research approach, research design, sampling design, sources of data and data collection methods, data analysis techniques, model specification, description of study variables, test of measurement quality (validation of the measuring tool), and ethical consideration.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

As indicated in the scope of the study section, this study mainly focuses on 18 humanitarian projects executed by selected local humanitarian NGOs. To ensure the consistency in data collection and project reporting across the selected local humanitarian NGOs, making comparisons between them more reliable, eliminate variations introduced by different funding sources and their specific M&E requirements, and strengthening the research methodology, the researcher has identified projects funded by the same donor i.e., USAID across the selected local humanitarian NGOs. The overview of the identified local humanitarian NGOs along with the projects funded by USAID and executed in the year 2023 is presented in the following section.

1) **Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization (ASDEPO)**

Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization (ASDEPO) is an Ethiopian CSO; a non-governmental and non-profit making humanitarian organization established in 2014. ASDEPO has registered under the new CSO legislation on charity and society proclamation number 1113/2019 with registration number 3528. ASDEPO is mandated to operate in all regional states and city administrations of the country.

ASDEPO is engaged in ten thematic program areas of intervention namely Education, Health/HIV and AIDS, Nutrition, Community and Family Support, Women and Youth economic empowerment, livelihood and Skill Training, Water, Sanitation and hygiene, Environmental Protection, Child Protection, and Humanitarian response.

2) Development for Peace Organization (DPO)

Development for Peace Organization (DPO) is an Ethiopian non-profit organization established in 2020 with a mission of striving to meet the humanitarian and developmental needs of societies regardless of race, color, religion, or cultural background. The organization is legally registered to work in Ethiopia (Reg. 5164), South Sudan (Reg. 4178), Kenya (OP.218/051/22-400/12732 and Somalia (Reg. NGOD/Moifar0422/022); it is also processing its registration in Yemen. DPO aspires to see people living a decent life in a safe and healthy environment.

3) Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC/DICAC)

The Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC/DICAC) is the development wing of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. The Commission operates through a countrywide network of churches, working with partners on poverty reduction. Programs include emergency relief, food security, rehabilitation, development, prevention, and control activities in HIV/AIDs. The organization was established in 1972. It is engaged primarily with the objective "to help disadvantaged communities attain self-reliance by tackling the root causes of poverty, drought, conflict, and HIV/AIDS by promoting sustainable development programs". The EOC-DICAC works within the regulations and laws governing nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). The Vision of EOC-DICAC is to help create a just society in which everyone has access to the necessities of life.

4) Ethiopian Red Cross (ERC)

The International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a global humanitarian network of 80 million people that helps those facing disaster, conflict, and health and social problems. It consists of the International Committee of the Red Cross, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the 192 National Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

The Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS), one of the 192 national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies around the world, was founded on July 8th, 1935, by government edict, following the second Italian invasion of Ethiopia. ERCS began by providing

humanitarian services to wounded soldiers and civilian victims. That same year on 25th September 1935, ERCS was officially recognized as the 48th member of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies.

ERCS is auxiliary to the government and yet it is an independent humanitarian organization. It was established and recognized by law through a National Charter adopted on 31st October 1947. The Charter has undergone various parliamentary revisions, the last being in 1999. The current Charter was endorsed by the Parliament in January 2018.

5) Fayya Integrated Development Organization (FIDO)

Fayyaa Integrated Development Organization (FIDO) is an Ethiopian indigenous, Non-Governmental Organization established in 2002 by a group of volunteers in Jimma zone of Oromia Regional State in response to the fight against HIV/AIDS pandemic. When it first began, FIDO started its field-level operations in the Jimma zone in partnership with Nazarene Compassionate Ministry (NCM) by providing support to 27 orphans and Vulnerable Children (OVC) with 10% community support. After evaluating its infant support triumphs, FIDO expanded its thematic scope and started to focus on HIV/AIDS-related issues such as Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT), care and support for OVC and PLWHA. In addition to that, Malaria control, Child Development, and Reproductive Health projects were launched with support from its partners.

6) Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development (MCMDO)

Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development Organization (MCMDO) is an Indigenous, nongovernmental, nonprofit, and humanitarian organization founded in 1997. It was formerly known as Welfare for the Street Mothers and Children Organization (WeSMCO) and was renamed in 2009 to incorporate the broadened thematic areas the organization is increasingly dealing with. The same year MCMDO was reregistered by the Charities and Societies Proclamation No.621/2009 as an Ethiopian resident charity organization with certificate number 0022. MCMDO has implemented more than 148 projects in the last and benefited around seven million five hundred beneficiaries all over the country.

Initially, the organization's focus was preventing 'street-ism' and promoting rehabilitation but has gradually increased to encompass 7 thematic areas: Health, Education, Skills Training, Family and Community Support, Water and Sanitation, Urban Agriculture and Environmental Protection, and Economic Empowerment of women. MCMDO currently works in 2 administrative cities and two hundred fifty woredas.

7) **Organization for Rehabilitation and Development (ORDA)**

In response to the severe rural poverty aggravated by the 1984 persistent drought, civil war, economic mismanagement, and above all the political contention of the Derg regime, ORDA Ethiopia was founded in February 1984 as the Ethiopian Relief Organization (ERO). ORDA Ethiopia was legally registered as a local NGO in 1991 by the Ethiopian Relief and Rehabilitation Commission and again in 1999 by the Federal Ministry of Justice (MOJ). According to the new Charities and Societies Legislation, it is re-registered by MOJ Charities and Societies Agency as an Ethiopian Residents Charity under license number 0607.

ORDA operates in different thematic areas such as Gender, Disability Inclusion, and Youth Employment, Food Commodity Management and Emergency, Forest, Environment, and Climate Change, Agriculture, Nutrition, and DRM; and water & irrigation program (WIP).

8) **Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA)**

OWDA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to making a positive impact on the lives of those in need. We believe in the power of collective action and are committed to driving sustainable change through our programs and initiatives. With your support, we can create a better future for individuals and communities around the world. Thematic areas are livelihood, health, WASH, and education.

9) **Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association (PAPDA)**

Partnership For Pastoralists Development Association [PAPDA] is a legally registered humanitarian, National nongovernmental organization striving to improve the livelihood of poor pastoralists and Agro pastoralist communities in Ethiopia. PAPDA

was established in June 2006 by people who hail from pastoralist areas of Oromia, Somali, and Afar regional States and is re-registered (No 0355) with the Agency for Civil Society Organizations. PAPDA exists to contribute towards the provision of efficient, effective, and sustainable basic socio-economic services that enhance the living standard of the pastoralist communities.

3.2 Research Approach

Research approach is a logical order the researcher needs to follow to achieve a certain predetermined result (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). Among the three kinds of research approaches, as stated by Kumar (2011) such as qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research approaches, this study followed a quantitative research approach. Quantitative research is a structured and systematic approach that defines the relationship between variables and is used for testing objective theories by examining the relationship among variables (Jonker & Pennink, 2010). Therefore, to address the research questions and objectives of the study, the researcher followed a quantitative approach.

3.3 Research Design

A research design is a plan of investigation and it is the complete scheme or program of the research (Kumar, 2011). Based on the purposes they serve, Robson (2002) has categorized research design into three types: explorative, descriptive, and explanative. To achieve the identified objectives and address the research questions, both descriptive and explanatory research designs were employed in this study.

Jonker and Pennink (2010) stated that the major concern of descriptive research design is to clearly describe the characteristics of a phenomenon, population, or area under study. Saunders *et al*., (2009) also added that a descriptive research design involves querying the selected population about a certain issue and allows the researcher to collect information on the actual state of the phenomenon at the time of the study. The study employed a descriptive approach to gain a thorough understanding of the study topic from other relevant sources, identify and explain the variables, and focus the research on key concerns associated with the study.

Babbie (2008) defined explanatory as a research design that focuses on the discovery of ideas, an insight that is especially useful when breaking a broad vague problem

statement into a smaller and more precise research question. It is also useful in clarifying concepts and testing measurement methods. Therefore, this study also employed an explanatory research design to examine the causal relationship between the identified independent variables (i.e., M&E practice and management support) and dependent variables (i.e., project performance).

Furthermore, for collecting the primary data, the study used a cross-sectional data collection design or survey method. As stated by Jonker and Pennink (2010), a cross-sectional data collection or survey method entails the collection of data on more than one case and at a single point in time.

3.4 Population of the Study and Sampling Design

A sample design is a plan for obtaining a sample from a given population (Kothari, 2004). So, in this section, the target population, sampling frame, sample size, and sampling techniques are described as follows.

3.4.1 Target Population of the Study

According to Kothari (2004), a target population is a specified group of people or objects for which questions are asked or observed to develop required data structures and information. As indicated in the scope of the study, based on their reputation in the year 2023, the study is delimited to nine different local humanitarian NGOs operating in Ethiopia, based in Addis Ababa. The lists of local humanitarian NGOs are provided by CSA based on their higher reputation in the year 2023.

These 9 local humanitarian NGOs have completed 38 projects in the year 2023; out of which 18 humanitarian projects were funded by a common donor named USAID. Among different projects implemented by these local humanitarian NGOs, the researcher has focused on eighteen completed projects that were funded by USAID. Selecting projects funded by the same donor i.e., USAID will ensure consistency in data collection and project reporting across the selected NGOs, making comparisons between them more reliable. Besides this, the researcher can eliminate variations introduced by different funding sources and their specific M&E requirements. This allows the researcher to isolate the impact of M&E practices on project performance and this simplifies data collection and strengthens the research methodology.

Hence, the target population of this study is eighteen humanitarian projects completed by selected nine humanitarian local NGOs. Table 3.1 presents the lists of the selected nine local humanitarian NGOs and the lists of projects funded by USAID and completed in 2023.

Table 3.1: List of Target Population across Local Humanitarian NGOs

S.N	List of Local Humanitarian NGOs	Type of Intervention (Projects)	Location
1	Action for Social Development and Environmental Protection Organization (ASDEPO)	Health & Nutrition	Tigray region
		Multi-sector Project	Tigray region
2	Development for Peace Organization (DPO).	Non-food items (NFI) distribution	Somali region
		Shelter repair kit distribution	Tigray region
3	Ethiopian Orthodox Church Development and Inter-Church Aid Commission (EOC/DICAC)	Child and Women Protection	Amhara region
		WASH	Oromia region
4	Ethiopian Red Cross (ERC)	Education	Tigray region
		Health & Nutrition	Tigray region
5	Fayyaa Integrated Development Organization (FIDO)	Agricultural Support	Oromia region
		NFI Distribution	Oromia region
6	Mothers and Children Multisectoral Development (MCMDO)	Multi-purpose cash (MPC)	Tigray region
		Education	Amhara region
7	Organization for Rehabilitation and Development (ORDA)	WASH	Somali region
		Child and Women Protection	Somali region
8	Organization for Welfare and Development in Action (OWDA)	NFI Distribution	Amhara region
		Multi-sector Project	Amhara region
9	Partnership for Pastoralists Development Association (PAPDA)	Shelter and Settlement	Tigray region
		Agricultural Support	Amhara region

Source: Data from Respective NGOs (2024)

3.4.2 Sample Size

A sample size according to Kothari (2004) is a representation or a smaller reflection of the larger population. In this study, the focus is on eighteen humanitarian projects funded by USAID and carried out by the nine local humanitarian NGOs. Hence, the sampling framework of this study is the lists of these humanitarian projects executed by the nine local humanitarian NGOs. Therefore, the total sample size of this is 18 (i.e., 18 projects).

The researcher has chosen employees who have been involved in these completed projects as the primary respondents. Specifically, individuals from the project team, the M&E team, and the management team have been selected for their relevance to the study. As informed from the human resources of the respective NGOs, the average number of employees working in M&E, project team, and management is three from each departments.

Bearing this mind, each local humanitarian NGO will have a total of 9 respondents (for the identified two projects), with 3 individuals from each of the project team, M&E team, and management team.

The total number of respondents in this study is determined by the number of projects, which is 18, resulting in a total of 162 staff members as respondents (9 respondents x 18 projects). This approach ensures a comprehensive analysis of the projects while incorporating insights from various perspectives within the organizations. The mean value of responses about each project is considered in the analysis.

3.4.3 Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique is the process by which the entities of the sample have been selected (Creswell, 2009). In this study, purposive and simple random sampling techniques were followed. As indicated in the previous section, the target population of this study is eighteen humanitarian projects executed by nine local humanitarian NGOs. This study followed purposive sampling to identify relevant staff members who can provide quality data about the completed humanitarian projects. The staff members were selected from the project team, M&E team, and management team. These departments/teams are selected in a purposive sampling technique. These respondents are believed to contribute appropriate data, both in terms of relevance and depth.

According to Creswell (2009), purposive sampling is a form of non-probability sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue, or capacity and willingness to participate in the research. The study also followed a random sampling technique to determine the respondents from these three departments. Simple random sampling provides the opportunity for each member of the population understudy to have an equal chance of being selected (Saunders *et al*., 2009).

