



**UTILIZATION OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT METHODOLOGIES  
IN HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS AND THE EFFECT ON  
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF SAVE THE CHILDREN  
ETHIOPIA**

**By: Biruk Tilahun**

A Project Submitted to Addis Ababa University School of Commerce in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the Award of Master of Arts Degree in Project Management.

**Advisor: Wasihun Mohammed (PhD)**

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**Utilization of project management methodologies in humanitarian projects and the effect on Performance: A case study of Save the Children Ethiopia**

**By: Biruk Tilahun**

**Approved By the Board Of Examiners**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor: Wasihun Mohammed (PHD)

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **DECLARATION**

I, **Biruk Tilahun**, declare that this project entitled “**Utilization of project management methodologies in humanitarian projects and the effect on Performance: A case study of Save the Children Ethiopia**” is my original work. I have carried out the present study independently with the guidance and support of my research advisor, **Wasihun Mohammed (PhD)**. Any other contributors or sources used for the study have been duly acknowledged. Moreover, this study has not been submitted for the award of any Degree or Diploma Program in this or any other Institution.

**Biruk Tilahun**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Date**

## **STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION**

This is to certify that **Biruk Tilahun**, has carried out his research work entitled **“Utilization of project management methodologies in humanitarian projects and the effect on Performance: A case study of Save the Children Ethiopia”** for the partial fulfillment of Master of Arts in Project Management at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce. This study is original and is not submitted for any degree in this university or any other universities.

**Confirmation by Advisor:**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Wasihun Mohammed (PhD)**

**Signature**

**Date**

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

**APMZ-** The Association of Project Management Zimbabwe

**MEAL-** Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

**NGO-** Non- Governmental Organization

**PMI-** Project Management Institute

**PMM-** Project Management Methodology

**PMTT-** Project Management Tools and Techniques

**SCI-** Save the Children International

**SWOT-** Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat

**UNHCR-** United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**WHO-** World Health Organization

**PMBOK-** Project Management Body of Knowledge

**PMDpro-** Project Management for Development Professionals Guide

**SIG-** Specific Interest Groups

**WASH-** Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

## **ABSTRACT**

*Although project management methodologies have been commonly used by organizations, research on their application in humanitarian projects and their contribution to project performance still has not been adequately investigated. In an attempt aimed at addressing this issue, the author conducted a study that investigated the project management methodologies utilized in practice and the perceived contribution to performance by referring to project management professionals operating in an international humanitarian/aid organization that is based in Ethiopia. The investigation was aimed at assisting practitioners and organizations make informed decisions regarding the selection of priorities in efforts targeted at the improvement of their Project Management practices. This research was conducted using a qualitative approach by adopting a descriptive research design that involved a program of semi structured interviews with humanitarian Project Management professionals working at Save the Children Ethiopia. The results showed that many of the tools and techniques identified as the top contributors to the performance of humanitarian projects are composed of very well-known and widely used tools, such as the Work breakdown structure, budget, logical framework, progress report; requirements analysis; risk identification; and project scope statement. These highly acclaimed Project Management methodologies cover the overall humanitarian Project Management life cycle from identification to project closure, but participants gave particular relevance to tools and techniques in planning and implementation phases. The study recommends that organizations working in the humanitarian and emergency response sectors should render special attention to proper communication of requirements, needs identification, resource, risk and change management tools. Similarly, they must be able to provide capacity building training to project team members, clearly communicate the project performance criteria as well as the tools to be used while executing projects. Finally, humanitarian organizations should at least support tools including the project charter, stakeholder engagement plan, work breakdown structures, needs assessment, after action review, risk register, Gantt chart, Logical Framework, reports, Monitoring Evaluation and Learning tools and the implementation plan while executing their projects.*

**Key Words:** *Project Management Methodologies and practices, Humanitarian Organizations, Project lifecycle, Performance*

# CHAPTER ONE

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Background of the Study

According to the Project management institute, a project is a unique and temporary endeavor made up of several coordinated and regulated tasks with start and end dates that is used to accomplish a given objective while adhering to predetermined conditions, such as financial, time, and resource constraints. The planning, scheduling, and control of actions intended to achieve these particular objectives of a project within a set timeframe and price range is referred to as project management (PMI, 2008).

#### 1.1.1 Project Management

Before the idea of project management was developed, projects have existed since the dawn of civilization. In those early days, famous construction projects like the Axum monuments of Ethiopia, the Great Wall of China, and the Egyptian pyramids were carried out as mechanical endeavors designed to develop nations merely through engineering-related operations. But it wasn't until much later that the idea of project management could be formalized as a discipline. More specifically, the contemporary type of project management emerged in the 1950s. Henry Grantt, one of the pioneers of project management, developed the Gantt chart, a scheduling diagram, around this period (Seymour & Hussein, 2014).

Later, in 1965, the International Project Management Association (IPMA), a project management organization in Europe, was created. In 1969, the Project Management Institute was founded in North America. Project management was still mostly used in the aerospace, construction, and defense industries up until the early 1970s. It wasn't yet considered to be essential to managing fruitful initiatives. But as the 1970s went on, it started to be used more broadly in different contexts (Larson & Gray, 2011).

South Africa, where it has been practiced for more than 25 years, is where the modern project management profession in Africa was mostly developed. In Johannesburg, a Project management Institute Chapter was founded in 1981, and in the Republic of South Africa, a new national PM association was founded in 1996. The Association of Project Management Zimbabwe (APMZ) was officially established in Harare in 1996 as well. Its goal is to create Specific Interest Groups

(SIGs) that will serve as local chapters of the Project Management Institute and the Association of Project Managers (Ika, 2012).

### **1.1.2 Project Management Methodologies, tools and Techniques**

**Project Management Methodologies-** are a set of guidelines, tools, techniques, practices, instruments, and methods used in the planning, execution, and management of projects to manage tasks, projects, and deadlines effectively so that project teams are able to accomplish both short- and long-term project objectives.

There are numerous distinct project management approaches, but the most widely used ones are traditional (waterfall), agile, and scrum (PMI, 2008). These methodologies are used in many industries, including software development, research and development, and product development and aid (Frame, 2014).

- A. **Traditional (waterfall) project management methodology-** refers to the traditional style of project management, where tasks are completed one at a time, one after the other, to produce the end product agreed at the start of the project (PMDpro, 2020).
- B. **Agile Project Management Methodology-** is a methodology that is designed to be adaptive to the reality of changing requirements, and puts the customer inside the project to ensure their needs are constantly in focus and fulfilled (Khang & Moe , 2008). It involves cross-functional, self-organizing teams who work fast and flexibly to create products of marketable quality early, and then to improve them iteratively until the optimal commercial solution is reached.
- C. **Scrum Project Management Methodology-** Scrum is a quick "sprint" project management methodology. The scrum technique is best suited for small teams and frequently adheres to weekly cycles with brief daily meetings, or "daily scrum meetings," as they are known (Youker, 2003). . The method was first applied to product development in 1986 by Hirotaka Takeuchi and Ikujiro Nonaka who saw the parallels in their method for creating products faster and more flexibly, using cross-functional teams to deal with complexity to achieve a simple goal. The term 'scrum' was more formally applied to a structured project management approach by Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland in the 1990s (PMDpro, 2011).

## **Project Management Tools and Techniques**

Project Management tools and techniques are defined as a series of systems and methodologies that are used to manage tasks, projects, and deadlines effectively so that project teams are able to accomplish both short- and long-term project objectives. These tools are imperative to maximize the efficiency of projects and ensure that teams complete the project within the budgeted time and deadline (White & Fortune, 2002) .

Recent research investigations and project requirements have led to the emergence of a wide variety of tools and approaches used to manage projects. A few of the most commonly used tools include the gantt chart, network diagram, work breakdown structure, project baseline, earned value analysis, reporting tools, budget, critical path analysis, audits and risk register. These methods and technologies are used to increase project value delivery, track and measure time and cost savings, improve project performance, and promote well-informed decision-making (Benser & Hobbs 2006).

The PMBOK Guide which includes a number of widely accepted project management practices, tools, and techniques, but it is very clear that the existence of such practices does not imply that they should always be applied uniformly to all projects. It also states that the organization and its project management team should be in charge of determining the appropriate tools for any given project (PMI, 2004).

### **1.1.3 Project Management in the Humanitarian, Development and Aid Sector**

Project management may bring about the greatest amount of change for organizations, communities and businesses when done consciously and with the use of tools, procedures, processes, and strategies (Corti, 2011). However, It is not easy to manage humanitarian and emergency projects such that they produce the desired results. Making projects focused, effective, and efficient requires the application of excellent, thorough project management techniques. For instance, it might be challenging to plan and deliver project results given the typical limitations of time, money, and quality. Forward planning, resource allocation, communication, teamwork, and quality control are also some of the complicated aspects of humanitarian project management which need to be addressed formally in many projects in accordance with company strategies, processes, governmental laws, and legal frameworks (Crawford & Bryce, 2003). Loo (2002) also noted that project management is further

complicated by the fact that the majority of projects are frequently implemented through partnerships, consortia, contractors, subcontractors, and suppliers. These complications necessitate the creation of extensive project plans as well as the skillful application of the proper methodologies, instruments and procedures that are vital for achieving intended project objectives (Hermano et al, 2013).

Project management is a core business of most humanitarian organizations as it serves as the means of delivering quality service to their intended targets. It involves the planning, scheduling and controlling of activities designed to meet specific objectives within an agreed timescale and budget (PMI, 2008).

In his 2011 book regarding the basics of project success Melton states that the lack of a consistent and well developed approach to project management, will ultimately result in projects running over-budget, over-schedule while rendering them unable to maximize their impact. (Melton, 2011). Several contemporary researchers and reports have indicated that a comprehensive Project Management Methodology (PMM) which comprises a set of effective tools, standards, procedures that are developed by looking at current ways of working, best practice and what other peer organizations are doing, is a vital means for any organization in its efforts to prepare, design and implement projects with quality and time efficiency (Frame, 2014).

Research shows that work breakdown structure, a detailed implementation plan, human resource plan, MEAL plan, organizational Charts, risk analysis and risk register, procurement plan, project charter, stakeholder map and analysis— are some widely used tools in the management of humanitarian projects across the globe (Melton, 2011).

The project management discipline is presumed to be of great importance in the humanitarian aid and development assistance sectors such projects have a great impact on the socio-economic advancement of project beneficiaries while also improving the effectiveness of the contribution of the donor organizations. Accordingly, the success of humanitarian projects and their probability of achieving intended targets is highly correlated to the techniques and tools applied in the management of these projects (Golini & Landoni, 2014). In lieu of this need for a

well developed project management tools, techniques and literature regarding best practices, some standards and guidelines specific for humanitarian projects such as the SPHERE Handbook: Humanitarian Charter and Minimum Standards in Humanitarian Response and PMDPro have recently been developed by practitioners (UNHCR, 2018). However, several authors have echoed the need for additional research and literature regarding tools, best practices, methodologies and humanitarian project management management techniques as the field is considered to still be at an infancy age (Golini & Landoni, 2014); Khang & Moe , 2008; Youker, 2003).

This thesis work is set to identify which project management tools and techniques are used by Save the Children Ethiopia and whether or not such uses affect the performance of humanitarian projects.

#### **1.1.4 Background of the Organization**

Save the Children International is an organization for children with offices in around 120 countries. Its mandate is to save lives, uphold the rights and fulfill the potential of children around the world. The Ethiopia Country Office is currently the largest operation globally with more than 2,400 staff working in one of Save the Children's 50+ offices throughout the country. Since its inception, Save the Children has worked to safeguard children caught up in armed conflict and it has reacted to 103 humanitarian crises in 63 different countries in the year 2021. In times of humanitarian crisis, Save the Children implements projects and programs that give kids a place to feel secure, play, and learn. The company assists children who have been taken from their homes by making sure they are cared for through safe, secure legal processes and, whenever possible, reunifying them with their family. In order to assist families in rebuilding their lives, Save the Children also offers emergency aid, healthcare, psychosocial support, makeshift schools, and financial grants. The organization works with local partners to immediately respond to natural disasters like earthquakes, tsunamis, or droughts in order to give families access to food, clean water, and shelter (Save the Children International, 2022).

Save the Children has been operating in Ethiopia since the 1960s providing support to vulnerable Ethiopian children and their families through the implementation of emergency relief services, humanitarian aid projects and with long-term development programs.



Some of these programs include projects in child protection, health, nutrition, education, water sanitation and hygiene and humanitarian relief (Save the Children Ethiopia, 2022). These programmatic sectors are briefly discussed below.

- A. Child Protection** - Ethiopian children must contend with a number of barriers to their protection, such as damaging customs, living apart from their families, and risky migration and travel. The primary concerns of child protection are addressed by Save the Children in order to strengthen national systems, mobilize local communities to provide adequate care for vulnerable children, lessen harmful traditional practices, and handle the cases of more than 15,000 unaccompanied and separated refugee children. Save the Children's projects have shown significant contribution to decrease in the occurrence of female genital mutilation in the Somali and Afar regions, among other things.
  
- B. Humanitarian relief**- more than 1.2 million people in 60 "priority one," most affected districts have received timely, life-saving services in food distribution, nutrition, WASH, education, and child protection as a result of Save the Children's 2020–2021 response to multiple drought and displacement emergencies in Ethiopia. Children were better protected from damage and able to complete their education during the crisis, and more than 1 million beneficiaries were reached through humanitarian action, including 250,000 refugees. Communities' resilience to and capacity to cope with future calamities also increased (182,000 in Dollo Ado and 68,000 in western Gambella and Benishangul).
  
- C. Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH)**- millions of rural Ethiopians, notably in the arid, drought-prone east and south, lack regular access to water and about two-thirds of them do not have access to sufficient sanitation. Save the Children addresses this in both emergency and longer-term development contexts by developing and providing water sources for health posts, health facilities, schools, and communities. The group advocates for communities free from open defecation and promotes good hygiene practices among young people. More than 600,000 people have received life-saving services from Save the Children's 2021–2022 WASH programmes.

- D. Nutrition**– Save the Children has worked with the Government of Ethiopia to create a thorough national nutrition strategy, integrate maternal, baby, and young child nutrition initiatives into the health system, and support nutrition-sensitive livelihoods in agricultural extension programs in almost 120 districts. With 40% of children stunted and more than 15% suffering from acute malnutrition in some places, malnutrition remains a major problem for Ethiopia. In order to curb this issue, Save the Children Ethiopia has supported 60 "Priority 1" drought-affected regions in the year 2021, serving roughly 6 million people, with life-saving acute malnutrition diagnosis and treatment programs.
- E. Health**- the most vulnerable Ethiopian children, who are typically in remote locations, are the focus of Save the Children's current efforts, which are focused on neonatal survival and access to better health facilities. As a result, the organization has put in place programs in the areas of children's health, sexual and reproductive health, and community-based newborn health that have been able to considerably improve newborn survival rates and provide many people in need with access to healthcare.
- F. Education**- More than 135,000 students benefited from Save the Children Ethiopia's education-related projects in 2021, which provided education to refugee children and schools in drought-affected areas. More than one million students now have improved access to early education through improvements in classroom environments, teacher training, and community reading mobilization.

This study was undertaken at the project and program headquarters of Save the Children Ethiopia office located in Addis Ababa.

## 1.2 Statement of the Problem

Many projects experience delays, scope changes, cost overruns and total failures due to a wide range of reasons. This consistent problem has inspired many project management professionals to produce ample literature regarding the factors, tools and techniques that are critical for realizing intended project performance levels and ultimately project success (Frame, 2014).

However, literature regarding projects in the humanitarian sector is very limited (Krippendorff, 2004). Exacerbating this problem even further, very little literature exists on the how and which, if any, project management methodologies, tools and techniques influence project performance in the context of humanitarian organizations and each specific stage of the project life cycle. Due to a lack of such understanding, Project Management tools and practices are used more for their popularity than for their well-articulated merits (Meaux & Osofisan, 2016). This notion is supported by some notable studies that have indicated that there is a dire need for more research that can add depth to the literature and knowledge base on the subject matter (Fetene, 2008; Crawford & Bryce, 2003; Tekalign, 2014).

Studies in project management areas have also stressed that humanitarian projects possess specific characteristics resulting from issues such as scarcity of resources, focus on intangible objectives, the urgent nature of the projects and the diversity of the project's stakeholders (Milosevic & Patanakul, 2005; Hermano, et al, 2013; Golini & Landoni, 2014; Corti, 2011). Because of these special features of humanitarian projects, mainstream projects management methodologies may not be suitable for the effective management of projects in humanitarian, developmental and non-governmental organizations (Nwaiwu, 2013). However, humanitarian projects lack a standardized project management methodology that effectively accommodates and responds to these special characteristics (Milosevic & Patanakul (2005) .

Another issue that prompted this study is the fact that management of projects in developing countries is fraught with significant and complex concerns that are still present and unaddressed (Nguyen et al., 2004; Yanwen, 2012). In the context of the researcher's country, Ethiopia, some known projects have been either delayed, have had cost overruns, were poor in quality or failed

to meet the initial objectives. For instance, the Productive Safety Net project, the School Feeding Program and Condominium Housing Project of Addis Ababa are amongst projects experiencing hiccups on a constant basis (Guesh, 2017; Michael, 2021; Abdu 2018).

Some of these problems and failures are attributed to the deficiency of a well established project management methodology and instances of best practices that can be repeated and applied to get better results. This argument is supported by Yimam's (2011) study, which explored whether and to what extent the processes, practices and tools under the PMBOK's Project Management knowledge areas are being applied by Ethiopian contractors in managing construction projects. The findings of the investigation were analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics while the results indicated that lack of a comprehensive and well developed project management methodology was especially apparent in organizations indigenous to Ethiopia (Yimam, 2011).

Similarly, the study by Animaw (2019), which examined project management practices in Ethiopia at the organizational level by undertaking a qualitative case study of addis ababa water and sewerage authority's project office, singled out the lack of suitable project management methodology and project management practices as major challenges. The researcher goes on to reiterate the need for further research on processes and practices of project management indicating that the study focused only on limited epistemological areas of project management (Animaw, 2019).

Humanitarian and aid organizations, especially those operating in developing countries, would greatly benefit from development of a standardized, practically viable and scientific Project management methodology that can enable the delivery of projects to a consistent quality (Diaz, 2010)

As a humanitarian operations professional who has seen and felt these problems first hand, the author of this study was motivated by the desire to fill these gaps by contributing literature that identifies the project management tools, methods, techniques and practices that add significant contributions to enhanced project performance, simplify project management processes, increase the efficiency of executing humanitarian projects, enable the effective delivery of project objectives and improve communication between project team members.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

The study will be guided by the following four research questions:

1. What are the project management methodologies, tools and techniques utilized by Save the Children Ethiopia for managing its humanitarian projects at each stage of the project life-cycle ?
2. What are the contributions of project management methodologies, Tools and techniques contributing to the schedule/time related performance of humanitarian Projects ?
3. What are the contributions of project management methodologies, Tools and techniques contributing to the scope related performance of humanitarian Projects ?
4. What are the contributions of project management methodologies, Tools and techniques contributing to the cost related performance of humanitarian Projects ?
5. What are the contributions of project management methodologies, Tools and techniques contributing to the quality related performance of humanitarian Projects ?

### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.4.1 General objective**

The general objective of the study is to examine Save the Children International's practice of project management methodologies and the contributions of these methodologies on project performance specific to the humanitarian projects it conducted in Ethiopia by the year 2021.

#### **1.4.2 Specific objectives**

The study particularly sought to address the following specific objectives: -

- Identify the assumptions, types, application and knowledge around tools and techniques involved in the design, planning, implementation, monitoring and closure of humanitarian projects
- To assess the perceived contributions of project management tools and techniques for schedule related performance of humanitarian Projects and generate practical knowledge
- To assess the perceived contributions of project management tools and techniques for cost related performance of humanitarian Projects and generate practical knowledge
- To assess the perceived contributions of the project management tools and techniques for scope related performance of humanitarian Projects and generate practical knowledge
- To assess the perceived contributions of the project management tools and techniques for quality related performance of humanitarian Projects and generate practical knowledge

## 1.5 Operational Definition of terms

**A Project-** is a set of related activities meeting agreed objectives culminating in a unique product or service, within a specific period of time and an agreed set of resources (PMI, 2008).

**Project Management-** refers to the planning, scheduling and controlling of activities designed to meet specific objectives within an agreed timescale and budget (Frame, 2014).

**A humanitarian Project/Response-** comprises projects implemented by the entire disaster response community beyond organizational boundaries, which are intended to support efficient, effective, and coordinated humanitarian action through project activities and the sharing of operational information to inform strategic decisions. Crucially, it also involves other elements along the humanitarian development nexus like activities by actors working on disaster risk reduction (Larson & Gray, 2011) .

**A humanitarian Organization-** Humanitarian organizations are a diverse group of organizations, agencies, and inter-agency networks that collectively generate worldwide humanitarian aid to those who need it most. UN agencies, NGOs, International Coalition agencies, military institutions, local government institutions, and donor agencies are some of the prominent humanitarian organizations (Diaz, 2010) .

**Project Management Methodologies-** Project Management Methodology (PMM) includes a set of tools, techniques, guidelines, practices and methods that are used to prepare, design and implement projects with quality, scope, cost and time efficiency by producing so that project teams are able to produce specific deliverables that help accomplish both short- and long-term project objectives (White & Fortune, 2002).

**Project Management Tools and Techniques-** are the systematic procedures and practices which project teams utilize to produce specific project management deliverables (PMDpro, 2011).

**Project Life Cycle-** is the sequence of phases through which a project progresses (Corti, 2011).

**Project Performance-** the extent to which a project adheres to the initial plans of time, cost, scope and quality throughout its implementation (White & Fortune, 2002).

**Project management practices-** refers to a consistent way of managing projects and undertaking activities of a project (Besner & Hobbs, 2006).

## **1.6 Significance of the Study and its Justification**

Study on the project management tools and best practices in the context of the humanitarian sector plays a pivotal role in understanding the trends, variations and putative project management methodologies that can guarantee success of humanitarian and international development projects.

The study has relevance for future research on project management tools and best practices because it investigates the types and practical application of techniques and tools which are considered as having the ability to make or break projects. Such an assessment will contribute to the project management profession by serving as a leaping platform with which further investigations regarding the design and applicable methodologies for the management of development and humanitarian projects can be conducted.

The study would also inform researchers who are studying project management tools and best practices: to understand the project management tools at disposal of humanitarian projects, the contribution of these tools with regards to project performance and the nature of application of these tools in the more narrow and specific humanitarian context. It will also help researchers comprehend best practices captured from the practical application of project management methodologies. Such knowledge can in turn help to uncover result oriented mechanisms and methods for project management on the basis of findings, implications and important lessons drawn from the study.

The main purpose of this study is to assess the utilization of project management tools and techniques at Save the Children International Ethiopia and the contributions of these tools on the performance of humanitarian projects it undertook in the year of 2021.

Put simply, the ‘why’ of Save the Children’s work is to achieve concrete and sustained improvements in children’s lives. Through the findings of this study, Save the Children Ethiopia will be able to critically reflect on the practical elements of its project management system, application, trends and practice. It can also make use of the strengths and limitations identified

and recommendations made by this study to improve its project management methodologies. By doing so, Save the Children can execute projects with better efficiency while creating a meaningful link between what it does, with the difference it makes in the lives of its beneficiaries.

At the societal level, Study of the techniques and tools used by Save the Children International in the management of its projects will play a significant role in understanding trends of project management by organizations in the humanitarian sector while also helping researchers design area-specific methodologies for managing projects to address the existing knowledge gaps.

In addition, this research will inform the decision making process of organizations engaged in humanitarian, emergency relief and development oriented projects about effective adaptation and utilization of core Project Management tools, methodologies and practices.

This contribution for the decision making process will especially be beneficial to local and indigenous organizations lacking formal or concrete guidelines, experience, knowledge and procedures for the management of humanitarian projects. The results of the study may also help the work of Project Management consulting and Software firms, editors of Project Management guidelines, trainers, authors and educators.

Lastly, as a mid level humanitarian professional, the author believes that this study is of paramount importance as it would enable him consolidate his Project management knowledge and practice in the context of the humanitarian and development sector in addition to serving as a platform for professional career development, future research endeavors, teaching, provision of training and consultancy services in the area.



## **1.7 Delimitations/Scope of the Study**

This research on the utilization of Project management methodologies and the way this tools and techniques affect the performance of humanitarian projects is limited in scope to the following:

1. The study is limited to the assessment of the project management tools and techniques used in the identification and definition, setup, planning, implementation and closure life-cycle of humanitarian and emergency projects implemented by Save the Children Ethiopia and identification of the tools and techniques that contribute to time, cost, scope and quality aspects of project performance.
2. The study was conducted at the headquarter of Save the Children Ethiopia's project office located in Addis Ababa Ethiopia with an exclusive investigation of the humanitarian and emergency projects implemented by the organization in the 2020-2021 calendar year.
3. Finding and discussion are based on data obtained from secondary sources and the information provided by those responsible for the management, planning, monitoring, implementation and evaluation of humanitarian aid and emergency relief projects of Save the Children Ethiopia. The study employed a qualitative research methodology with a deep content analysis and description of the organizational processes, experiences and perspectives of the research participants, as a case study, searching for aspects that might contribute to improve the knowledge of project management in practice.
4. The study only investigated and analyzed the case of Save the Children Ethiopia. Thus, the research result should be taken only as indicative of the Project management practice specific to the here discussed organizational context.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

In the context of the humanitarian sector, a project is a set of actions structured around a specified goal, to be carried out over a specific length of time, in a defined geographical area, for a specific group of beneficiaries, with the goal of solving specific problems or improving their circumstance. These projects are distinct from projects in other sectors in that their purpose is directly focused on the broader societal goal of human development (Crawford & Bryce, 2003).

The humanitarian sector is a significantly project-dominated arena. Nonetheless, the industry's lack of well developed, technically viable, practical and exclusive project management methodologies is now considered by many as a major challenge (Corti, 2011).

#### **2.2 Theoretical Review**

##### **2.2.1 Project management tools and techniques**

In terms of the definition, this study adopts the notion that project management tools and techniques are systematic procedures or practices that project managers employ to realize certain project management deliverables (Milosevic & Patanakul 2005). Conceptualizations that are similar to the definition given here can also be observed in a multitude of books and publications. For instance, (Teller et al., 2014) discuss the use of Risk register as a vital tool to analyze the project's risks and prepare a proper risk response plan while other authors like (Kirk, 2012) focus on stakeholder Power/ Interest Grid/Matrix which he describes as a tool that allows project managers to categorize stakeholders in terms of the level of power and interest they have over projects.

Golini & Landoni (2014) discuss the use of Logframes which refer to tools used for arranging core elements of a project and identifying the logical linkages between them. After action reviews, organizational charts and need assessment tools are issues of concern and dialog for numerous authors (Besner and Hobbs, 2004; White and Fortune, 2002).

With regards to humanitarian project management, PMDpro entails the application of vital Project management tools and techniques such as an authority matrix, a detailed project

implementation plan, human resources plan, objective and problem trees, project charter, monitoring and evaluation plan, sustainability and exit strategy, work breakdown structure and stakeholder engagement plan (PMDpro, 2011). These tools are tipped to help with time, scope, cost and quality management (Simons and Lucarelli, 1998; PMDpro, 2011). SWOT analysis is also deemed necessary for risk management (Milosevic & Patanakul, 2005).

Despite the fact that these studies identified some patterns in the usage of Project Management Tools and Techniques, they did not make it apparent which tools and approaches should be employed in humanitarian projects. They also didn't say whether or not using these tools had any effect on project outcomes.

### **2.2.2 Project life cycle**

A project life cycle establishes the foundation for project management (Larson & Gray, 2011). Different types of Project life cycles have been widely presented in project management literature and books, both for academic and practical purposes. The labels and numbers of project life cycles vary depending on an organization's management and control requirements, the type and distinctiveness of the industry, the nature of projects, and its application areas (PMDpro, 2011). As such, developmental and humanitarian projects are also characterized by a relatively distinct form of project life cycle (Teller et al, 2014).