3.5 Data Sources and Collection Techniques

3.5.1 Data Type and Source

Both primary and secondary sources were used in this research. Structured questionnaires were used to collect the primary data. The researcher used the survey method to acquire the primary data through a structured questionnaire from eighteen completed humanitarian projects funded by USAID across the identified nine local humanitarian NGOs and employees from selected departments i.e., project, M&E, and management team members. Secondary data is collected from the organization (M&E) manual, published and unpublished theoretical literature, empirical studies, recent year's records, the internet, articles, periodicals, research papers, and various reference books. Secondary data gave the researcher a point of comparison for the data they had collected and helped them comprehend the issue better.

3.5.2 Data Collecting Instruments

For collecting the primary data, the researcher used a self-administered structured questionnaire as the main instrument for data gathering from the former USAID-funded project staff, M&E staff, and management members. The independent variables namely M&E practice with its attributes and management support were assessed by a data collection instrument adopted from the previous work of Kamau & Mohammed (2015) and Jahaf (2021). The researcher modified the questionnaire to relate it to the general & specific objectives of the research. To measure the project performance of the humanitarian projects, the researcher adopted a criteria and data collection tool designed for humanitarian projects developed by OECD (2010) i.e., coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness. The questionnaire of the survey is built into four parts having a total of 49 questions. Part one (Q1-7) is designed for collecting the demographic data, part two is for the M&E practices, part three is for management support, and part four is for the performance of the humanitarian projects.

The data of the independent variable i.e., M&E practice (Part II: Q8 - 32), mediating variable i.e., management support (Part II: Q33 - 37), and the data of dependent variable i.e., the level of performance of the humanitarian projects (Part IV) that include coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness (Q38 - 49) were collected through Likert's five-point scale; a scale designed to examine how strongly respondents agree with the statement using the following anchors: 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree,

3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree. The Likert Scale is widely used and is appropriate for eliciting the respondents' opinions on the subject. It provided a middle ground on issues for those who would be unsure or do not want to commit. Because of its applicability in terms of attitude, the Likert scale was chosen (Cooper & Schindler, 2014).

For those who were undecided, an intermediate scale of neither agree nor disagree i.e., neutral is included. The researcher designed the questionnaire in the English language as indicated in Appendix A. Table 3.2 indicates the structure of the questionnaire as below.

Table 3.2: Questionnaire Structure of the Study

S.No.	Sections	Questions	No. of Questions
1	Demographic Information	Question No. 1 – 7	7
2	M&E Practice	Question No. 8 – 32	25
3	Management Support	Question No. 33 – 37	5
4	Project Performance	Question No. 38 – 49	12
	Total Questions		49

3.5.3 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher has received permission from the identified local humanitarian NGOs to collect the primary data through a well-prepared questionnaire with a preamble letter from Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce. Since the questionnaires are self-administered, the researcher has provided the questionnaire to the target population with a cover letter that explains the purpose of the study, the way of responding, the aim of the research, and the security of the information to encourage high response.

Consent was made with employees to facilitate a good response rate and the collection of the data has taken around 3 weeks. The questionnaire was distributed and collected in person (face-to-face), email, telegram, and other convenient platforms such as the Kobo toolbox. The researcher has followed the status of the questionnaire through phone calls and visits to their offices to make sure that they have allocated adequate time to respond and submit or send back the questionnaire.

3.6 Model Specification and Data Analysis Techniques

3.6.1 Model Specification

To compute the best prediction of a dependent variable from the identified independent variables as indicated in the conceptual framework, a multiple linear regression model was utilized. Before conducting the multiple linear regression analysis, the relevance of the structural equal model was tested. The absence of outliers, linearity, normality, and the absence of multicollinearity are the relevant tests for conducting multiple linear regression models as stated by Almaquist *et al*., (2016).

For examining the effect of M&E practice and management support on the project performance of humanitarian projects, the following multiple linear regression models were designed.

$$Yi = \beta_0 + MPx_1 + MSx_2 + \varepsilon$$

Where; Yi is Project Performance, $\beta 0$ is the intercept, MP is model parameters i.e., M&E practice, MS is management support, and ε is the error or noise term. $x1$ denotes the coefficient for M&E practice and $x2$ denotes the coefficient for mediator variable i.e., management support.

3.6.2 Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis is the process where collected data is reduced to a more controllable and convenient size, and a researcher can start to identify trends or patterns, apply statistical techniques, and give a summary of the data (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). Before directly starting the analysis, the collected data was passed through a data screening process and checked for completeness and consistency. Identified mistakes and data gaps were rectified. Thereafter, the data was sorted & coded, then entered into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS v27).

For the analysis of the primary data i.e., quantitative data, descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, multiple, and hierarchical regression models were employed. The descriptive statistical analysis includes frequencies, percentages, and means. This analysis provides an overview of the participants' perceptions regarding M&E practice, management support, and their influence on project performance.

Besides this, multiple and hierarchical regression techniques were applied to test the hypotheses of the study. To test the relationship between the independent variable i.e., M&E practices, mediator variable i.e., management support, and dependent variable i.e., project performance, multiple regression analyses was conducted. In addition to the multiple regression, hierarchical regression is used to test the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on project performance by considering the mediator variable. The mean value of M&E practice attributes, management support, and different attributes of project performance were used for the correlation and regression analysis.

3.7 Description of Study Variables

This study utilized three main types of variables: independent (M&E practice in local humanitarian projects), mediator (management support), and dependent (project performance of eighteen humanitarian projects funded by USAID and implemented by nine local humanitarian NGOs).

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Practice: is a systematic process that helps project managers and stakeholders track a project's progress, performance, and outcomes (Nuguti, 2019). It involves the continuous collection and analysis of data to assess whether the project is on track to achieve its objectives and goals. Project M&E comprises a range of processes and activities that, when implemented correctly, result in successful project delivery and enhance project performance (Msila & Setlhako, 2020). This study focuses on five key M&E components to examine the practice of M&E in the identified local humanitarian NGOs, which includes the availability of an M&E plan, M&E skills/capacity (competency of M&E team), analysis and reporting, involvement of stakeholders (stakeholder engagement), and availability of funds/budgets.

Management Support: Management support in the project as outlined by PMBOK (2001) includes strong leadership and organization of the project team. This research explores how management support acts as a bridge between M&E practices (independent variable) and project performance (dependent variable) in humanitarian projects. By investigating this mediating effect, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how M&E practices influence project performance through the lens of management support.

Project Performance: In humanitarian projects, project performance refers to assessing how well the project is meeting its objectives, targets, and intended outcomes regarding providing aid, protection, and services to vulnerable populations. In this study, the performance of the identified local humanitarian NGOs will be examined based on the evaluation criteria developed by OECD DAC (2010) designed to evaluate only humanitarian projects. These criteria are coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness.

3.8 Scale Reliability and Validity

3.8.1 Reliability

According to Kothari (2004), reliability refers to consistency, where internal consistency involves correlating the responses to each question in the questionnaire with those other questions in the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient, indicated by the symbol "α", is one of the most popular measures of internal consistency. Based on the following rule of thumb of Almaquist *et al*., (2016), if "α > 0.95 – 'Excellent', α 0.8 – 0.95 – 'Very good', α = 0.7 – 0.8 – 'Acceptable', α >0.6 – 'Questionable', α >0.5 – 'Poor', and α <5 – 'Unacceptable'. Hence, for conducting the analysis, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient has to be greater than 0.7. To check the consistency of the data collection tool, the researcher has computed a reliability test as below.

Table 3.3: Reliability Test

Reliability Test Result of Independent Variables		
Variables	**Cronbach's Alpha**	**No. of Items**
M&E Practice	.973	25
Management Support	.830	5
Reliability Test Result of Dependent Variable		
Project Performance	.896	12
Overall Value	**.979**	**42**

Source: Own Computation (2024)

In Table 3.3, all variables have a Cronbach's Alpha above 0.7, within the acceptable range. Specifically, the M&E practice scores 0.973 ("Excellent") and management support scores 0.830 ("Very good"). The overall Cronbach's Alpha is 0.979, indicating "Excellent" reliability. This high internal consistency ensures reliable data for analysis, supporting valid conclusions in the research.

3.8.2 Validity

Validity in research is the cornerstone of ensuring that an instrument (data collection tool) accurately measures what it is intended to measure, reflecting the truthfulness of the results obtained (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). It is crucial for a research instrument, such as a questionnaire, to precisely capture the concepts under study. Essentially, validity signifies the extent to which variations identified through a measuring instrument genuinely represent differences among those being examined (Cooper & Schindler, 2008).

Various methods exist for establishing validity, including content validity, convergent validity, concurrent validity, predictive validity, and construct validity (Cooper & Schindler, 2008). In this study, content validity was meticulously addressed through a thorough review of the literature and the incorporation of established questions from prior research to enhance the questionnaire's validity. Moreover, to ensure the questionnaire's validity, discussions were held with the advisor before its distribution to the target population.

To further bolster the content validity of the questionnaires, consultations were conducted with a select group comprising individuals with backgrounds in monitoring and evaluation, as well as project implementation experience. This strategic approach aimed to refine the questionnaire and ensure that it effectively captures the intended concepts with precision and accuracy, thereby reinforcing the validity of the study.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

Throughout the research, ethical considerations, particularly regarding privacy and confidentiality, were a top priority. To protect the anonymity of participants, each received a guarantee of non-disclosure of their identities in the final report. Prior to the survey, participants were informed about the research objectives through verbal and written means, including an informed consent form, ensuring they understood the study's purpose and consequences. By securing their consent, participants were assured of confidentiality and appropriate use of their responses. This ethical approach not only maintained standards but also built trust and transparency between the researcher and participants, enhancing the research's ethical integrity.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

This chapter presents the analysis, interpretation of responses, the findings of the study, and the discussion of the findings. This section is comprised of six sub-sections such as response rate and demographic information, descriptive analysis of the attributes of M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs, descriptive analysis of management support in local humanitarian NGOs, descriptive analysis of project performance in local humanitarian NGOs, analysis of the statistical significance of the effect of M&E practice on project performance in local humanitarian NGOs, and results of hypotheses test. To analyze the collected data in line with the overall objective of the research undertaking, statistical procedures were carried out using SPSS version 27.

4.1 Response Rate and Demographic Information

4.1.1 Response Rate

The target population of the study was the eighteen projects executed by local humanitarian NGOs and three departments across the identified nine local humanitarian NGOs were purposively identified. Respondents across these departments in the identified organizations were selected through a simple random sampling technique.

Self-administered questionnaires were designed to collect data from the target population. The questionnaires contained close-ended questions with a five-point Likert scale on which the respondents were asked to tick the boxes that apply to them. The researcher issued a total of 162 questionnaires in person and via internet-based platforms such as email and telegram to the identified respondents and 150 were filled and returned giving a response rate of 93% as indicated in table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1: Response Rate of the Projects and Respondents

No.	Description	No. of Projects	No. of Respondents
1	Total target population	18	162
3	Questionnaire distributed	18	162
4	Questionnaire returned	18	150
5	Response rate (%)	100	93%
6	Usable response	18	150

Source: (Survey, 2024)

As indicated in the Table above, responses about all projects were collected while in respondents wise, 150 out of 162 were collected.

The researcher issued 162 questionnaires (having 49 questions) to the staff of M&E, project, and management teams across the eighteen projects. As indicated in the sampling design section, across the three teams a total of 9 respondents were targeted to respond for each project. hence, 18 questionnaires for the two projects in each organization were expected to be collected. The response rate across each organization and project is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2: Response Rate across the Target Population

S.N	List of Local Humanitarian NGOs	List of Projects	Project Staff	MEAL Staff	Management Staff	Total	Target	%
1	ASDEPO)	Health & Nutrition	3	3	2	8	18	89%
		Multi-sector Project	3	3	2	8		
2	DPO	NFI distribution	3	3	3	9	18	100%
		Shelter repair kit distribution	3	3	3	9		
3	EOC/DICAC	Child and Women Protection	3	2	2	7	18	78%
		WASH	3	2	2	7		
4	ERC	Education	3	3	3	9	18	100%
		Health & Nutrition	3	3	3	9		
5	FIDO	Agricultural Support	3	3	2	8	18	89%
		NFI Distribution	3	3	2	8		
6	MCMDO	Multi-purpose cash (MPC)	3	3	3	9	18	100%
		Education	3	3	3	9		
7	ORDA	WASH	3	3	2	8	18	89%
		Child and Women Protection	3	3	2	8		
8	OWDA	NFI Distribution	3	3	2	8	18	89%
		Multi-sector Project	3	3	2	8		
9	PAPDA	Shelter and Settlement	3	3	3	9	18	100%
		Agricultural Support	3	3	3	9		
	Total (Actual)		***54***	***52***	***44***	***150***		
	Total (Target)		***54***	***54***	***54***		***162***	
	Response Rate		***100%***	***96%***	***81%***		***93%***	

Source: (Survey, 2024)

As indicated in the above table, the targeted responses were collected from DPO, ERC, MCMDO, and PAPDA. This implies that all of the respondents have returned the questionnaire.

4.1.2 Demographic Information of Respondents

This section presents variables that show the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of respondents including sex, age, education level, work experience, types of projects, and occupation level of the respondents.