The most commonly used life cycle of humanitarian projects has five phases namely identification and definition, project setup, project planning, project implementation and project closure (PMDpro 2020, Bonnal and Gourc, 2002; PMI, 2008). Parallel and specific to each phase or cycle, there exist a set of project management tools and techniques (Crawford & Bryce, 2003). For this study, the author has opted to adopt this project life cycle model and investigate the associated tools and techniques of project management as it is the most commonly used life cycle model in humanitarian projects (PMDpro, 2011; UNHCR, 2018; PMI, 2008; Khang & Moe, 2008; Youker, 2003).

#### **The Humanitarian Project Lifecycle Model (The PMDpro model)**

The humanitarian project lifecycle model is a framework designed for the management of humanitarian, developmental and aid projects. This framework is based on the project phase concept which was initially developed by and adopted by the Project Management Institute

(PMI) which proposes four major phases of a project as the elements of any given project life cycle. The four life-cycle phases presented by the project management institute (PMI) include initiation, planning, execution, and project closeout stages (PMI, 2008; Bonnal and Gourc, 2002). Although being nearly identical to this model by PMI, the humanitarian project life-cycle model proposed by PMD Pro provides a more specific, detailed and five staged project model that particularly covers the entire lifecycle of humanitarian and development projects while recommending a set of tools to be used at each stage or phase.

**Phase 1- Project Identification and Definition:** this is the initial stage where project teams develop needs, explore opportunities, analyze the project environment, and design project definition alternatives. The strategic and operational framework within which the project will operate is also established by the decisions taken during the Project Identification and Definition Phase (Golini & Landoni, 2014). The PMDpro (2020) suggests the application of Objective Trees, Problem Trees, Risk Register for this particular stage.

**Phase 2- Project Setup:** Project Charter, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI diagram) tools are identified as the appropriate tools for this stage of the project cycle. During this phase, the project is officially authorized, the project governance structure is developed, and the project's broad parameters are specified and presented to the project's primary stakeholders during this phase (PMDpro, 2011; PMI, 2008).

**Phase 3- Project Planning:** here, the project management and team prepare a complete and detailed implementation plan as well as auxiliary plans such as logistics, MEAL, resource allocation plans (which are necessary inputs to the project) by employing tools such as the Logical Framework, Work Breakdown Structure, Network Diagram and Budget. These plans will serve as a model for the project's entire activity and will be constantly evaluated and updated over the project's life cycle to reflect the project's dynamic circumstances (PMI, 2008; Youker, 2003).

**Phase 4- Project Implementation:** project implementation phase is where the application of the project implementation plan takes place. Gantt Chart and Issue Log are the commonly advised tools for activity control, handling problems, managing the project team and creatively integrating the different elements of the project plan which are some of the core elements of this stage (Larson & Gray, 2011; UNHCR, 2018).

**Phase 5- Project Closure:** all closure activities that need to occur at the end of a project, such as capturing the lessons learnt, confirming the deliverables with beneficiaries, and finalizing the administrative, financial and contractual closure activities take place during this stage of the life cycle (Khang & Moe , 2008; Bonnal and Gourc, 2002). The PMDpro suggested tools for this phase include After Action Review, audit and Project Closure Checklist (PMDpro, 2020).

### **2.2.3 Project Performance**

The literature on project performance entails that a project's performance is influenced by the type, method of application and level of Project Management tools and techniques utilized in its management (Melton, 2011; Tekalign, 2014; Crawford & Bryce, 2003; PMDpro, 2011).

Over the years, numerous studies have been undertaken to discover which project management methodologies influence project performance . According to Fortune and White (2006), there is a distinct lack of agreement among researchers and authors about how and which project management tools and techniques influence the performance of projects. Melton (2011) and Liu and Youker (2003) similarly note that defining pertinent performance influencing tools for a project is a disputed and complex matter. Nonetheless, mainstream literature on project management (PMDpro, 2011; PMI, 2008; Youker, 2003) dictates that the contributions of project management tools, techniques and practices on performance can be assessed by using time, cost, scope and quality dimensions as criteria. Similarly PMBOK (2008), Kerzner (2009) and other literature have written that whether or not the project management tools utilized contributed to the realization of project goals and objectives can be assessed against the triple constraints of time, cost, scope and quality parameters and used as a criteria to investigate the contribution to performance.

#### **2.2.3.1 The triple Constraint Theory**

The Triple Constraint Model, sometimes also called the Iron Triangle, is a project management framework used for evaluating the performance and success of projects based on how well they address competing demands. The concept of the model is that the effective management and success of projects depends on one's ability to control and monitor time, cost, and scope of the project within boundaries of quality standards. Larson and Gray (2011) stated that the performance and ultimate success of a project is dependent on the project team's ability to fulfill the triple constraint requirements for managing time, cost, and entire project scope.

### **2.2.3.2 Disciplines of the PMDpro Model**

The PMDpro (2020) proposes a set of disciplines and systematic approaches which it deems important for high project performance or to stay on top of humanitarian project activities. The model also identifies a set of tools and techniques for each discipline which are tipped to be beneficial for realizing high levels of project performance and ultimately, project success. These disciplines, tools and techniques include:

- A. **Scope Management-** A clearly outlined project scope outlines not only what needs to be accomplished (project deliverables), but also how you plan to get there. If done correctly, every project member and stakeholder will have the same understanding of the benefits of the project as well as the work that is necessary to successfully deliver the outcomes and outputs of the project and this clear understanding directly influences project performance. In order to prevent the gradual expansion of the scope of the project, it is helpful to establish parameters for the deliverables of the project (a principle cause of project delays).

PMDpro Suggested Tools: Logframe and Work Breakdown Structure for the Project

- B. **Cost (Project Resources) Management:** involves organizing all of the resources that are required for a project, developing a budget to ensure that funds are allotted where they are required, and assigning team members to the tasks that are most appropriate for them. There is also the need for project teams to maintain communication with the support services of an organization, such as finance, supply, logistics, and human resources, so as to guarantee a continuous supply of the products and resources required by the project.

PMDpro Suggested Tool: Budget, contracts and purchase request forms

- C. **Time Management** – in order to stay within as well as complete a humanitarian project at the scheduled time, the schedules that are created must be accurate. This includes determining all of the activities that need to take place, determining how these activities should be sequenced (or how they should be dependent on other factors), estimating the resources, both type and quantity, that are required for each activity, and determining how long each of these activities will take. The Project Schedule, also known as a Gantt Chart, compiles all of this information, and it should be monitored on a regular basis to ensure that the overall project calendar is not derailed.

PMDpro Suggested Tools: a schedule Network Diagram and a Gantt Chart

### **2.3 Empirical Review**

Previous studies have been conducted regarding the tools, practices and methodologies in the management of humanitarian projects. Amongst them are Meaux & Osofisan (2016), Hermano et al (2013), Besner & Hobbs (2006), Corti (2011), and Golini & Landoni (2014).

The study by Meaux & Osofisan (2016), aimed at investigating context analysis and quality management tools of project management. The findings showed that there are strong context analysis tools but the application and availability tools specifically developed for this type of analysis are lacking. Furthermore, the study stipulates that the tools often needed a significant amount of time to gather information for analysis in addition to a lack of specificity in tool selection and utilization technique.

According to Corti (2011), a better equipped humanitarian context and project quality management tools are required and should be developed. The Project management guide for development professionals also implies that further research is needed on additional project management tools based on longitudinal design, notably to explore the specific tools associated with humanitarian and development projects (PMDpro, 2011).

Hermano et al (2013) study aimed at examining impact of project management tools adoption on the performance levels of humanitarian project managers. Their findings stressed that project managers are often unaware of the tools that can contribute to a project's success and this is evidently supported by the high project failure rate found in these contexts (Hermano, Lopez-Paredes, Martin-Cruz & Pajares, 2013)

Golini & Landoni (2014), examined the need for specific project management and appraisal tools in their study. The results of the study outlined the need for the development of managerial approaches and tools that are peculiar to humanitarian and international development projects. The authors also suggested that standard project management methodologies should be accompanied by specific tools to ensure humanitarian projects realize their intended high social impact.

In an attempt to fill this gap of a practically investigated, tested and proven approach to a standardized project management methodology, the research by Besner and Hobbs (2006) questioned a sizable sample of project managers and looked at the project management techniques which the participants believed to be important to the success of their projects. The

authors used a total of 70 tools and techniques (mostly adopted from the PMBOK) in a descending order to investigate the average usage and perception of their importance. Based on their findings, the authors concluded that well developed and effectively used project management tools, techniques and practices should enhance project performance and success (Besner and Hobbs, 2006).

#### **2.4 Theoretical Framework of the Study**

The contingency theory has been chosen as the appropriate theoretical lens for realizing the objectives of this research. The contingency approach is considered to be a dominant, rational and theoretical framework which holds the underlying assumption that projects are unique endeavors that are undertaken in different environments and thus require different sets of project management methodologies depending on the situational and contextual factors. As such, the approach accounts for broader level contextual factors such as project characteristics, type, sector and goals. The ultimate goal would be to deliver projects that are within the agreed cost, time and quality projects, which contribute to the overall aim of the organizational existence. The variables considered in this research are based on the assumptions by the contingency approach as the use of project management tools, techniques, methods and practices varies across organizations and the respective sectors. Therefore, it is understood that depending on the organization's operational needs, it is expected they will employ methodologies that fit into their needs and deliver expected results. There are a range of tools and techniques which organizations can choose to implement in each life-cycle stages of their projects and the perceived contributions of these tools and techniques to performance also varies.

Accordingly, this research examines the use of project management methodologies and their contribution to the performance of projects within the humanitarian sector using contingency theory as a theoretical lens. This application of contingency theory as a framework offers deeper insights into project management and performance as it allows focus on the concept of variations through the assumption that there is no single right method of doing things, whereas it's the combination of context, subjective interpretations and objective reality that identifies the best approach and techniques.



## **2.5 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

Project Management Methodologies have been defined in this study as a set of tools, techniques, guidelines, practices and methods that are used to prepare, design and implement projects with quality, scope, cost and time efficiency so that project teams are able to produce specific deliverables that help accomplish both short and long term project objectives (White & Fortune, 2002).

Based on this definition, it can be understood that project teams use different tools at different phases of the project lifecycle so as to produce deliverables that ultimately contribute to the realization of the project objectives within the targeted time, cost, schedule and quality parameters. Accordingly, the reviewed literature indicated that data collection and Needs assessment tools are common tools in the Identification Phase that need to be employed in order to produce deliverables such as the project scope statement (Besner & Hobbs, 2006). The setup phase comprises project management and governance tools such as the kick off meetings, feasibility reports and proposals can be utilized to generate deliverables such as the project charter (PMDpro, 2020). The third phase, that is, the planning phase consists of deliverables such as project schedule and work plan which are achieved through the utilization of tools such as human resource plan, WBS, Procurement and Distribution Plan, Implementation Plan and risk register while the implementation phase includes earned value management, issue log, management of risks, reporting and feedback tools (Crawford & Bryce, 2003; Youker, 2003; PMDpro, 2011). Finally, the project closure stage is concerned with tools that include audit, project closure checklist and after action reviews for the execution of an exit strategy and ensuring sustainability (PMI, 2008).

This utilization of project management methodologies for producing deliverables at each stage of the project life cycle indicates that such uses positively contribute to project performance. This assumption is also supported by ample literature which has identified a variety of tools such as the Critical Path Method (CPM), Gantt Charts, MEAL plan, WBS, risk register, network diagram, budget and Work Breakdown Structure as tools that are critical contributors to project performance (Besner and Hobbs, 2006; Khang & Moe, 2008; PMI, 2008; Bonnal and Gourc, 2002; Crawford & Bryce, 2003; PMDpro, 2011).

The PMDPro model (2020), states that a project can be considered to be a well performing one if it achieves the triple objective of being undertaken or completed within the planned time, cost, scope, and quality while subsequently identifying a set of tools and techniques that can contribute to the enhancement of project performance related to each of the herementioned critical success factors (Erling et al, 2006).

Turner (2004) also identifies a project's ability to stay on time, within budget, and to agreed-upon quality standards as the benchmark for judging the performance of the project. This is the traditional view of project management as used by Baccarini in the development of the project performance criteria model which is rooted in the triple constraint theory. This well renowned and classic criterion from practice serves a measure of the immediate performance of a project against its main design parameters— schedule, cost, scope, and quality (PMDpro, 2011; PMI, 2008; Youker, 2003).

As such, this study investigated the project management tools utilized at each phase of humanitarian projects and the contributions ,if any, of these tools for the performance of humanitarian projects undertaken by Save the Children Ethiopia by using the contingency theory as a theoretical lens and the findings from reviewed literature. The conceptual approach of applying contingency theory to this study will be the interaction effect that will be used to help explain observed phenomena relating to project management methodologies and project performance.

The author used the five phased (initiation and identification, setup, planning, implementation and closure) project life cycle model since it has been largely used and listed model in relation to humanitarian and development project related literature (PMI, 2008; Golini & Landoni, 2014; Khang & Moe, 2008; Youker, 2003).

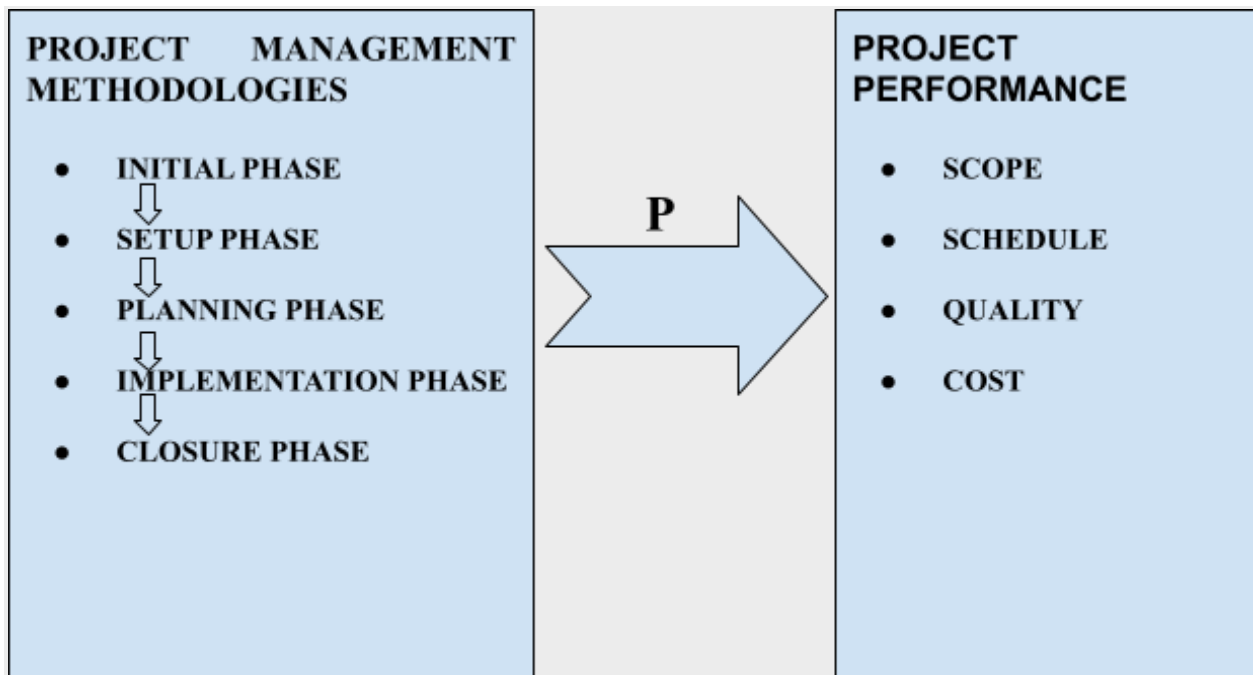
Furthermore, the study also integrated the assumptions of project performance criteria model and a list of frequently used tools that are tipped to be contributors to project performance and which have been shortlisted from the findings of considerable literature such as Besner & Hobbs (2006), PMDpro (2020), Melton (2011), White & Fortune (2002), and Kerzner (2009). Following the empirical and theoretical reviews of literature and the resulting conceptualizations, the author has developed the below proposition that is to be investigated by the study.

**Proposition- There is a positive relationship between the utilization of project management methodologies in association with each phase of the humanitarian project life-cycle and the performance of projects**

The visual representation (figure 2.5.1) and the table that follows it have been presented to summarize those findings from literature which have been adopted as an operational framework of the study. The conceptual framework in Figure 2.5.1 demonstrates the relationships that exist between the propositional variables under investigation. The dependent propositional variable is the performance of projects in relation to the parameters of cost, scope, schedule/ time and quality. The independent propositional variables that will be assessed to identify their level of influence on the dependent propositional variable are project management methodologies and the phases of humanitarian projects.

The literature implies the relationships shown in Figure 2.5.1 but does not indicate that these relationships have been tested in the context of humanitarian projects. The reviewed literature also indicates a lack of understanding about the relationship between use of methodologies across project life cycles and their impact on performance with regard to humanitarian projects.

**Figure 2.5.1 Visual Representation of the Conceptual Framework of the Study**



**Table 2.5.2 Summary of the Conceptual Framework**

General Methodologies	Models
	PMBOK
	PMDpro
	Project performance criteria model
	Project life-cycle model
Project Life-cycle Phases	Tools and Techniques
Identification and definition	Objective tree, Baseline Plan, Needs assessment plan, problem tree
Setup	Project Charter, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI diagram), Kick-off meeting
Planning	WBS, activity list, Risk register, Gantt chart, critical path method, communication plan
Implementation	Issue log, project implementation plan, monitoring plan, reports
Closure	After Action Review, audit, project closure meeting and Project Closure Checklist
Project Performance Criteria	Tools and Techniques
cost	Budget, contract, purchase request form
schedule/Time	Schedule Network Diagram, activity list and a Gantt Chart
quality	Quality Reports, Monitoring, Evaluation and learning (MEAL) tools, minimum requirements list and indicator performance tracking table (IPTT)
scope	Requirement analysis, scope statement, WBS and Logframe

## CHAPTER THREE

### Research Design and Methodology

#### 3.1 Research Approach

A research design is a framework for gathering, measuring, and analyzing information. It is a set of assumptions, rules, and processes used to handle a research problem in a methodical manner (Kothari, 2004). The study adheres to a value-free—free of subjective bias— follows linear methodological procedures to interpret qualitative data. It supports the use of a qualitative method to conduct research (Creswell, 2003).

Both quantitative and qualitative research, according to Krippendorff (2004), are based on fundamental assumptions, and these choice of assumptions determine how the research is understood and developed. Krippendorff also emphasizes the influence of the researcher's assumptions into the study, which reflects on the methodology chosen for the research and the subsequent data analysis (Krippendorff, 2004). In light of this, the purpose of the current study is to examine the perceived reality, probe more closely behind organizational appearances, and identify mechanisms which explain the project management practice of humanitarian organizations. Both Patton (2002) and Creswell (2003) refer to this method as the domain of qualitative studies.