Table 4.3: Demographic Information of Respondents

Characteristics	Description	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sex	Female	42	28.0	28.0
	Male	108	72.0	100.0
Age Group	19 – 30 years	32	21.3	21.3
	31 – 40 years	68	45.3	66.7
	41 – 50 years	42	28.0	94.7
	51 & Above 51 years	8	5.3	100.0
Highest Education Level	First Degree	54	36.0	36.0
	Master's degree	90	60.0	96.0
	PhD degree	6	4.0	100.0
Years of Service	2 – 5years	36	24.0	24.0
	6 – 10years	32	21.3	45.3
	11 – 15 years	52	34.7	80.0
	16 – 20 years	16	10.7	90.7
	Above 20 years	14	9.3	100.0
Type of Projects	Agricultural support	17	11.3	11.3
	Child & Women Protection	15	10.0	21.3
	Education	18	12.0	33.3
	Health & Nutrition	17	11.3	44.7
	Multi-purpose cash (MPC)	9	6.0	50.7
	NFI Distribution	25	16.7	67.3
	Shelter & Settlement	9	6.0	73.3
	Shelter repair kit distribution	9	6.0	79.3
	WASH	15	10.0	89.3
	Multi-Sector	16	10.7	100.0
Occupational Level	Project Staff	54	36.0	36.0
	M&E Staff	52	34.7	70.7
	Management staff	44	29.3	100.0

Source: (*Survey, 2024)*

As shown in the table above, out of the 150 respondents for the study, 42 were female (28%) whilst 108 (72%) were male. This shows that the ratio of males is greater than females involved in the study. On the other hand, the age distribution of respondents as shown in Table 4.3 above shows that the majority of the respondents fell within the age group of 31 – 40 years (n=68, 45.3%) followed by age groups 41 – 50 years (n=42, 28%). On the contrary, respondents who fell within the 51 & above 51 years group (n=8, 5.3%) constituted the least share followed by age groups of 19 – 30 years (n=32, 21.3%). This implies that age groups below 40 years occupy 88% of the respondents.

With the educational background, the majority of the respondents (n=90, 60%) have possessed their master's degree; and 36% (n=54) possessed their first degree. On the other hand, the least share of respondents (n=6, 4%) possessed a PhD degree. This could enhance the quality of the collected data. Hence, most of the respondents were

university graduates (well-educated). It was believed that the sampled staff would provide appropriate responses about the project.

In terms of how many years the respondents had worked at the corresponding organizations and projects, the findings show that most respondents (n=52, 34.7%) had worked for their respective organizations for 11 to 15 years. In addition, 24% (n=36) of the respondents had worked in their respective organizations for 2 to 5 years, while 21.3% (n=32) had worked in their respective organizations for 6 to 10 years. On the contrary, the least share of respondents (n=14, 9.3%) stated that they have worked in their respective organizations for more than 20 years and 10.7% (n=16) respondents have worked for 16 to 20 years. According to this, more than half of the respondents (n=68, 69.3%) have worked up to 10 years in their respective organizations. This could indicate that the study gathered information from well-experienced who acquired knowledge in humanitarian projects.

The identified local humanitarian NGOs have executed different humanitarian projects funded by USAID. Regarding with this, respondents were asked in which humanitarian project they were engaged. The majority of respondents (n=25, 16.7%) were engaged in NFI distribution projects, 12% (n=18) in education projects, 11.3% (n=17 each) in agricultural support and health & nutrition projects, and 10.7% (n=16) in a multi-sector project. In addition, the least share of respondents (n=9, 6% each) stated that they were engaged in shelter repair kit distribution, multi-purpose cash (MPC) distribution, and shelter & settlement projects.

The study has purposely identified the M&E team, project team, and management teams as respondents for this study. Based on this, respondents were requested to indicate their occupational level. The majority of respondents (n=54, 36%) stated that they were working as project staff in the identified projects and organizations and 34.7% (n=52) of the respondents were working as M&E staff while 29.3% (n=44) were working as management staff.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis of Attributes of Monitoring and Evaluation Practice in Local Humanitarian NGOs

4.2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Practice is a systematic process that helps project managers and stakeholders track a project's progress, performance, and outcomes (Nuguti, 2019). It involves the continuous collection and analysis of data to assess whether the project is on track to achieve its objectives and goals. This study focuses on five key M&E components to examine the practice of M&E in the identified local humanitarian NGOs, which includes the availability of an M&E plan, M&E skills/capacity (competency of M&E team), analysis and reporting, involvement of stakeholders (stakeholder engagement), and availability of funds/budgets. In light of this, the study set out to get the M&E, project team, and management staff's opinions regarding the M&E plan utilized in the humanitarian project executed by their respective organizations that USAID funded. The following section presents the results of the collected data.

Table 4.4: Frequency of Respondent's Perception of the M&E Plan

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
The USAID-funded projects had a comprehensive M&E plan	5 3.3%	10 6.7%	30 20.0%	60 40.0%	45 30.0%	3.8667
The M&E plan had indicators that were linked to the objectives of the project.	- 	5 3.3%	20 13.3%	45 30.0%	80 44.7%	4.3333
M&E planning ensured effective tracking of the progress of the projects.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	16 10.7%	57 38.0%	67 44.7%	4.1733
Planning for M&E considered all project activities and was open to adjustments.	10 6.7%	21 14.0%	12 8.0%	61 40.7%	46 30.7%	3.7467
Project staff and key stakeholders are involved in the preparation of the M&E plan.	30 20.0%	15 10.0%	15 10.0%	60 40.0%	30 20.0%	3.3000
Overall Average Mean						3.8840

Source: (Survey, 2024)

From Table 4.4 it can be seen that the majority (83.3%, Mean = 4.3333) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that the M&E plan used in the USAID project had indicators linked to the project objectives. Besides this, 82.7% (Mean = 4.1733) of the respondents perceived that the M&E planning ensured effective tracking of the progress of the project funded by USAID. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 30%, Mean = 3.30) for the statement stating that project staff and key stakeholders are involved in the preparation of the M&E plan; and for the

statement stating that planning for M&E considered all project activities and was open to adjustments (Mean = 3.7467).

According to Almaquist *et al.* (2016), if the mean value of the Liker scale is greater than 3.79, it will be considered as high; if it is between 3.40 and 3.79, it will be regarded as moderate; and if the mean value is below 3.40, it will be considered as low. As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all attributes of the M&E plan ranges from 3.30 to 4.44 and the overall average mean value of this attribute i.e., the M&E plan is computed as 3.8840. This is considered as high as stated by Almaquist *et al*. (2016). From this, the research infers that the M&E plan used in the USAID project is perceived by respondents as high-performance (good quality).

4.2.2 Skills of M&E Team

Effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices require a diverse team comprising individuals with varying levels of expertise, including staff, beneficiaries, and volunteers without formal M&E backgrounds. Strong technical skills among staff are crucial for donor-funded projects in NGOs, enabling them to offer valuable insights into creating effective performance monitoring systems. Beyond technical expertise, individuals with M&E experience play a vital role in intervention success, emphasizing the importance of assessing existing experience within the team, partner organizations, and target communities. Continuous learning through training and capacity building is emphasized to keep M&E staff updated on the latest trends and approaches in the field, highlighting the significance of skilled personnel in carrying out M&E tasks competently. Skills of the M&E team (competence of M&E team) were also the other attributes of M&E practice selected in this study. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the skills of the M&E team involved in the USAID-funded project. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.5: Frequency of Respondents' Perception of Skills of the M&E Team

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
The staff M&E team has adequate experience in monitoring and evaluation	25 16.7%	50 33.3%	30 20.0%	35 23.3%	10 6.7%	2.7000
The level of education was considered in the selection and recruitment of staff into USAID funded M&E team	5 3.3%	10 6.7%	30 20.0%	65 43.3%	40 26.7%	3.8333
Project training needs analysis was done to ensure the right skills are acquired to manage the M&E activities	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	30 20.0%	54 36.0%	56 37.3%	4.0067

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
M&E staff can determine how the project's lessons learned are produced, communicated, and perceived.	4 2.7%	6 4.0%	25 16.7%	50 33.3%	65 43.3%	4.2520
M&E staff played a key role in providing functional advice in the implementation of the USAID-funded project.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	8 5.3%	77 51.3%	55 36.7%	4.1467
Overall Average Mean						3.7587

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Table 4.5 shows that the majority (88%, Mean = 4.1467) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that the M&E staff played a key role in providing functional advice in the implementation of the USAID-funded project. Besides this, 76.7% (Mean = 4.1067) of the respondents perceived that the M&E staff can determine how the project's lessons learned are produced, communicated, and perceived. Besides this, 73.3% (Mean = 4.0067) of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the project training needs analysis was done to ensure the right skills are acquired to manage the M&E activities. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 50%, Mean = 2.70) for the statement stating that the staff of the M&E team has adequate experience in monitoring and evaluation.

As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all dimensions of skills of the M&E team ranges from 2.70 to 4.1467 and the overall average mean value of this attribute i.e., skills of the M&E team is computed as 3.7587. This is considered as moderate as stated by Almaquist et al. (2016). From this, the research infers that the skills of the M&E team engaged in the USAID-funded project are perceived by respondents as moderate.

4.2.3 Analysis and Reporting

The study has identified analysis and reporting as the other attributes of M&E practice. Hubert and Molapo (2019) clarified that regular project reporting provides opportunities to compare project performance to the project plans (Hubert & Mulyungi, 2018), which explains why M&E activities have a substantial impact on the initiatives' success. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the analysis and reporting trends that were used in the USAID-funded project. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.6: Frequency of Respondents Perception about Reporting & Analysis

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
Data collection and analysis tools in place in USAID-funded projects were capable of identifying any limitations, biases, and threats to the accuracy of the data and analysis	5 3.3%	20 13.3%	25 16.7%	30 20.0%	65 46.7%	3.9333
Data collection and analysis tools in place in USAID-funded projects were capable of generating both internal and external assessment reports	38 25.3%	20 13.3%	30 20.0%	31 20.7%	31 20.7%	2.9800
There was timely dissemination of analyzed data during the M&E reporting in USAID-funded project	25 16.7%	25 16.7%	30 20.0%	30 20.0%	40 26.7%	3.2333
Data collection analysis assists in monitoring and evaluation	24 16.0%	15 10.0%	45 30.0%	36 24.0%	30 20.0%	3.2200
The number of data collection tools was sufficient for project/program needs and not excessive.	25 16.7%	30 20.0%	30 20.0%	35 23.3%	30 20.0%	3.1000
Overall Average Mean						3.2933

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Table 4.6 shows that the majority (66.7%, Mean = 3.9333) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that the data collection and analysis tools in place in USAID-funded projects were capable of identifying any limitations, biases, and threats to the accuracy of the data and analysis. Besides this, 46.7% (Mean = 3.2333) of the respondents perceived that there was timely dissemination of analyzed data during the M&E reporting in the USAID-funded project. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 38.7%, Mean = 2.98) for the statement stating that data collection and analysis tools in place in the USAID-funded projects were capable of generating both internal and external assessment reports.

As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all dimensions of analysis and reporting ranges from 2.98 to 3.933 and the overall average mean value of this attribute i.e., analysis and reporting is computed as 3.2933. This is considered as low as stated by Almaquist *et al*. (2016). Based on this data, the research concludes that the analysis and reporting practices employed in the USAID-funded project are perceived as inadequate by the respondents.

4.2.4 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement is another attribute of M&E practice considered in this study. Stakeholders at different levels in M&E can take part in corrective action identification or taking, as well as share control over the content, process, and outcomes of M&E activities. Involving stakeholders in M&E (monitoring and evaluation) boosts project delivery by providing richer, more relevant information (UNFPA, 2016). This includes

program users, decision-makers, implementers, and communities. Their participation improves program quality and ensures local needs are addressed. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the stakeholder engagement in the M&E in the USAID-funded project. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.7: Frequency of Respondents Perception about Stakeholder Engagement

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
A stakeholder analysis was done to ensure all the stakeholders are involved in project monitoring	24 16.0%	22 14.7%	19 12.7%	26 17.3%	59 39.3%	3.4933
Communication strategy is developed to address the flow of information	18 12.0%	25 16.7%	19 12.7%	26 17.3%	62 41.3%	3.5933
Stakeholders were adequately involved in designing and planning M&E activities.	5 3.3%	20 13.3%	35 23.3%	41 27.3%	49 32.7%	3.7267
Stakeholders feedback in USAID-funded project was well captured and analyzed for implementation	15 10.0%	15 10.0%	35 23.3%	45 30.0%	40 26.7%	3.5333
M&E results and findings were communicated to the stakeholders.	5 3.3%	10 6.7%	20 13.3%	50 33.3%	65 43.3%	4.0667
Overall Average Mean						3.6827

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Table 4.7 shows that the majority (76.7%, Mean = 4.0667) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that M&E results and findings were communicated to the stakeholders; and 60% (Mean = 3.7267) of the respondents agreed or highly agreed that stakeholders were adequately involved in designing and planning M&E activities. Besides this, 58.7% (Mean = 3.5933) of the respondents perceived that communication strategy is developed to address the flow of communication. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 30.7%, Mean = 3.4933) for the statement stating that a stakeholder analysis was done to ensure all the stakeholders were involved in project monitoring.

As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all dimensions of stakeholder engagement ranges from 3.4933 to 4.0667 and the overall average mean value of this attribute i.e., stakeholder engagement is computed as 3.6827. This is considered as moderate as stated by Almaquist *et al.* (2016). Based on this data, the research concludes that the stakeholder engagement in the M&E practice in the USAID-funded project is perceived as moderate by the respondents.