The study was conducted using a basic, qualitative research design grounded in the critical realism philosophy of thought. A deductive approach was adopted to validate the conceptual frame of the study presented in (Figure 2.5.1). The philosophical position of the study is referred to as critical realism and holds the assumption that social constructions must be recognized and represented in an objective manner even though the philosophy assumes reality as being predominantly objective (Patton, 2002). In this paradigm, objective mechanisms and occurrences are combined with people's subjective judgments, which are framed by their experiences and conception of reality. As a result, it is focused on the practical and places a high value on the practical knowledge and skills in a variety of circumstances and interpretations. It focuses on methodically evaluating how theories and findings are applied in practice in order to comprehend how they may be applied to develop practice and determine how they can be helpful to practitioners. (Merriam, 2009).

As such, data collected were focused on regular activities, based on the investigation of meanings and perceptions expressed through words, which would contribute to address the identified issues.

The purpose of qualitative research in project management studies is to gain new perspectives and insights on relevant topics we have limited knowledge about (Kothari, 2004). This approach was chosen for this study so as to take advantage of the reviewed literature, enhance the knowledge about specific issues, and to better understand the research in question. By doing so, the idea was to generate insights that seek problem solutions and for these reasons qualitative research has been carried out on the practitioners' field.

### **3.2 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive case study research design in its effort to answer the research questions. Descriptive research is a design that involves gathering data that describe a specific situation and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the collected data. It is a type of research that describes a population, situation, or phenomenon that is being studied. It focuses on answering the how, what, when, and how questions of a research problem.

The descriptive interpretation of the findings was chosen in order to maintain transparency in the research data and to present the reader with as much precise information of the data as possible in order to authentically reflect the participants' perceptions and experiences (Creswell, 2003).

Thus through the implementation of the descriptive research design, the researcher was able to appropriately investigate the types and practice of project management tools and techniques being used in the organization. Furthermore, the descriptive design proved critical in illuminating the experience of each participant and in detailing their current perceptions of how these project management methodologies influence performance of humanitarian response projects.

### **3.3 Sampling Design**

For the purpose of this study, Purposive sampling is the chosen sampling technique. By applying this purposive or strategic selection processes, respondents who work at Save the Children

Ethiopia and have particular experiences or knowledge concerning the research topic, were recruited. The main inclusion criteria for participants was the level of involvement in humanitarian response projects. Potential candidates were identified by browsing the Human resources database of the organization and other relevant sources which were vital in pointing out relevant staff.

Qualitative studies are mostly conducted by using data from a sample size of 1 to 30 research participants. However, scholarly writings stress the sample size should be set based on informational demands in order to answer the research question with adequate certainty (Krippendorff, 2004, Patton, 2002).

As previously discussed in the background section of this study, the sectors or program areas of Save the Children International include child protection, health, nutrition, education, water sanitation and hygiene and humanitarian relief (Save the Children Ethiopia, 2022). These six distinct sectors (departments) where humanitarian response projects are undertaken were considered for this study as they fitted the inclusion criteria.

In the discussion concerning the sample selection process for a qualitative case study research Creswell (2003), emphasizes that in an extensively homogenous population, any sample population of significantly more than 12 participants may be reaching saturation. Moreover, concerning the data sample, Bryman (2012) also states that studies with a small sample of subjects might be more appropriated in research using a descriptive case study approach, once it is not searching for rigid replicable methodology, but is seeking to unveil evidences and understanding of an exceptional event.

Based on these suggestions from the existing literature, a total of fourteen respondents composed of participants from each department or sector who are responsible for project execution and those involved in the management of humanitarian projects were selected as the participants for the study with the aim of securing a diversified yet holistic data. This selection of an appropriate sample of respondents was done on the basis of preliminary planning conducted by the author that involved approaching and consulting with the management of Save the Children Ethiopia during the early planning stages of the study. This allowed the author to compile a list of prospective participants from each of the departments and then select individuals from that list to

take part in the research project once it had gotten under way. Since the purpose of the study was to evaluate the status of projects that were carried out in the year 2021, the respondents who were selected for participation in the study needed to have a minimum of two years' worth of experience working for Save the Children Ethiopia and its humanitarian project operations. Consultation regarding respondents was carried out in the form of emails, phone calls, and in-person meetings with senior management of Save the Children Ethiopia in order to clarify the required profile of the participants.

The respondents were carefully selected from Save the children's management and staff in Ethiopia. A mixture in positions and roles of respondents offered a better accuracy to the qualitative data and enabled the appropriate arrangement of quality data for analysis. Participation was free of charge for all the respondents, and the study is self funded.

### **3.4 Sources of data**

Both primary and secondary data was used in the study. The primary data is made up of data from in-depth interviews. The resulting information resulted in the primary data for the research. The secondary data is derived from reviews of documents, academic books and journal articles which served as an effectively supportive tool for the collected data. The combination of secondary and primary data enabled the author to draw inferences as they were complementary (Olsen 2004). This also helped ensure validity of the study.

### **3.5 Data collection tools and Research instruments**

An academically acclaimed case study strategy involves integrating data collection techniques rather than depending solely on one and this choice of a research method, the tools that will assist in gathering data for a study, results from the research design decision (Bryman & Bell 2003). Accordingly, this study was conducted using two main data collection techniques. The first technique was the use of semi structured interviews with respondents. The questions that guided in the semi structured interviews were developed through the utilization of contingency theory as a theoretical lens. A deeper understanding of how the interviewees perceived how project methodologies operated in their context in terms of having an impact on the features of project performance was obtained through interviews. By doing so, data was assessed to be more reliable and more precise due to the richness of information and high quality of data that was grasped from in-depth interviews. The second technique for collecting the necessary primary



data had been the review of organizational documents and reports which was vital to enrich the information that the researcher needed. (Bryman, 2012). The questions used in the in depth interviews were in great part drawn from questions developed and used for well recognized researchers into project management competency (Crawford, 2000).

In addition, this research also integrated secondary research data gathered through review of online sources, books and previous studies in the research area in an effort to improve the quality and precision of the primary data (Creswell, 2003).

### **3.6 Method of Data Collection**

The data required for this study was collected using a range of techniques. The interviews were conducted using telephone and face to face techniques as deemed necessary and convenient by the researcher and respondents.

### **3.7 Procedures of Data Collection**

A formal letter from the Department of Project Management was presented to the organization prior to the data collection process. After receiving formal confirmations to conduct the study, each participant was clearly notified of intent, expectation and purpose of the research followed by receipt of their consent to participate in the study. Finally, participants were communicated in advance to arrange a conducive place, time and platform for conducting the interview.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

For the purpose of this study, Content analysis via the application of data triangulation has been undertaken. Content analysis is a research method that allows researchers to establish reproducible and reliable inferences from verbal, visual, or written data in order to describe particular events in a systematic and objective manner (Krippendorff, 2004).

On the other hand, triangulation is a method of analyzing results from a study utilizing diverse data collection methods. It is a method of paramount importance as it helps to improve validity, to paint a more detailed picture of a research topic, and to examine several approaches to comprehending a research problem (Guion, 2002). As such, the researcher did not start with a hypothesis or a hypothesis, but rather with a qualitative proposition and some research questions based on the study's aims.

Following the data collection, the results were transcribed, coded, and organized under themes for analysis purposes. Data from the interviews were, following Bryman (2004), broken down into categories based on the conceptual framework and nature of data. This is called open coding, which is the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing, and categorizing data. At an initial stage of analysis, interview notes were organized into file folders and kept in a safe place. During transcription, the first step was to copy the audio file into written form. Verbal statements of the participants are directly typed into the Microsoft office word file. Project Managers, administrative staff, executives and project team members' responses were categorized separately and based on their respective sectors via the assignment of codes (A1-A14) in order to discuss their views independently and categorically.

Kothari (2004) notes that arranging data in groups on the basis of common characteristics is important in order to have meaningful relationships. The resulting data was therefore linked with the categories that emanated from the conceptual framework of analysis. Similarly Bryman (2004), states that the approach to data analysis can be structured around theoretical premises or a descriptive framework. In order to connect bits of information from the same instance to related theoretical claims, Bryman proposes a logic in which the first step is to create central categories and the second is to locate information about each connected category using the data obtained. Accordingly, the category of focus to be used for the analysis of data in this study had been the description of the project management methodologies utilized in the transitions through the different phases of the humanitarian project life cycle and the contribution of these project management tools and techniques, practices and methods to project performance in connection with the four specific performance measurement criteria pointed out in the reviewed literature. The analysis was conducted in a manner that seeks for data related to the categories within the interview transcripts or institutional documents. Once the data was categorized in those areas and the organization processes well understood, the research question and research objectives were answered and presented in the discussion section. Finally, the data analysis categories also guided the conclusion of the study.

As a result, this study can be perceived as one that is framed around a deductive research technique based on the contingency theory, in which data gathered was analyzed via triangulation and used to develop conclusions by weaving new information into the current knowledge base.

### **3.9 Data Quality: Reliability and Validity**

According to Bryman (2004), reliability and validity are the two major criteria to evaluate the quality of social research. In this study, the author attempted to ensure reliability of data by having the interview protocols as well as questions reviewed by peers and an expert in the field of project management. Furthermore, a combination of tools were used to collect data, identified patterns were cross-validated for reliability and data triangulation was employed to analyze the findings. Finally, Construct validity was attained by convergence of the interviewee data, whereas concept validity was provided by the theoretically constructed model, which was based on prior research and from which the proposition was drawn.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations**

Ethical issues should be respected in any type of research because they relate directly to the integrity of the research (Bryman, 2004). The researcher conducted this study in accordance with the following ethical considerations: anonymity, research clearance, and giving credit to the work of others using proper citation. In all the interviews conducted, all names of the respondents are kept anonymous, or remain unknown to rid of managerial, personal and organizational strains, pressures and unforeseen issues that could hamper the quality of data resulting from participation in the study. The respondents were informed that they can withdraw from the research at any time without any restriction.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### **Results, analysis and interpretation**

This chapter presents the results and analysis of data on the utilization of project management methodologies, tools and techniques and the effect on the performance of humanitarian projects resulting from the application of these methodologies as perceived by the participants of the study. Data was obtained from the Save the Children Ethiopia's database and interviews with project managers, executives, project teams, and other administrative and support staff across multiple departments of the organization.

Because the proposition of the study is aimed at the utilization of project management methodologies in a specific phase contributing to the performance of humanitarian projects, prior to examining the proposition of the study, the author began with an assessment of whether or not the utilization of project management methodologies were significantly different across phases of humanitarian projects implemented by Save the Children International. This was done by conducting content analysis via the application of open coding whereby data was broken down, examined, compared, conceptualized, and linked with the categories that emanated from the conceptual framework of analysis. As such, the existing project management methodologies, tools and techniques were identified based on the qualitative data results and examined in relation to the humanitarian project life cycle model adopted for the study and which consists of five distinct stages: identification and definition, project setup, project planning, project implementation and project closure (PMDpro, 2011; PMI, 2008).

Following such analysis, qualitative data related to the contribution of the project management tools and techniques for performance at each stage of the project lifecycle was analyzed in an attempt to identify and discuss the particular project management methodologies and practices that can potentially improve the performance and ultimately success rate of humanitarian projects.

## 4.1 Results/Findings of the study

**Table 4.1: Characteristics of the study participants**

<b>Code Number</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Current Position</b>	<b>Years of Experience</b>
<b>A1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Humanitarian Operations Manager</b>	<b>9 Years</b>
<b>A2</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Humanitarian Operations Coordinator</b>	<b>13 Years</b>
<b>A3</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Head of Child Protection Program Manager</b>	<b>11 years</b>
<b>A4</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Program Manager</b>	<b>7 years</b>
<b>A5</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>8 years</b>
<b>A6</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Project Officer</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>A7</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Humanitarian Operations Coordinator</b>	<b>11 years</b>
<b>A8</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Project Officer</b>	<b>5 years</b>
<b>A9</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>MEAL Manager</b>	<b>8 years</b>
<b>A10</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Program Coordinator</b>	<b>5 years</b>
<b>A11</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Project officer</b>	<b>6 years</b>
<b>A12</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>3 years</b>
<b>A13</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Project Coordinator</b>	<b>14 years</b>
<b>A14</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>Masters Degree</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Project Manager</b>	<b>6 years</b>

### 4.1.1 The utilization of Project Management Tools and Techniques across the developmental and humanitarian project life cycle stages

The results from this study indicated that a vast number of Project Management Tools and techniques are used extensively in one or more humanitarian project life cycle stages but none of these tools were found to be utilized throughout all the stages of the humanitarian project life

cycle. One major finding of the study is that because of Save the Children Ethiopia's dependence on donor funding for running humanitarian projects, it is forced to adhere to the requirements of the donors in terms of project management methodologies especially pertaining to monitoring and reporting practices. This need for compliance was perceived by a majority of the respondents as having restrictive effects in relation to developing a consistent Reporting, Monitoring and evaluation profile of toolkits that can be simultaneously used across multiple projects.

#### **4.1.1.1 The identification and definition stage**

During the Identification Phase, project teams and other stakeholders work together to Collect data, analyze problems and the project environment, explore options and develop ideas for the potential design of a project. The activities and the decisions made during this phase set the operational framework of the project. There are a range of project management tools and techniques used during this phase of a humanitarian project cycle.

**TOOL A. Needs Assessment and Data Collection-** the project managers and executives that took part in the study discussed that the identification Phase begins by collecting data that will later help project teams complete the needs analysis and project design. The purpose of data collection is to broadly explore and gather information on a wide variety of issues and the data collected is not limited only to examining issues related to community needs but also includes data related to current services provided in the area (whether by the community itself or other organizations), Stakeholders who may be involved in the project, beneficiary community strengths and assets, national or sector level goals, objectives, and strategies.

More than half of the participants explained that primary and secondary data will be collected using qualitative tools such as focus groups and interviews. and quantitative data collection tools including surveys, questionnaires, tests, and standardized observation instruments. The resulting data is used as an input to identify and measure the needs of targeted communities using a Needs Assessment as well as to monitor and evaluate a project by using a baseline. A9 referred to "baseline" as a project management tool that involves measurements of key conditions (indicators) before a project begins, from which change and progress can be assessed.

Almost all participants identified needs assessment as a project management tool of the identification phase which is used to validate that a need exists and is a priority for the community, stakeholders and target people and groups. The Needs Assessment will inform the parameters of the project through data and feedback from stakeholders. Here, a Needs Assessment Tool is used to summarize the key findings of a Needs Assessment. As per A1's discussion, this project management tool is composed of three distinct subcategories of tools. These are Secondary Data Review, Primary Data Needs Assessment Plan and Primary Data Needs Assessment Report. Participant A4 shared, "personally, gathering ample data about what the situation on the ground looks like prior to any intervention taking place is highly empowering, you can never design an appropriate response without such information."

**TOOL B. Stakeholder Management tools-** Stakeholders are agencies, organizations, groups or individuals who have a direct or indirect interest in the project's development, intervention or its evaluation. Project Manager A10 explained that the main tools used by Save the Children Ethiopia with regards to stakeholder management include Stakeholder Power Map, Stakeholder Register and Engagement Plan.

A Stakeholder Power Map is a visual exercise and analysis tool that is used to identify stakeholders and their level of interest and influence so as to inform the organization's stakeholder engagement strategy. The other tool used here is a Stakeholder Register and Engagement Plan. This is a stakeholder management tool that helps track and maintain stakeholder relationships throughout projects.

**TOOL C. Problem Analysis tools-** problem analysis is an analysis of the current and future state of project beneficiaries, the organization itself, priorities, problems and operating environment. Save the Children Ethiopia uses two project management tools for conducting a problem analysis. These are the problem tree and objective tree. The problem tree is a tool utilized to analyze an identified problem by differentiating its causes from effects. As part of the problem tree analysis, the project team will define the Project Problem Statement, which broadly outlines the need that the project aims to address.

The Objective Tree is a tool that helps the organization identify different perspectives and define different routes to solve the problem highlighted in the Problem Tree. It also helps the project team define where and where not to intervene.

**TOOL D. Logical framework-** the Logical Framework (Logframe) a tool that is one of the main tools Save the Children Ethiopia applies in order to define project intervention logic for its development and humanitarian projects.

The donors of Save the Children Ethiopia are the ones who provide specifications on the structure and format of the Logframe. The tool outlines the approach that the humanitarian projects will take to achieve their goals and objectives, as well as the monitoring and evaluation of progress towards these objectives. Importantly, it also lays out the plan for the projects, and details the link between day-to-day activities at a project level, and the broader intended impact of the project.

**TOOL E. Sustainability and Exit Strategy Tool-** the purpose of this tool is to ensure that the organization thinks about sustainability of the project and its preferred exit scenario early on so that they can avoid inappropriate resourcing (human and financial) at the end of project transition phase which could otherwise have been prevented.

The Sustainability and Exit Strategy tool summarizes how the projects intend to withdraw their resources while ensuring that achievement of the project goals is not jeopardized and that progress towards these goals is sustained.

The tool involves the following elements: Defining preferred closure scenario, Identifying high-level timeline and activities needed to sustain project impact, Defining financial and human resources needed and definition of post-project risks.

#### **4.1.1.2 The project setup stage**

During the Set Up Phase, Save the Children Ethiopia established the management and governance structures required to ensure that its humanitarian projects are managed appropriately. Some of the project management tools and techniques used at this stage are presented below.



**TOOL A. The Project Charter-** is a short summary document that establishes the project's scope and objectives at a high level. The Charter is drafted in Project Design and then signed by the Project Sponsor/Board in the Set Up Phase. It can also be signed by additional partners/individuals depending on the project. The Charter is shared with key stakeholders to align expectations of the project and provide updates throughout the project lifecycle.

**TOOL B. Risk Management Tool-** this tool is a project management methodology that is practiced at Save the Children Ethiopia as a mechanism for addressing risks or events that may happen during the execution of projects and affect the process.

There are four processes of the project risk management tool employed by the organization being discussed in this study. They will be explored here:

- Risk Analysis - identifying and documenting all the risks that can affect the project.
- Risk Assessment - determining the probability that risks will occur and estimating their potential impact, and prioritizing risks.
- Risk Response - deciding what actions are needed to reduce or remove threats, particularly those with high-probability and high-impact.
- Risk Monitoring and Control - responds to risks as they occur and ensures proper risk management procedures are being followed.

#### **4.1.1.3 The project planning stage**

This stage involves tools for Human Resource planning, Procurement and Distribution Planning, Implementation Planning, Budgetary Planning and MEAL Planning.

**TOOL A. Human Resource Planning Tools-** a Human Resources Plan was completed for every project and first used in the Planning phase. The tool was vital in terms of enabling the forecast of demand for project staff and monitoring of the recruitment process. It ensured that necessary lead times for recruitment were taken into account and documents the start / end date of staff contracts. It is updated throughout the projects, especially when staff leave the project or when there is demand for additional staff members.

A Project Organizational Chart is the prime tool of use for the human resources planning process. It is a tool that provides a visual representation of the project's structure. It shows who is in the team, the role they have and the relative authority positions of the team members.

**TOOL B. Procurement and Distribution Planning Tools-** The project teams work closely with supply chain staff to get the right quality goods and services to the place of need at the required time in a cost-effective way, enabling the delivery of our programmes in humanitarian and development contexts.