4.2.5 Availability of Sufficient Budget

Availability of budget is also identified as the attribute of M&E practice in this study. A project budget should allocate sufficient resources for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities, separate from the main project budget (Gyorkos, 2013). While specific allocations can vary, most donors and organizations recommend dedicating 3-10% of the project budget to M&E (Chaplowe, 2018). This ensures sufficient resources for accurate and credible results without hindering other project activities. By ensuring proper resource allocation from the start, organizations can nurture robust M&E systems that guide them toward blooming success. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the availability of a sufficient budget for the M&E in the USAID-funded project. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.8: Frequency of Respondents Perception about Budget Allocation

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
The organization provided sufficient funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project	10 6.7%	12 8.0%	15 10.0%	57 38.0%	56 37.3%	3.9133
The organization ensured a timely allocation of funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project	7 4.7%	13 8.7%	10 6.7%	62 41.3%	58 38.7%	4.0067
The budgetary decisions were decided independently by the M&E unit	35 23.3%	35 23.3%	20 13.3%	25 16.7%	35 23.3%	2.9333
We make budget allocations for M&E for every project	20 13.3%	15 10.0%	35 23.3%	35 23.3%	45 30.0%	3.4667
We secure contingency budget during budget planning and use contingencies to avoid additional budgeting	30 20.0%	22 14.7%	15 10.0%	43 28.7%	40 26.7%	3.2733
Overall Average Mean						3.5187

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Table 4.8 shows that the majority (80%, Mean = 4.0067) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that the organization ensured a timely allocation of funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project; and 75.3% (Mean = 3.9133) of the respondents agreed or highly agreed that the organization provided sufficient funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 46.7%, Mean = 2.9333) for the statement stating that the budgetary decisions were decided independently by the M&E unit.

As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all dimensions of availability of budget for the M&E ranges from 2.9333 to 4.0067 and the overall average mean value of this attribute i.e., availability of budget is computed as 3.5187. This is considered as moderate as stated by Almaquist *et al.* (2016). Based on this data, the research

concludes that the availability of budget for M&E in the USAID-funded project is perceived as moderate by the respondents.

4.2.6 Overall Mean of M&E Practice

Based on the categorization of mean values by Almaquist *et al.* (2016), it is observed that out of the 25 dimensions (questions) related to M&E practices, 11 attributes (44%) are rated above 3.79, indicating a "high" mean value. Notably, a significant majority of respondents (Mean = 4.33) agreed or strongly agreed that the M&E plan of the USAID-funded project effectively linked indicators to project objectives. Similarly, high mean values were recorded for statements highlighting the role of M&E planning in tracking project progress (Mean = 4.1733) and the valuable input provided by M&E staff in project implementation (Mean = 4.1467). Additionally, respondents acknowledged the M&E staff's ability to determine the production, communication, and perception of project lessons learned. Conversely, 8 attributes (32%) received mean values below 3.40, indicating a "low" mean value. Among these, respondents expressed the least agreement regarding the adequacy of M&E team staff's experience in monitoring and evaluation (Mean = 2.70), followed by a statement suggesting that the M&E unit autonomously made budgetary decisions.

The implications of these findings suggest a mixed assessment of the M&E practices within the USAID-funded project. On the other hand, the high mean values for certain attributes related to M&E planning, indicator alignment, and the role of M&E staff indicate strengths in these areas. This signifies that the project has effective mechanisms in place for tracking progress, aligning activities with objectives, and leveraging the expertise of M&E staff to enhance implementation and learning processes.

However, the lower mean values for other attributes, such as the adequacy of M&E staff experience and autonomy in budgetary decisions, highlight potential areas for improvement. The perceived lack of experience among M&E team members in monitoring and evaluation could hinder the quality and effectiveness of M&E activities. Additionally, the indication that budgetary decisions are not independently made by the M&E unit raises concerns about the autonomy and decision-making authority within the project, which could impact the overall effectiveness and efficiency of M&E processes.

4.3 Descriptive Analysis of Management Support in Local Humanitarian NGOs

Project success hinges on effective project management, as outlined by PMBOK (2001). This includes strong leadership and organization of the project team. This research explores how management support acts as a bridge between M&E practices (independent variable) and project performance (dependent variable) in humanitarian projects. By investigating this mediating effect, the study aims to gain a deeper understanding of how M&E practices influence project performance through the lens of management support. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the management support in the USAID-funded project. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.9: Frequency of Respondents Perception about Management Support

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
There was visible supportive supervision and commitment by management towards the project performance of the USAID-funded project	20 13.3%	40 26.7%	44 29.3%	41 27.3%	5 3.3%	2.8067
Management actively participates in designing and planning M&E activities.	6 4.0%	14 9.3%	35 23.3%	45 30.0%	50 33.3%	3.7933
Management ensures the provision of adequate resources to M&E practices.	15 10.0%	10 6.7%	35 23.3%	45 30.0%	45 30.0%	3.6333
Management properly uses M&E findings in decision-making processes.	5 3.3%	8 5.3%	17 11.3%	55 36.7%	65 43.3%	4.1133
The top management recognizes the role of M&E and provides all the necessary support for the M&E program.	2 1.3%	8 5.3%	25 16.7%	40 26.7%	75 50.0%	4.1867
Overall Average Mean						3.7067

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Table 4.9 shows that the majority (80%, Mean = 4.1133) of respondents agreed or highly agreed that the management properly uses M&E findings in decision-making processes; and 76.7% (Mean = 4.1867) agreed or strongly agreed that the top management recognizes the role of M&E and provides all the necessary support for the M&E program. On the contrary, respondents showed the least agreement (highest disagreement i.e., 40%, Mean = 2.8067) for the statement stating that there was visible supportive supervision and commitment by management towards the project performance of the USAID-funded project.

As indicated in the above table, the mean value of all dimensions of management support ranges from 2.8067 to 4.1133 and the overall average mean value of this

attribute i.e., management support is computed as 3.7067. This is considered as moderate as stated by Almaquist *et al.* (2016). Based on this data, the research concludes that the management support in the USAID-funded project is perceived as moderate by the respondents.

4.4 Descriptive Analysis of Project Performance in Local Humanitarian NGOs

The project performance of eighteen humanitarian projects funded by USAID and implemented by nine local humanitarian NGOs will be thoroughly assessed in this study. The focus will be on evaluating how well the projects are meeting their objectives, targets, and intended outcomes in providing aid, protection, and services to vulnerable populations. The evaluation criteria developed by OECD DAC (2010) specifically for humanitarian projects - coverage, coherence, coordination, and connectedness - were used to carefully examine and measure the performance of the identified NGOs. Through this comprehensive analysis, valuable insights will be gained to further enhance and improve the effectiveness of humanitarian interventions. Respondents were asked to indicate their perceptions about the project performance of the identified USAID-funded projects. The following table presents the findings.

Table 4.10: Frequency of Respondents Perception about Project Performance

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
Coverage						
The humanitarian project (USAID-funded project) effectively reached the most vulnerable populations.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	15 10.0%	65 43.3%	60 40.0%	4.1333
The distribution of aid and resources was efficient in reaching those in need	7 4.7%	18 12.0%	30 20.0%	40 26.7%	55 36.7%	3.7867
The project considered factors like gender, age, and disability when identifying beneficiaries.	5 3.3%	14 9.3%	16 10.7%	50 33.3%	65 43.3%	4.0400
Average Mean						***3.9867***
Coherence						
The humanitarian project's activities were aligned with the overall goals and objectives.	10 6.7%	5 3.3%	15 10.0%	60 40.0%	60 40.0%	4.0333
The interventions of the humanitarian project (USAID-funded project) were consistent with the needs and priorities of the affected communities.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	40 26.7%	50 33.3%	50 33.3%	3.9000
The project activity aligned with the overall humanitarian strategy for the project location.	10 6.7%	5 3.3%	15 10.0%	60 40.0%	60 40.0%	4.0333
Average Mean						***3.9889***
Coordination						
Different organizations and stakeholders involved in the project coordinated their efforts effectively.	15 10.0%	30 20.0%	35 23.3%	35 23.3%	35 23.3%	3.3000

Attributes	Frequency					Mean
	SD	D	N	A	SA	
My organization has effectively collaborated with other humanitarian actors on the project site.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	10 6.7%	65 43.3%	65 43.3%	4.2000
The project activities were well-coordinated with other organizations to avoid duplication.	5 3.3%	5 3.3%	15 10.0%	65 43.3%	60 40.0%	4.1333
Average Mean						***3.8778***
Connectedness						
The project integrated local knowledge and expertise into its implementation	5 3.3%	15 10.0%	50 33.3%	35 23.3%	45 30.0%	3.6667
The project established strong connections with local authorities and community leaders.	6 4.0%	14 9.3%	25 16.7%	60 40.0%	45 30.0%	3.8267
Local communities were involved in the design and implementation of project activities.	10 6.7%	15 10.0%	40 26.7%	49 32.7%	36 24.0%	3.5733
Average Mean						***3.5733***
Overall Average Mean of Project Performance						**3.8856**

Source: (Survey, 2024)

A. Coverage

Based on the data presented in Table 4.10, it is evident that the USAID-funded project has made a significant impact in reaching vulnerable populations, with an overwhelming 83.3% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing with this notion. Furthermore, a substantial 76.7% of respondents acknowledged the project's consideration of important factors such as gender, age, and disability when identifying beneficiaries. However, there was notable disagreement (16.7%) among respondents regarding the efficiency of aid and resource distribution to those in need.

Analyzing the mean values across all coverage attributes, ranging from 3.7867 to 4.1333, the overall average mean for coverage stands at 3.9867. This figure denotes a high level of performance in coverage, as per the mean value categorization of Almaquist *et al.* (2016). The research thus concludes that respondents perceive the USAID-funded project as excelling in coverage, underscoring its effectiveness in reaching and assisting vulnerable populations.

B. Coherence

In examining the coherence of the USAID-funded humanitarian project, it is noteworthy that a substantial majority of respondents (80.0% each) believed that the project activities were in alignment with both the overall goals and objectives and the humanitarian strategy for the project location. However, a relatively lower percentage

(66.7%) of respondents felt that the project interventions were consistent with the needs and priorities of the affected communities.

The mean values for coherence attributes fall within a range of 3.90 to 4.03, culminating in an overall average mean score of 3.9889. This figure, categorized as high according to Almaquist *et al*. (2016), suggests a favorable perception of coherence in the USAID-funded project by the respondents.

The high level of perceived coherence in the humanitarian project indicates a strong alignment of project activities with overarching goals and strategies. However, the lower agreement regarding the alignment with community needs highlights an area for potential improvement. Addressing this discrepancy could lead to even more effective and targeted interventions, ultimately improving the project's impact on the affected communities. Further exploration and adjustment in this regard could enhance the overall success and sustainability of the USAID-funded humanitarian initiative.

C. Coordination

In evaluating the coordination aspect of the USAID-funded humanitarian project, it is evident from Table 4.10 that a significant majority of respondents (86.7%) believed that their respective organizations effectively collaborated with other humanitarian actors during the project implementation. Additionally, 83.3% of respondents perceived that project activities were well-coordinated with other organizations to prevent duplication. However, a smaller percentage (46.7%) felt that different organizations and stakeholders involved in the project coordinated their efforts effectively.

The mean values for coordination attributes range from 3.30 to 4.13, resulting in an overall average mean score of 3.8778, categorized as high performance according to Almaquist *et al.* (2016). This suggests a positive perception of coordination in the USAID-funded project by the respondents.

D. Connectedness

In analyzing the connectedness aspect of the USAID-funded humanitarian project, Table 4.10 reveals that a majority of respondents (70%) agreed that the project had established strong connections with local authorities and community leaders. Besides

this, 56.7% of respondents perceived that the project effectively integrated local knowledge and expertise into its implementation. However, only 53.3% of respondents felt that the project fell short in integrating local knowledge and expertise.

The mean values for connectedness attributes range from 3.5733 to 3.8267, resulting in an overall average mean score of 3.6889, categorized as moderate performance according to Almaquist *et al.* (2016). This indicates that respondents perceive the connectedness aspect of the USAID-funded project as moderate in its performance.

While the project has succeeded in establishing strong connections with local authorities and community leaders, there is room for improvement in integrating local knowledge and expertise into project implementation. Enhancing collaboration with local stakeholders, actively involving them in decision-making processes, and leveraging their expertise can lead to more contextually relevant and impactful interventions. Strengthening connectedness with the local community can foster ownership, sustainability, and effectiveness of the project. By addressing the gaps identified, the USAID-funded project can further enhance its connectedness and ultimately achieve better outcomes in its humanitarian endeavors.

E. Overall Project Performance of Identified Humanitarian Projects

Examining the overall project performance measurement criterion, it is evident that respondents have predominantly shown a high level of agreement (mean value above 3.79) across most questions, with 8 out of 12 statements receiving strong endorsement. Notably, respondents expressed the highest agreement towards the effectiveness of collaboration with other humanitarian actors on the project site (mean = 4.20), followed closely by the project's success in reaching the most vulnerable populations (mean = 4.13) and ensuring well-coordinated activities to prevent duplication. Conversely, the statement regarding the effective coordination among different organizations and stakeholders involved in the project received the least agreement (mean = 3.30).

Among the four dimensions of project performance measurement, respondents demonstrated the highest agreement for coherence (mean = 3.9889), closely followed by coverage (mean = 3.9867) and coordination (mean = 3.8778). In contrast, respondents displayed the least agreement for connectedness (mean = 3.5733). The overall average mean value of the project performance for the USAID-funded project

is calculated as 3.886, which is considered high performance according to Almaquist *et al.* (2016). This indicates that respondents perceive the project performance of the USAID-funded project as highly effective.

4.5 Analysis of the Statistical Significance of the Effect of M&E Practice on Project Performance in Local Humanitarian NGOs

The researcher conducted both multiple linear regression and hierarchical regression analysis to assess the influence of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The researcher ensured the validation of classical model assumptions before proceeding with the regression analysis, and the outcomes are presented below.

4.5.1 Diagnostic Test of Assumptions

Before conducting multiple linear regressions, it is essential to evaluate the classical assumption, encompassing linearity, normality, autocorrelation, and multicollinearity tests. The outcomes of each assumption test are outlined as follows.

A. Linearity Test

A linearity test examines the presence of a linear relationship between independent variables and the dependent variable, essential for correlation and linear regression analysis (Almquist *et al.*, 2016). If the ANOVA test's deviation from the linearity value exceeds 0.05, it indicates a linear dependency between independent and dependent variables; however, if it is below 0.05, the relationships are nonlinear. The results of the linearity test are displayed in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11: Linearity Test (ANOVA Table)

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Project Performance * M&E Practice	Between Groups	(Combined)	152.715	64	2.386	19.088	0.001
		Linearity	142.336	1	142.336	1138.64	0.001
		Deviation from Linearity	10.379	63	0.165	1.318	0.117
	Within Groups		10.626	85	0.125		
	Total		163.341	149			
Management Support * M&E Practice	Between Groups	(Combined)	98.872	64	1.545	15.520	0.001
		Linearity	90.404	1	90.404	908.195	0.001
		Deviation from Linearity	8.468	63	0.134	1.350	0.098
	Within Groups		8.461	85	0.100		
	Total		107.333	149			
Project Performance *	Between Groups	(Combined)	141.062	15	9.404	56.562	0.000
		Linearity	128.406	1	128.406	772.313	0.000

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Management Support		Deviation from Linearity	12.656	14	0.904	5.437	0.061
	Within Groups		22.279	134	0.166		
	Total		163.341	149			

Source: Compiled from Survey Questionnaires using SPSS, 2024

According to the ANOVA Output Table above, the significant deviation values from linearity for all independent variables are greater than 0.05. This implies a linear relationship between each dependent and independent variable.

B. Autocorrelation Test

In regression analysis, the presence of autocorrelation is unacceptable. Fortunately, the Durbin-Watson test serves as a tool to detect this issue. As per Almquist *et al.* (2016), if Durbin-Watson values fall within the range of 1.5 to 2.5, we can affirm the absence of autocorrelation. Table 4.14 displays the Durbin-Watson values for various relationships, including M&E practice and project performance, M&E practice and Management support, Management support and Project performance, and Hierarchical multiple linear regression, with values of 1.643, 1.776, 1.739, and 2.385, respectively. These results indicate no autocorrelation, allowing us to proceed with the regression model.

C. Multicollinearity Test

Multicollinearity, as described by Tustin *et al.* (2005), occurs when independent variables in a regression model are highly correlated (r=0.8 or greater), hindering the separation of their effects on the outcome variable. This can lead to difficulties in model fitting and result interpretation. The researcher used the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and the Tolerance Statistic to assess multicollinearity in the dataset. A VIF value of 1 indicates no correlation, values between 1 and 5 suggest moderate correlation, and values over 5 indicate critical multicollinearity. Additionally, a tolerance below 0.20 or 0.10 signifies multicollinearity. The test results for the independent variables are presented below. Based on these criteria, the tests were conducted on the independent variables, and the result is shown below.

Table 4.12: Multicollinearity Test

	Tolerance	VIF
M&E Practice	.258	4.340
Management Support	.258	4.340

Source: Compiled from Survey Questionnaires using SPSS, 2024

According to the collinearity statistics from the coefficient output, the VIF values of all independent variables fall between 1 and 5, indicating a moderate level of correlation that does not require corrective actions. Furthermore, the tolerance values for all independent variables are above 0.2, leading to the conclusion that there are no signs of multicollinearity.

D. Normality Test

The researcher employed the normal probability plot test in SPSS to assess the normality of the data. As outlined by Almquist *et al.* (2016), the conventional approach is to examine the points about the diagonal line, with adherence suggesting normal distribution and deviation indicating irregularity. The normal probability plot from the SPSS output is displayed below.

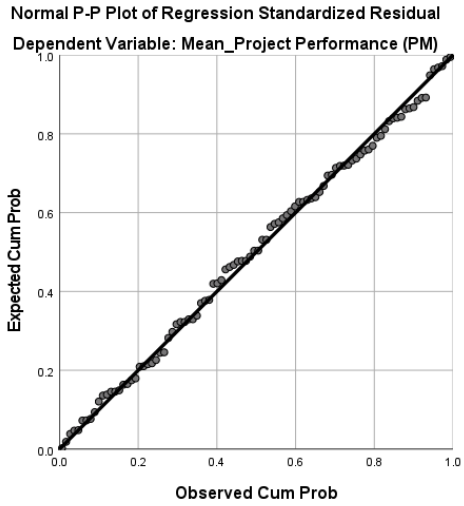

Figure 4.1: Normal P-P Plot
Source: Own Computations, 2024

The data points consistently adhere to and track along the diagonal line, as demonstrated by the normal probability plot chart. This indicates that the residual values exhibit a normal distribution, affirming the effectiveness of the regression analysis technique employed.

E. Residual Normality Test

The researcher used a histogram to identify the normal distribution of residuals and the result is presented as follows.

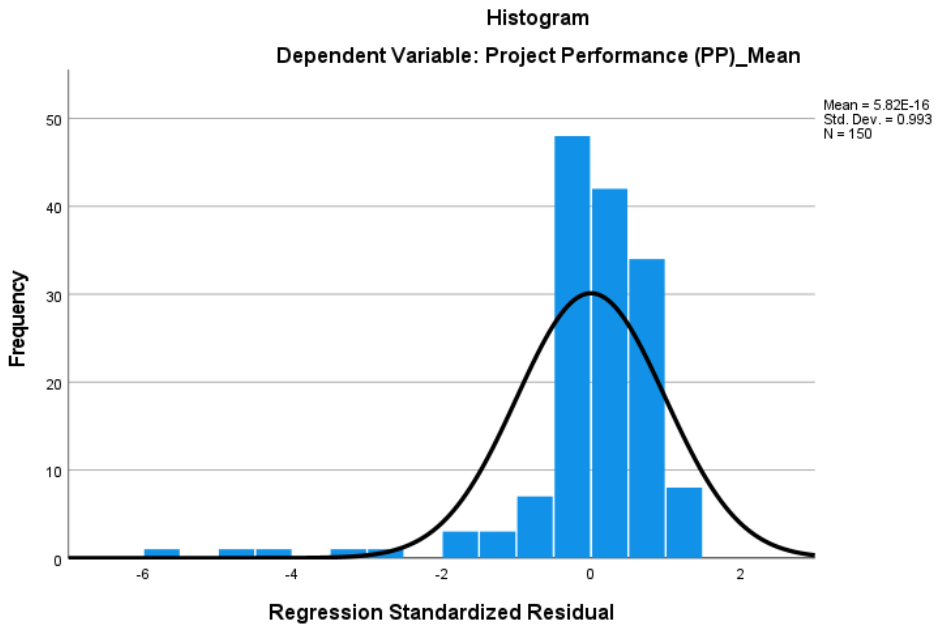

Figure 4.2: Regression Standardized Residual
Source: Own Computations, 2024

For assessing residual normality in regression analysis, the mean value for the residuals is ideally close to 0, indicating that on average the residuals do not systematically over or under-predict the dependent variable. The standard deviation is typically recommended to be around 1 for a sample size of 150, as this allows for the assessment of how spread out the residuals are around the mean (Almquist *et al.*, 2016). Bearing this in mind, as indicated in the above figure, the mean value is computed as 5.82E-16 and this indicates a very small number extremely close to zero. On the other hand, the standard deviation is computed as 0.993 around 1. This suggests that the residuals are distributed normally. Hence, the researcher has ensured that all of the results of assumptions to run regression analysis are fulfilled.

4.5.2 Correlation Analysis

Correlation is a statistical method that measures the strength and direction of the relationship between two variables. The correlation coefficient ranges between +1 and -1, with higher values indicating a stronger association. Positive and negative signs denote the direction of the relationship.

Common types of correlation include Pearson, Kendall, Spearman, and Point-Biserial (Kothari, 2004). In this study, we used Pearson correlation to analyze the linear relationship between variables that meet certain assumptions. The results of the correlation analysis are shown below.

Table 4.13: Results of Pearson Correlation Analysis

		M&E Practice	Management Support	Project Performance
M&E Practice	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
	N	150		
Management Support	Pearson Correlation	.918**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
	N	150	150	
Project Performance	Pearson Correlation	.933**	.887**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.000	
	N	150	150	150

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

Source: (Survey, 2024)

Cresswell (2009) categorizes correlation coefficients based on their values: small (.10-.29), medium (.30-.49), and large (.50 and above) associations. The analysis of humanitarian projects by local NGOs revealed significant positive relationships between independent and mediating variables with project performance. The ** symbols in the table denote strong associations between independent variables at a p-value of 0.01. Both monitoring & evaluation (M&E) practices and management support exhibited statistically significant positive relationships with project performance ($r = 0.933$, $p < 0.01$ and $r = 0.887$, $p < 0.01$, respectively). This indicates a substantial association between M&E practices, management support, and project performance. Notably, M&E practices showed the strongest relationship with project performance among the variables considered.

The significant positive relationships discovered between monitoring & evaluation (M&E) practices, management support, and project performance in humanitarian projects conducted by local NGOs suggest that these factors play a crucial role in influencing project outcomes. The observed substantial association between M&E practices, management support, and project performance corroborates the importance of these factors in driving successful project outcomes, with M&E practices showing the strongest relationship with project performance among the variables examined. Overall, these findings underscore the significance of effective monitoring & evaluation practices and management support in enhancing the performance of humanitarian projects implemented by local NGOs, providing valuable insights for improving project effectiveness and impact.

4.5.3 The Effect of M&E Practices on the Performance of Humanitarian Project

A. Model Result

The Model Summary table of a linear regression model presents key metrics for assessing the model fit. It includes R (correlation between observed and predicted values), R-squared (indication of data fit to the model), adjusted R-squared (accounts for nonsignificant predictors), and the standard error of the estimate (measure of prediction accuracy). These metrics help evaluate the effectiveness and reliability of the regression model in capturing the relationships within the data. The Model summary is presented as follows.

Table 4.14: Model Summary of M&E Practice and Project Performance

Model Summary[b]					
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**Durbin-Watson**
1	.933[a]	871	.871	.37673	1.643
a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice					
b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance					

Source: Own computations, 2024

The R-value of the regression model in Table 4.14 is 0.933, suggesting a robust correlation between the independent (M&E practice) and dependent variables (project performance). According to Cresswell's classification, a correlation coefficient in such a model ranging from 0.7 to 0.9 signifies a strong relationship, reaffirming the significance of the associations found in this model.

Furthermore, the R square and adjusted R square value of 0.871 indicate that 87.1% of the data fits the regression model. This means that the independent variable considered in this analysis i.e., M&E practice can explain 87.1% of the variation in project performance for local humanitarian NGOs. Consequently, one can infer that M&E practice and management support collectively account for this explained variance.

The remaining 12.9% of the variance in project performance can be attributed to factors not encompassed in this study. This underscores the need for continued research, evaluation, and adaptation to account for these additional variables and ensure comprehensive understanding and optimization of project outcomes.

The implications of these findings are significant for stakeholders involved in humanitarian projects, particularly local humanitarian NGOs. The strong association between M&E practices, management support, and project performance suggests that investing in these areas can positively impact and enhance project outcomes. By recognizing the substantial contribution of M&E practices and management support to project performance, organizations can prioritize these aspects in their planning and implementation strategies. This may involve allocating resources towards strengthening monitoring and evaluation mechanisms, providing adequate support and resources for project managers, and fostering a culture of accountability and transparency within the organization.

B. ANOVA Result

In regression analysis, the ANOVA table (Table 4.15) provides crucial information. The p-value is key for assessing the reliability of the regression results. According to Almaquist *et al.* (2016), a p-value below 0.05 indicates a statistically significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable, suggesting reliable predictability. Conversely, a p-value above 0.05 suggests a weaker predictive ability of the independent variables. These findings guide the interpretation of the relationship between variables in the regression analysis. Subsequently, the results based on these criteria are presented below, shedding light on the significance and predictive power of the independent variables about the dependent variable.

Table 4.15: ANOVA Result of M&E Practice and Project Performance

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	142.336	1	142.336	1002.917	.001[b]
	Residual	21.005	17	.142		
	Total	163.341	18			
a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice						
b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance						

Source: Own computations, 2024

As indicated in Table 4.15 above, the p-value associated with the F value (1002.917) is very small (0.001) or less than 0.05. This indicates that M&E practice reliably predicts the dependent variable (i.e., project performance).

C. Result of Beta Coefficient

The ability of the independent variable to predict the dependent variable is addressed in Table 4.16 below.

Table 4.16: Beta Coefficients of Independent Variables (M&E Practice)

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.213	.120		1.774	.078	-.024	.450
	M&E Practice (MP)	1.012	.032	.933	31.669	.001	.949	1.076
a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance								

Source: Own Computations, 2024

As shown in the above table, there is a positive association between M&E practice and project performance. As a rule of thumb, coefficients having p-values less than alpha (0.05) are statistically significant; and greater than alpha (0.05) are not statistically significant (Almaquist et al., 2016). As indicated in Table 4.16, the coefficient for M&E practice (1.012) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level since the p-value is 0.001, which is less than 0.05.

The Beta coefficient of 1.012 for the independent variable i.e., M&E practice to the dependent variable i.e., project performance indicates a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The significance value of 0.001 suggests that this relationship is statistically significant, meaning that the impact of M&E practice on project performance is unlikely to have occurred by random chance.

In practical terms, this interpretation implies that for every unit increase in M&E practice, there is a corresponding increase of 1.012 units in project performance. This result highlights the importance of implementing effective monitoring and evaluation practices in humanitarian projects, as they are associated with significantly improved project outcomes.

4.5.4 The Relationship between M&E Practice and Management Support

A. Model Result

The study also sought to examine the relationship between M&E practice and management support. The study hypothesized that M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support. The Model summary is presented as follows.

Table 4.17: Model Summary of M&E Practice and Management Support

Model Summary[b]					
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**Durbin-Watson**
1	.918[a]	.842	.841	.33821	1.776
a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice					
b. Dependent Variable: Management Support					

Source: Own computations, 2024

In this regression analysis, the R-value of 0.918 indicates a strong positive correlation between the independent variable "management support" and the dependent variable "M&E practice." Table 4.17 also indicates that the R square and adjusted R square values are 0.842 and 0.841 respectively. As indicated by Almaquist *et al.* (2016), an adjusted R square is used for interpretation when the study is worked with samples. Hence, since the researcher used a sample, we consider the value of the adjusted R square value (0.841). The adjusted R-square value of 0.841 suggests that approximately 84.1% of the variance in M&E practice can be explained by changes in management support.

The remaining 15.9% of the variance in management support can be attributed to factors not encompassed in this study. This underscores the need for continued research, evaluation, and adaptation to account for these additional variables and ensure comprehensive understanding and optimization of management support.

This indicates that this model is robust and the relationship between management support and M&E practice is reliable and well-fitted. Overall, these results imply that a high level of management support is associated with a significant increase in the implementation and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices within the context of the study.

B. ANOVA Result

The second result of regression is the ANOVA table as indicated in table 4.18 below. In this table, the p-value result is crucial to decide the reliability of the regression result. Based on these premises, the result is presented as follows.

Table 4.18: ANOVA Result of M&E Practice and Management Support

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	90.404	1	90.404	790.351	.001[b]
	Residual	16.929	17	.114		
	Total	107.333	18			
a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice						
b. Dependent Variable: Management Support						

Source: Own computations, 2024

As indicated in Table 4.18 above, the p-value associated with the F value (790.351) is very small (0.001) or less than 0.05. This indicates that M&E practice reliably predicts the dependent variable (i.e., project performance).

C. Result of Beta Coefficient

The following table presents the Beta coefficients of the independent variable. Beta coefficients help researchers understand the strength, direction, and impact of relationships between variables in regression analysis, aiding in the interpretation and inference of results.

Table 4.19: Beta Coefficients of Independent Variables (Management Support)

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.780	.108		7.239	.001	.567	.993
	M&E Practice (MP)	.807	.029	.918	28.113	.001	.750	.864
a. Dependent Variable: Management Support								

Source: Own Computations, 2024

In the regression analysis where the dependent variable is "management support" and the independent variable is "M&E practice," the unstandardized coefficient (B) value of 0.807 for the independent variable "M&E practice" indicates that for every one-unit increase in M&E practice, there is an associated increase of 0.807 units in management support.

The constant value of 0.780 represents the expected value of management support when the M&E practice variable is zero. The significance value of 0.001 indicates that the relationship between M&E practice and management support is statistically significant. This means that the impact of M&E practice on management support is unlikely to have occurred by random chance, strengthening the validity of the regression results.

Overall, the interpretation suggests that a higher level of monitoring and evaluation practices (M&E practice) is positively associated with increased management support within the context of the analysis.

4.5.5 The Influence of Management Support on the Performance of Humanitarian Projects

A. Model Result

The study also examined the influence of management support on the performance of humanitarian projects. With this, the study hypothesized that management support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance. the following section presents the result.

Table 4.20: Model Summary of Management Support & Project Performance

Model Summary[b]					
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**Durbin-Watson**
1	.887[a]	.786	.785	.48585	1.739
a. Predictors: (Constant), Management Support					
b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance					

Source: Own computations, 2024

As indicated in Table 4.20, the R-value is 0.887. The R-value represents the correlation coefficient between the independent and dependent variables. In this case, a high R-value of 0.887 indicates a strong positive correlation between management support and project performance. This suggests that there is a substantial relationship between the level of management support provided and the resulting project performance outcomes.

The table also indicates the R-square value and adjusted R-value are 0.786 and 0.785 respectively. This indicates that 78.5% of the variance in project performance can be explained by variations in management support. This suggests that a significant portion of the changes in project performance can be attributed to variations in management support levels. The remaining 21.5% of the variance in project performance can be attributed to factors other than management support that are not encompassed in this

study. These results indicate a strong positive relationship between management support and project performance in humanitarian projects implemented by local NGOs. The majority of the variance in project performance can be accounted for by variations in management support levels, supporting the importance of effective support mechanisms in enhancing project outcomes.

B. ANOVA Result

Table 4.21 below presents the ANOVA table. The ANOVA table serves as a valuable tool in regression analysis by evaluating the overall significance and validity of the regression model, comparing different models, partitioning variance, conducting hypothesis tests, and assessing model fit.

Table 4.21: ANOVA Result of Management Support and Project Performance

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	128.406	1	128.406	543.984	.001[b]
	Residual	34.935	17	.236		
	Total	163.341	18			
a. Predictors: (Constant), Management Support						
b. Dependent Variable: Project Performance						

Source: Own computations, 2024

As indicated in Table 4.21 above, the p-value associated with the F value (543.984) is very small (0.001) or less than 0.05. This indicates that management support reliably predicts the dependent variable (i.e., project performance).

C. Result of Beta Coefficient

Beta coefficients are essential in regression analysis as they quantify relationships, determine variable importance, compare effects, test hypotheses, predict outcomes, and provide insights into the impact of covariates on the relationships between variables. The following table presents the Beta coefficient result.

Table 4.22: Beta Coefficients of Independent Variables (Management Support)

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	-.169	.178		-.946	.346	-.521	.184
	Management Support (MS)	1.094	.047	.887	23.323	.001	1.001	1.186
a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance								

Source: Own Computations, 2024

In the regression analysis with the dependent variable project performance and the independent variable management support, the unstandardized beta coefficient (B) value of 1.094 indicates that for every one-unit increase in management support, there is an associated increase of 1.094 units in project performance.

Additionally, the constant value of -0.169 represents the expected value of project performance when the management support is zero. In this case, it suggests that even without any management support, the project performance is expected to be -0.169 units. The significance value of 0.001 indicates that the relationship between management support and project performance is statistically significant. This means that there is strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis that there is no relationship between management support and project performance in favor of the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship.

Therefore, based on these results, we can interpret that management support has a positive and significant impact on project performance, as indicated by the positive unstandardized beta coefficient and the statistically significant relationship confirmed by the low p-value.

4.5.6 Hierarchical Multiple Regression: Mediating Effect of Management Support

A. Testing for Mediation

The theoretical framework predicted that management support mediates the relationship between M&E practice and project performance. Mediation is a hypothesized causal chain in which one variable affects a second variable, which affects a third variable (Baron & Kenny, 1986). This mediation was predicted concerning the relationships between M&E practice and project performance. The potential mediating role of management support was tested by the criterion of Baron and Kenny (1986), which suggested a research procedure to determine whether there is a mediation effect. The Baron and Kenny approach to establishing mediation involves the following four steps.

- **Step 1: The independent variable must affect the dependent variable**
  $Yi = \beta_1 + MPx_1 + \varepsilon_1$; where Yi denotes Project Performance and MP denotes M&E practice

- **Step 2: The independent variable must affect the mediator**

  $MS = \beta_2 + MPx_2 + \varepsilon_2$; where MS is a mediating variable management support and MP is M&E practice

- **Step 3: The mediator must affect the dependent variable**

  $Yi = \beta_3 + MSx_3 + \varepsilon_3$, where Yi is Project Performance and MS is the mediating variable i.e., Management Support

- **Step 4: A significant influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable weakens in the presence of the mediator.** This means that the coefficient relating the independent variable to the dependent variable must be larger (in absolute value) than the coefficient relating the independent variable to the dependent variable in the regression model with both the independent variable and the mediating variable predicting the dependent variable. In other words, the coefficient of the independent variable (i.e., x4 in M&E practice indicated in step 4) which reflects the direct effect must be lesser or smaller than coefficient x1 in step 1 which reflects the total effect.

  $Yi = \beta_0 + MPx_4 + MSx_5 + \varepsilon$; where Y is Project Performance, MP the independent variable M&E practice, and MS denotes the mediating variable i.e., Management Support

The purpose of steps 1 – 3 is to establish that zero-order relationships among the variables exist. If one or more of these relationships are non-significant, researchers usually conclude that mediation is not possible or likely (Baron & Kenny, 1986). A significant relationship from steps 1 – 3, led to step 4. Step 4 model, was necessary to ascertain if a full or partial mediation occurred. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a full mediation occurs if the effect of the mediating variable (i.e., management support) remains significant after controlling for the independent variable (i.e., M&E practice). On the other hand, a partial mediation is deemed to have occurred if the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., M&E practice) and the dependent variable (Project Performance) is still significant after controlling for the effects of the intervening variable (that is, both M&E practice and Management Support).

Bearing this in mind, the following section presents the regression analysis for testing the mediation role of management support on the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

B. Step 1: The independent variable must affect the dependent variable

In step 1, a simple regression analysis was carried out with M&E practice predicting project performance. The results are shown in the previous section, Table 4.14 and 4.15. The model also produces a Durban-Watson test statistics value of 1.643. Since this value is greater than 1 and less than 3, it shows that the model is well-specified. The model summary as indicated in Table 4.14 indicates that the value of R square is 0.871 implying that M&E practice explains 87.1% of the variation in project performance. The ANOVA table as indicated in Table 4.15 indicates that the model fits and there is linearity between M&E practice and project performance (F = 1002.917; Sig. = 0.001). The coefficient table (Table 4.16) also indicates that M&E practice has a positive significant effect on project performance. As indicated in Table 4.16, the coefficient for M&E practice (1.012) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level since the p-value is 0.001, which is less than 0.05. This implies that for every unit increase in M&E practice, there is a corresponding increase of 1.012 units in project performance. Hence, the criterion of Baron and Kenny (1986) indicated in Step 1 is fulfilled.

C. Step 2: The independent variable must affect the mediator

In step 2, a simple regression analysis was carried out with M&E practice predicting the mediating variable i.e., management support. The results are shown in the previous section, Table 4.17, 4.18. and 4.19. The model summary as indicated in Table 4.17 produces a Durban-Watson test statistics value of 1.776. Since this value is greater than 1 and less than 3, it shows that the model is well-specified. The model summary as indicated in Table 4.17 indicates that the value of adjusted R square is 0.841 implying that M&E practice explains 84.1% of the variation in management support. The ANOVA table as indicated in Table 4.18 indicates that the model fits and there is linearity between M&E practice and management support (F = 790.351; Sig. = 0.001).

The coefficient table (Table 4.19) also indicates that M&E practice has a positive significant effect on management support. As indicated in Table 4.19, the coefficient for M&E practice 0.807) is statistically significant at the 0.05 level since the p-value is 0.001, which is less than 0.05. This implies that for every unit increase in M&E practice, there is a corresponding increase of 0.807 units in management support. Hence, the criterion of Baron and Kenny (1986) indicated in Step 2 is fulfilled.

D. Step 3: The mediator must affect the dependent variable

In step 3, a simple regression analysis was carried out with the mediating variable i.e., management support predicting the dependent variable i.e., project performance. The results are shown in the previous section, Table 4.20, 4.21. and 4.22. The model summary as indicated in Table 4.20 produces a Durban-Watson test statistics value of 1.739. Since this value is greater than 1 and less than 3, it shows that the model is well-specified. The model summary as indicated in Table 4.20 indicates that the value of adjusted R square is 0.785 implying that management support explains 78.5% of the variation in project performance. The ANOVA table as indicated in Table 4.21 indicates that the model fits and there is linearity between management support and project performance (F = 543.984; Sig. = 0.001). The coefficient table (Table 4.22) also indicates that management support has a positive significant effect on project performance. As indicated in Table 4.22, the coefficient for management support i.e., 1.094 is statistically significant at the 0.05 level since the p-value is 0.001, which is less than 0.05. This implies that for every unit increase in management support, there is a corresponding increase of 1.094 units in project performance. Hence, the criterion of Baron and Kenny (1986) indicated in Step 3 is fulfilled.

E. Step 4: A significant influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable weakens in the presence of the mediator.

The purpose of steps 1 – 3 was to establish that zero-order relationships among the variables exist. If one or more of these relationships are non-significant, researchers usually conclude that mediation is not possible or likely (Baron & Kenny, 1986). As indicated in the above section, all of the relationships indicated from steps 1 to 3 (i.e., the relationship between M&E practice and project performance, M&E practice and management support, and management support and project performance) are

statistically significant. Hence, the study concludes that mediation is possible. A significant relationship from steps 1 – 3, led to step 4.

Step 4 model, was necessary to ascertain if a full or partial mediation occurred. According to Baron and Kenny (1986), a full mediation occurs if the effect of the mediating variable (i.e., management support) remains significant after controlling for the independent variable (i.e., M&E practice). On the other hand, a partial mediation is deemed to have occurred if the relationship between the independent variable (i.e., M&E practice) and the dependent variable (Project Performance) is still significant after controlling for the effects of the intervening variable (that is, both M&E practice and Management Support). The results of step 4 are presented in Table 4.23.

Model Summary

The hierarchical regression analysis with management support as a mediating variable between M&E practice and project performance leads to slight changes in the R, R-square, and adjusted R-square values compared to when only considering M&E practice as an independent variable. The model summary of a hierarchical regression model is presented in the table below.

Table 4.23: Model Summary of Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regressions

Model Summary[b]									
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**	**R Square Change**	**F Change**	**df1**	**df2**	**Sig.F Change**
1	.933[a]	.871	.871	.37673	.871	1002.917	1	148	.001
2	.937[b]	.877	.875	.36957	.006	6.787	1	147	.002
a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice									
b. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice, Management Support									
c. Dependent Variable: Project Performance									

Source: Own computations, 2024

As indicated in **Model-1 i.e., When considering M&E practice alone**, Adjusted R-squared (0.871) indicates a very strong positive relationship between M&E practice and project performance. R-squared change (0.871) signifies that M&E practice alone explains 87.1% of the variance in project performance. Sig. F change (0.001) suggests this association is statistically significant at the 0.01 level.

As indicated in **Model-2 i.e., When including management support as a mediating variable**, Adjusted R-squared (0.875) shows a very strong positive relationship between M&E practice, management support, and project performance. However, the

increase from Model 1 is minimal. R-squared change (0.006) indicates that adding management support to the model explains only an additional 0.6% of the variance in project performance. (This small change is further supported by the significant Sig. F change below). Sig. F change (0.002) is statistically significant ($p < 0.05$), suggesting that the addition of management support as a mediator is to be statistically relevant.

The model summary indicates that M&E practice with adjusted R-square = 0.871 explains 87.1% of the variance in project performance. When the enter method was used (i.e., when the mediating variable management support is used) in running the regression, the results indicated the adjusted R-square = 0.875 (87.5%) meaning that all the variables (i.e., the independent variable M&E practice and mediating variable management support) taken together explain 87.5% of the variance in project performance. out of 87.5% of the variance in the project performance, 87.1% was explained by variation in M&E practice alone leaving 0.5% of the variance in project performance to be explained by others. The model summary result also indicates that there is a statistically significant positive mediation of management support of 87.1%. On the other hand, model two indicates a statistically insignificant relationship between M&E practice and project performance, hence confirming the mediation role of management support. This result is consistent with the result obtained using Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step approach.

The adjusted R-square values in both Model 2 increased from 0.871 to 0.875 when adding management support as a predictor, indicating that management support explains additional variance in project performance beyond what is explained by M&E practice alone.

Overall, the change in the R, R-square, and adjusted R-square values when including management support as a mediating variable indicates that management support plays a role in enhancing the relationship between M&E practice and project performance. The increase in the R-square value suggests that the inclusion of management support as a mediator improves the model's ability to explain and predict project performance compared to considering M&E practice alone.

ANOVA Result

The following section presents the F-values from the ANOVA tables when considering M&E practice alone and when including management support as a mediating variable indicating the significance of the overall regression models.

Table 4.24: ANOVA Result of Hierarchical Multiple Linear Regression Model

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	142.336	1	142.336	1002.917	.001[b]
	Residual	21.005	17	.142		
	Total	163.341	18			
2	Regression	143.263	2	71.632	524.458	.001[c]
	Residual	20.078	16	.137		
	Total	163.341	18			
a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice						
c. Predictors: (Constant), M&E Practice, Management Support						

Source: Own computations, 2024

When considering M&E practice alone (i.e., Model-1), the F-value is 1002.917 with a significance value of 0.001. This high F-value suggests that the regression model with M&E practice as the independent variable is statistically significant. This indicates that the relationship between M&E practice and project performance is statistically significant at the 0.001 level.

When including management support as a mediating variable (Model-2), the F-value is 524.458 with a significance value of 0.001. This F-value shows the overall significance of the regression model when both M&E practice and management support are included. While this F-value is lower than the one obtained with M&E practice alone, it is still statistically significant. The significant F-value and p-value indicate that the combined model with both M&E practice and management support as predictors is still a strong and significant predictor of project performance.

Result of Beta Coefficient

In the hierarchical regression analysis, the unstandardized regression coefficients (B values) indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between the independent variable (M&E practice), mediating variable (management support), and dependent

variable (project performance) in the regression models. The following table presents the result of the analysis.

Table 4.25: Beta Coefficients of Independent Variables (M&E Practice & Management Support)

Coefficients[a]								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval for B	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	.213	.120		1.774	.009	-.024	.450
	M&E Practice (MP)	1.012	.032	.933	31.669	.001	.949	1.076
2	(Constant)	.030	.137		.222	.004	.245	1.712
	M&E Practice (MP)	.824	.079	.759	.430	.501	.668	.980
	Management Support (MS)	.234	.090	.190	2.605	.010	.056	.412
a. Dependent Variable: Project Performance								

Source: Own Computations, 2024

When considering M&E practice alone (i.e., Model-1), the Constant variable B value is 0.213. This constant represents the intercept of the regression equation when all predictor variables are zero. Unstandardized B (1.012) for M&E practice suggests a strong positive association with project performance. T-value (31.669) and significance (0.001) confirm this strong and statistically significant relationship. The significance value (0.001) suggests that the relationship between M&E practice and project performance is statistically significant at the 0.001 level, providing strong evidence that M&E practice is a significant predictor of project performance.

When including management support as a mediating variable (i.e., Model-2), the Constant variable B value is 0.030. This constant represents the intercept of the regression equation for the model that includes M&E practice and management support as predictors. The B value of M&E practice and management support is 0.824 and 0.234 respectively, with significance values of 0.501, and 0.010. The coefficient of M&E practice indicates that for a one-unit increase in M&E practice, the expected change in project performance is 0.824 units. The coefficient of management support indicates that for a one-unit increase in management support, the expected change in project performance is 0.234 units.

In Model 2, the significance value for management support is 0.020, indicating that management support has a significant direct effect on project performance. The mediating role of management support can be determined by looking at whether the direct effect of M&E practice on project performance is reduced when management support is added to the model. In this case, since the coefficient for M&E practice decreases from 1.012 in Model 1 to 0.824 in Model 2, and the t-value decreases substantially from 31.669 to 0.430, it suggests that management support acts as a **partial mediator** between M&E practice and project performance. Therefore, based on the results provided, it appears that management support partially mediates the relationship between M&E practice and project performance in your research model.

These results suggest **partial mediation**. M&E practice likely still has a direct impact on project performance, but some of its influence is channeled through management support. Management support acts as an additional factor explaining the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

From the above analysis, it can be concluded that the estimated regression equation was:

$$Yi = 0.03 + 0.824MP + 0.234MS + \varepsilon$$

Where Yi denotes the project performance of humanitarian projects executed by local humanitarian NGOs, MP denotes M&E practice, and MS denotes management support.

4.6 Hypotheses Test

The study also sought to address the results of the identified four hypotheses. The results of the hypotheses are presented as follows.

Hypothesis 1: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

H1: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

H01: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs doesn't positively influence project performance.

Interpretation: As indicated in Tables 4.14, 4.15, and 4.16, the B coefficient for M&E practice is 1.012 with a t-value of 31.669 and a significance value of 0.001. The significant ($p < 0.05$) positive coefficient suggests that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between M&E practice and project performance in local humanitarian NGOs. The R Square value of 0.871 indicates that approximately 87.1% of the variance in project performance can be explained by the M&E practice in the model. The ANOVA table shows a highly significant F value of 1002.917 with a significance value of 0.001, indicating that the model as a whole is a good fit and the relationship between M&E practice and project performance is statistically significant. Therefore, we can conclude that the hypothesis "M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance" is supported by the data and the results of the regression analysis i.e., **hypothesis 1 is accepted**.

The results of this study align with prior research by Waithera and Wanyoike (2015) who emphasized that monitoring and evaluation activities contribute to building trust with donors and organizations, ultimately increasing the chances of securing funding and ensuring the sustainability of projects. The findings also support the study conducted by Muhammad (2016) who highlighted that M&E generates crucial information for project implementation, facilitating evidence-based reporting, guiding decision-making, and improving project performance. The findings of this study also support the research conducted by Gaibo and Mbugua (2019), Tengan *et al*. (2019), and Micah and Luketero (2017).

Hypothesis 2: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support.

H2: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support.

H02: M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs doesn't positively influence Management Support.

Interpretation: As indicated in Tables 4.17, 4.18, and 4.19, the B coefficient for M&E practice is 0.807 with a t-value of 28.113 and a significance value of 0.001. The significant ($p < 0.05$) positive coefficient suggests that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between M&E practice and management support. The R Square value of 0.842 indicates that approximately 84.2% of the variance in management

support can be explained by the M&E practice in the model. The ANOVA table shows a highly significant F value of 790.351 with a significance value of 0.001, indicating that the model as a whole is a good fit and the relationship between M&E practice and management support is statistically significant. Therefore, we can conclude that the hypothesis "M&E practice in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences Management Support" is supported by the data and the results of the regression analysis i.e., **hypothesis 2 is accepted**.

Hypothesis 3: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

H3: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance.

H03: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs doesn't positively influence project performance.

Interpretation: As indicated in Tables 4.20, 4.21, and 4.22, the B coefficient for management support is 1.094 with a t-value of 23.323 and a significance value of 0.001. The significant ($p < 0.05$) positive coefficient suggests that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between management support and project performance. The adjusted R Square value of 0.785 indicates that approximately 78.5% of the variance in management support can be explained by the project performance in the model. The ANOVA table shows a highly significant F value of 543.984 with a significance value of 0.001, indicating that the model as a whole is a good fit and the relationship between management support and project performance is statistically significant. Therefore, we can conclude that the hypothesis "Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs positively influences project performance" is supported by the data and the results of the regression analysis i.e., **hypothesis 3 is accepted**.

This study's finding aligns with prior research by Njama (2015), highlighting the crucial role of active managerial involvement in facilitating timely and informed decision-making, thereby positively influencing project outcomes. Njama's study emphasized the significance of managerial support in driving successful project results. Furthermore, the current study's findings corroborate the insights of Micah and Luketero (2017), who emphasized the importance of management support in fostering a conducive environment for project teams. Their research underscored how such

support can boost team morale, motivation, and overall efficiency, ultimately contributing to project success.

Hypothesis 4: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs has a mediating effect on the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

H4: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs has a mediating effect on the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

H04: Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs does not mediate the relationship between M&E practice and project performance.

Interpretation: Based on the information in Table 4.25, in Model 1, M&E practice has a strong positive effect on project performance with a significant coefficient of 1.012 and a high t-value of 31.669 ($p = 0.001$). In Model 2, the coefficient for M&E practice decreases to 0.824 and is no longer significant at the 0.05 level, with a t-value of 0.430. However, management support has a significant positive effect on project performance with a coefficient of 0.234 and a t-value of 2.605 ($p = 0.020$).

Since the direct effect of M&E practice on project performance decreases when management support is added to the model, and the mediating variable (management support) has a significant effect on project performance, we can conclude that management support in local humanitarian NGOs **partially mediates** the relationship between M&E practice and project performance, as supported by the data and analysis conducted in the study. Therefore, we can conclude that the hypothesis "Management Support in local humanitarian NGOs has a mediating effect on the relationship between M&E practice and project performance" is supported by the data and the results of the regression analysis i.e., **hypothesis 4 is partially accepted**.

This finding of the study aligns with a study conducted by Kamau & Mohammed (2015) and Wattoo, *et al.* (2010) who revealed that management support can serve as an intermediary factor between Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Project

Performance as it plays a critical role in ensuring the effective implementation of findings and recommendations from M&E endeavors to enhance project performance.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary aim of this research was to investigate how Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices impact the performance of humanitarian projects in specific local NGOs dedicated to humanitarian interventions in Ethiopia. The study utilized self-administered structured questionnaires for data collection, with thorough validity and reliability tests conducted on the selected data collection tools. The key findings, conclusions, and recommendations derived from the study are succinctly outlined in this section. The following section presents the major findings of the study, conclusion, and recommendation.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The primary aim of this research was to examine the impact of M&E practices on project performance in humanitarian initiatives conducted by selected local NGOs in Ethiopia. The study focused on nine local NGOs and a total of eighteen humanitarian projects funded by USAID, utilizing research questions to guide data collection. It also outlined four hypotheses and designed five specific objectives to be tested and examined. The study's main objective was to assess M&E practices in local humanitarian projects, particularly focusing on M&E planning, team capacity, analysis and reporting, stakeholder engagement, and budget allocation.

The research found that respondents generally agreed that the M&E plan used in USAID projects effectively tracked project progress and was linked to project objectives. However, there was less agreement regarding the involvement of project staff and key stakeholders in the M&E plan's preparation and its adaptability to project activities. Regarding M&E staff, respondents agreed that they provided valuable advice and were instrumental in determining project lessons learned and training needs. However, there were concerns about the team's experience in monitoring and evaluation, suggesting a moderate perception of their skills.

While respondents acknowledged the capability of data collection and analysis tools to identify limitations, biases, and threats to data accuracy, there was less agreement about their capacity to generate comprehensive assessment reports, indicating perceived inadequacies in analysis and reporting practices. Additionally, stakeholders were perceived as adequately involved in M&E activities, and findings were effectively communicated, although there was less agreement about the thoroughness of stakeholder analysis, suggesting moderate stakeholder engagement. Finally, respondents generally agreed that the organization ensured timely and sufficient budget allocation for M&E activities, though there were doubts about the independence of budgetary decisions within the M&E unit, reflecting a moderate perception regarding budget availability.

The correlation and regression analyses of the study showed substantial positive relationships between M&E practices, management support, and project performance. Particularly, M&E practices exhibited the strongest association with project performance among the variables considered. The research concluded that management support acts as a partial mediator between M&E practice and project performance, suggesting that while M&E practice directly impacts project performance, a portion of its influence is channeled through management support, which acts as an additional explanatory factor.

5.2 Conclusions

This study investigated the effect of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices on the performance of humanitarian projects undertaken by local NGOs in Ethiopia. The research focused on eighteen USAID-funded projects implemented by nine different NGOs. Five key M&E components were examined: M&E plan, M&E team skills, data analysis and reporting, stakeholder engagement, and budget availability.

The findings revealed both strengths and areas for improvement in the M&E practices employed. M&E plans were generally well-linked to project goals and tracked progress effectively. However, stakeholder involvement in plan development and flexibility in adapting plans to changing circumstances need attention. While the M&E teams provided valuable guidance, their experience in monitoring and evaluation could benefit from further development. Data collection tools identified potential biases and

limitations, but generating comprehensive reports fell short. Stakeholder communication and involvement in planning activities were evident, but a systematic approach to include all stakeholders was lacking. Funding for M&E activities was considered adequate and allocated on time, although the M&E unit itself didn't have much control over budget decisions.

Statistical analysis highlighted the crucial role of M&E practices in project performance. M&E practices demonstrated the strongest positive association with project success compared to management support. Interestingly, the study also revealed that management support partially mediates the relationship between M&E practices and project performance. This suggests that strong M&E practices directly influence project outcomes, but some of this influence is also amplified by supportive management.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on these findings, the study recommends several key steps for local Ethiopian NGOs to enhance project performance:

- **Strengthen stakeholder engagement**: local humanitarian NGOs should conduct a thorough stakeholder analysis to identify all relevant stakeholders, including project staff, and involve them in the monitoring and evaluation process. This will ensure comprehensive input, collaboration, and support from all parties involved, leading to more effective project outcomes.
- **Enhance M&E Team Competency**: local humanitarian NGOs should invest in training and capacity-building programs for the M&E team to improve their skills and experience in monitoring, evaluation, data analysis, and reporting. This will enable them to effectively carry out M&E activities and provide accurate insights for project improvement.
- **Improve Analysis and Reporting Practices**: local humanitarian NGOs should develop tools and methodologies that can generate both internal and external assessment reports, providing comprehensive analysis of project performance. This will help identify limitations, biases, and opportunities for improvement, leading to more informed decision-making processes.

- **Ensure Transparent Budgetary Processes**: local humanitarian NGOs should establish clear guidelines and procedures for budget allocation for M&E activities, ensuring that decisions are made independently by the M&E unit. This will guarantee adequate funding for monitoring and evaluation efforts, allowing for a thorough assessment of project performance and impact.
- **Prioritize Management Support**: local humanitarian NGOs should recognize the critical role of management support in driving M&E practices and project performance. Provide top-level support and leadership to create an enabling environment for effective monitoring and evaluation, acting as a mediator to amplify the impact of M&E practices on project outcomes.

By implementing these recommendations, local humanitarian NGOs in Ethiopia can enhance their monitoring and evaluation practices, improve project performance, and ultimately contribute more effectively to the success of humanitarian projects in the country. Continual monitoring, evaluation, and adaptation of these practices will be essential to ensure ongoing improvement and sustainable impact in the humanitarian sector.

5.4 Future Research Directions

Bearing in mind the objectives, research questions, the results of the hypothesis as well as the major findings of the study as well as the methodology employed in this study, researchers in the future should consider the following suggestions.

- **Longitudinal Studies**: future researchers should conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of monitoring and evaluation practices on project performance in humanitarian settings and developmental projects. This will provide insights into the sustainability of project outcomes over time and the effectiveness of M&E interventions in driving long-term success.
- **Comparative Studies**: future researchers should compare monitoring and evaluation practices across different types of humanitarian projects, sectors, or geographical regions. This comparative analysis can identify best practices, challenges, and lessons learned that can be applied to improve M&E practices in diverse contexts.

- **Qualitative Research**: future researchers should conduct in-depth qualitative research to explore the perspectives, experiences, and insights of key stakeholders involved in monitoring and evaluation processes in humanitarian projects. Qualitative data can provide a rich contextual understanding and uncover nuances that quantitative data may not capture.
- **Impact Evaluation**: future researchers should focus on conducting impact evaluations to assess the direct causal relationship between M&E practices and project outcomes in humanitarian projects. By measuring the specific impacts of different M&E interventions, this research can provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing project performance.
- **Technology and Innovation:** future researchers should investigate the role of technology and innovation in revolutionizing monitoring and evaluation practices in humanitarian work. Explore the use of digital tools, data analytics, mobile technology, and other innovative solutions to streamline M&E processes, enhance data collection, and improve decision-making in project management.
- **Expand the Scope**: future researchers should consider a larger sample size of NGOs and projects for broader generalizability, explore the impact of M&E practices on different types of humanitarian projects (e.g., disaster relief, education, healthcare), and conduct comparative studies to analyze M&E practices across different regions or countries.
- **Management Support and M&E**: future researchers should further investigate the specific characteristics and behaviors of supportive management that amplify the impact of M&E practices and explore how to foster a culture of M&E within NGOs, where all staff recognize the value of monitoring and evaluation.

These future research directions can help advance the understanding of monitoring and evaluation practices in humanitarian projects, address critical gaps in the existing knowledge base, and provide valuable insights for practitioners, policymakers, and researchers working in the field of humanitarian assistance.

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Appendices

Appendix B: Questionnaire

ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT
Field of Study: Master of Arts Degree in Project Management

Dear Respondent,

My name is Wondwossen Shiferaw, a student of Addis Ababa University, School of Commerce pursuing a Master of Arts Degree in Project Management. As part of my final year, I am required to carry out academic work in the form of a research study. I am currently conducting a study on "The effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on project performance of humanitarian projects in the case of local NGOs". Kindly spare some minutes to answer these questions. Information obtained will be treated with confidentiality and will be used only for this study. Your involvement in this study is extremely valuable and greatly appreciated in addressing the study's concerns.

Thank You for Your Cooperation

Part I – Personal Information

1. Name of Organization
   A. ASDEPO ☐ D. ERC ☐ G. ORDA ☐
   B. DPO ☐ E. FIDO ☐ H. OWDA ☐
   C. EOC/DICAC ☐ F. MCMDO ☐ I. PAPDA ☐
2. Sex
   A. Female ☐ B. Male ☐
3. Age
   A. Below 18 ☐ B. 19 – 30 ☐ C. 31 - 40 ☐ D. 41- 50 ☐ E. >51 ☐
4. What is your highest level of Education?
   A. High school Graduate ☐ C. Diploma ☐ E. Master's Degree ☐
   B. Certification ☐ D. Degree ☐ F. PhD ☐
5. For how long have you worked in this organization?
   A. Less than 2 years ☐ C. 6-10 years ☐ E. 16-20 years ☐
   B. 2 – 5 years ☐ D. 11-15 years ☐ F. Above 20 years ☐
6. In which of the following USAID funded project were you engaged?

A. Agricultural Support ☐ F. NFI Distribution ☐
B. Child and Women Protection ☐ G. Shelter and Settlement ☐
C. Education ☐ H. Shelter repair kit distribution ☐
D. Health & Nutrition ☐ I. WASH ☐
E. Multi-purpose cash (MPC) ☐ J. Multi-sector ☐

7. In which group were you belong among the following in the USAID project?
   A. Project Staff ☐
   B. M&E Staff ☐
   C. Top Management Member ☐

Part -II: M&E Practice Attributes

Dear respondent, kindly indicate your level of agreement for the following statements by ticking your appropriate level of agreement among the options.

No.	Attributes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	***M&E Plan***					
8	The USAID-funded projects had a comprehensive M&E plan					
9	The M&E plan had indicators that were linked to the objectives of the project.					
10	M&E planning ensured effective tracking of the progress of the projects.					
11	Planning for M&E considered all project activities and was open to adjustments.					
12	Project staff and key stakeholders are involved in the preparation of the M&E plan.					
B	***M&E Skills/Capacity***					
13	The staff M&E team has adequate experience in monitoring and evaluation					
14	The level of education was considered in the selection and recruitment of staff into USAID funded M&E team					
15	Project training needs analysis was done to ensure the right skills are acquired to manage the M&E activities					
16	M&E staff can determine how the project's lessons learned are produced, communicated, and perceived.					
17	M&E staff played a key role in providing functional advice in the implementation of the USAID-funded project.					
C	***Analysis and Reporting***					
18	Data collection and analysis tools in place in USAID-funded projects were capable of identifying any limitations, biases, and threats to the accuracy of the data and analysis					
19	Data collection and analysis tools in place in USAID-funded projects were capable of generating both internal and external assessment reports					
20	There was timely dissemination of analyzed data during the M&E reporting in USAID-funded project					
21	Data collection analysis assists in monitoring and evaluation					
22	The number of data collection tools was sufficient for project/program needs and not excessive.					
D	***Stakeholder Engagement***					
23	A stakeholder analysis was done to ensure all the stakeholders are involved in project monitoring					
24	Communication strategy is developed to address the flow of information					

No.	Attributes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
25	Stakeholders were adequately involved in designing and planning M&E activities.					
26	Stakeholders feedback in USAID-funded project was well captured and analyzed for implementation					
27	M&E results and findings were communicated to the stakeholders.					
E	***Availability of Budget***					
28	The organization provided sufficient funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project					
29	The organization ensured a timely allocation of funds for M&E activities for the USAID-funded project					
30	The budgetary decisions were decided independently by the M&E unit					
31	We make budget allocations for M&E for every project					
32	We secure contingency budget during budget planning and use contingencies to avoid additional budgeting					

Part III: Management Support

Dear respondent, kindly indicate your level of agreement for the following statements by ticking your appropriate level of agreement among the options.

No.	*Management Support Attributes*	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
33	There was visible supportive supervision and commitment by management towards the project performance of the USAID-funded project					
34	Management actively participates in designing and planning M&E activities.					
35	Management ensures the provision of adequate resources to M&E practices.					
36	Management properly uses M&E findings in decision-making processes.					
37	The top management recognizes the role of M&E and provides all the necessary support for the M&E program.					

Part IV: Project Performance

Dear respondent, kindly indicate your level of agreement for the following statements by ticking your appropriate level of agreement among the options.

No.	Attributes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
A	***Coverage***					
38	The humanitarian project (USAID-funded project) effectively reached the most vulnerable populations.					
39	The distribution of aid and resources was efficient in reaching those in need					
40	The project considered factors like gender, age, and disability when identifying beneficiaries.					
B	***Coherence***					
41	The humanitarian project's activities were aligned with the overall goals and objectives.					
42	The interventions of the humanitarian project (USAID-funded project) were consistent with the needs and priorities of the affected communities.					

No.	Attributes	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
43	The project activity aligned with the overall humanitarian strategy for the project location.					
C	***Coordination***					
44	Different organizations and stakeholders involved in the project coordinated their efforts effectively.					
45	My organization has effectively collaborated with other humanitarian actors on the project site.					
46	The project activities were well-coordinated with other organizations to avoid duplication.					
D	***Connectedness***					
47	The project integrated local knowledge and expertise into its implementation					
48	The project established strong connections with local authorities and community leaders.					
49	Local communities were involved in the design and implementation of project activities.					

Thank you for your time!