Procurement and Distribution Planning is a critical component to the organization's humanitarian projects and features two tools:

- i) Procurement Plan: The planning for sourcing and procuring goods or services in order to meet the project needs.
- ii) Distribution Plan: The planning for the distribution of goods from the supplier to the warehouse, and from the warehouse to the end user.

**TOOL C. Implementation Planning Tools-** The Work Breakdown Structure (for scope planning), the Network Diagram, Gantt Chart and critical path analysis are the main tools used for implementation plan development.

- i) The Work Breakdown Structure- is a tool that helps the project team define the scope of the project. It arranges the project scope in a hierarchy of 'work-packages'. As A5 put it, "Planning with the work breakdown structure is much easier as it clarifies expectations and any modifications to tasks can be made faster". The tool breaks down the 'work-packages' into manageable tasks, which can then be grouped under activities. Most respondents agreed that this tool facilitates a deeper understanding of the project and provides a comprehensive overview of the project tasks. A11, a project Manager explained that when planning for scope, the team first develops a comprehensive list of all the work the project needs to accomplish in order to complete its deliverables. When making the list, it is important to identify both the direct work of the project (project activities that are required to complete project deliverables) and the indirect work of the project. (project activities that are supportive to the project but not specifically part of the work needed to complete project deliverables)

A Logframe is not a plan - it is not detailed and comprehensive enough. To do this, the project team develops a Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) - the primary tool that project managers at Save the Children Ethiopia use to define project scope.

ii) The Network Diagram- Network Diagrams are tools that help to ensure that activities are delivered on time, on budget, and to the quality and scope defined in the Work Breakdown Structure.

iii) The Critical Path analysis tool- The Project Critical Path analysis is a tool for developing a picture of the series of tasks that determines the minimum amount of time required to complete project activities.

**TOOL D. Budgetary Planning Tools-** budget is the project management tool that sets out exactly what projects costs will be and when the money is needed. At Save the Children Ethiopia, project teams rely on it to plan and manage their work effectively, the leadership team use the budgets from projects and others within the programme to keep an eye on overall expenditures, finance staff use it to produce the monthly cash requests, and the award and finance staff use it to create proposal budgets that take donor requirements into consideration.

**TOOL E. Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEAL) Planning Tools-** Monitoring Tracks the operational work of the humanitarian projects through the use of project management tools such as regular project team meetings, reports, and site visits while evaluation is a tool that tracks the progress of the projects at the higher levels of the logical framework via the application of indicators, progress and activity reports and assessments. Accountability is the mechanism necessary to request, receive, and learn from stakeholder feedback during the project and is done by deploying tools such as a hotline to obtain feedback from stakeholders. Finally, Learning is composed of tools like after action reviews and regular reflection meetings that enable the making of smarter project decisions via the use of data and questions raising.

#### **4.1.1.4 The project implementation stage**

During the Implementation Phase, the project team delivers the activities that it has set out in the Logframe. Here, the projects have established clear plans (DIP, MEAL Plan etc.) for the projects that will support the implementation and ensure the projects are delivered on budget, within

scope, and to the highest quality. This juggling act of managing the Triple Constraint Triangle, risks, and issues can be incredibly challenging, which is why it is so important the project manager has all of the procedures, tools, and plans in place prior to the start of implementation. This phase involves executing these plans and ensuring that the project is managed using the appropriate mechanisms.

**TOOL A. Schedule Management Tools-** One of the most difficult challenges highlighted by a number of respondents about implementing projects, is managing the schedule of projects. Unforeseen issues, incomplete plans, or changes to project scope can result in inaccurate schedules and lead to project delays. In order to avert or address this challenge, Save the Children Ethiopia employs two schedule management tools that help get its projects back on track. These are fast tracking and crashing. Participant A7 noted that “with these schedule management tools, attention for follow up, correcting and controlling is created and this is crucial to keep the project moving according to the defined plan”. Fast Tracing is the tool through which activities that would normally be completed in sequence are instead completed at the same time. Crashing on the other hand is the tool via which projects are injected with additional resources to an activity so that the project team can accelerate progress.

**TOOL B. Budget Management tools-** When monitoring project financial performance, the first question is usually, “Is the project over or under spent?” The tool used to answer this question is the budget versus actual report (commonly referred to as the BvA). The BvA compares the budget with the actual financial transactions and identifies the differences, which are called variances. The finance and project teams at the organization in the study find these variances by reviewing the details of the financial transactions during the specific period of review (month, quarter, etc.). Another budget management tool used is Earned Value Analysis (EVA). This is a tool that compares the planned and actual cost for each task that has been performed and also compares the rate of progress on each task to what was scheduled in the plan of projects. Finally, When monitoring the budget, Save the Children also applies the Cost Performance Index (CPI) tool. Cost Performance Index is a tool used for the measure of the financial effectiveness and efficiency of projects. It represents the amount of completed work for every unit of cost spent.

**TOOL C. Policies and Procedures-** at Save the Children, there are many existing policies and procedures in how to manage project work on a day-to-day basis. It might be the case therefore that when implementing a project, these pre-existing Save the Children policies and procedures

are referred to during the project's duration. All Save the Children policies are made available via the Quality Framework tool.

#### **4.1.1.5 The project closure stage**

The End of Project Transition Phase is the final phase in the project lifecycle. This phase requires the project team to either formally close the project, handover to others (for example partners and local authorities), extend the duration or expand the scope of project, or potentially redesign the current project. Accomplishments are celebrated and lessons learned shared with others.

**TOOL A. Project Closure Checklist-** These are critical tools not only because they help avoid problems with project audits, but they also reduce the risk that there will be disputes with suppliers, employees, and donors regarding the status of accounts. This tool assists with each of the following three areas: contract, financial and administrative closure.

**TOOL B. Scenarios for end of Project Transition -** this is a tool used when projects reach the End of Project Transition Phase. By using these scenario tools, the project teams will move on towards confirming or amendment of the project scenario set out previously in their Sustainability & Exit Strategy..

**TOOL C. Sustainability and Exit strategy tool-** the main aim of the Sustainability and Exit Strategy tool is to ensure the project's deliverables are sustainable; it is not about hastening the project's exit. This phase provides an opportunity to bring the project stakeholders together and to make any adjustments to the strategy to ensure this goal is achieved.

**TOOL D. Learning from Failures-** as the name indicates, this tool is through which project teams take time to specifically focus on failures repeatedly through the life of a project and in detail at the end of the project

**TOOL E. After Action Review-** the After Action Review (AAR) is a tool for facilitating an assessment through which lessons are captured and assessed in a way that is easily accessible and available for staff of other relevant projects.. It involves a discussion of projects that enables individuals involved to learn for themselves what happened, why it happened, what went well, what needs improvement and what lessons can be learned from the experience. Lessons learned are not only tacitly shared on the spot by the individuals involved, but can be explicitly documented and shared with a wider audience.

**TOOL F. Celebrating Accomplishments-** is a tool through which accomplishments are acknowledged and celebrated. It involves recognizing contributions from project team members, stakeholders, and people and groups to increase ownership of projects and provide a space to reflect on how far it has come.

## **PART TWO**

### **4.1.2 The utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across the developmental and humanitarian project life cycle stages and the contribution to Project Performance**

This part of the study focuses on the project management methodologies, tools and techniques used at each stage of the project lifecycle and the effect on the performance of humanitarian projects. It presents and discusses the findings from literature, review of organizational documents and interviews conducted with participants of the study.

The discussion will be guided by the project performance criteria model developed by Baccarini (1999) and rooted in the triple constraint theory that was initially developed by Eliyahu M. Goldratt. The data of the study was collected by using the project performance criteria model as a criteria for assessing the immediate performance of a project against its main design parameters—schedule (time), budget (cost), scope, and quality (PMDpro, 2011; PMI, 2008; Baccarini 1999; Youker, 2003).

The findings of the study revealed that the use of Project Management Tools and techniques had a significant impact on the performance of projects across a wide range of performance parameters.

#### **4.1.2.1 The Utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across project life cycle stages and the contribution to Performance related to Schedule/Time**

Humanitarian and emergency relief projects require swift planning and implementation if they are to meet their primary objective of addressing pressing basic needs. In this race against time, needs assessment tools such as the WBS, activity matrix, Problem Tree, the Venn Diagram, and Stakeholder Matrix were found to be some of the critical methodologies that proved pivotal and to which the study participants gave due credit for.

For instance, one of the project officer's working in the Child protection departments stressed that by using the needs assessment tools, the office and partners can produce quick, high-quality, participatory and gender-balanced emergency assessments. Similarly, a project coordinator for the WASH department explained that the need assessment tools such as surveys, joint need assessment tools and report reviews prove pivotal in emergency response projects as they allow rapid and accurate assessment of beneficiaries needs which then enhances the effectiveness and performance of humanitarian projects by allowing them to provide emergency responses quickly and efficiently.

The distribution and procurement tools also had a massive impact on time (schedule) related performance of projects. A handful of study participants as necessities for procurement, transport, storage, distribution and reporting as they allowed effective management of large volumes of goods, relief items and assets moving through them while also permitting the rapid, efficient and transparent purchase of needed supplies and services.

As the finance administrator at Save the Children explained, the purpose of logistical and procurement tools is to get the right goods or services, at the right time, for the right price. When used well, these project management tools can save precious time, get better value for money so do more for less, and ensure that resource requirements are realistic.

A good procurement planning tool also helps Supply Chain put in place a sourcing pipeline, taking into consideration not only the needs for an individual project but also of those of other existing and future projects. This provided the organization with a head-start, helping it to get beneficiaries what they need, faster, cheaper and simpler.

#### **4.1.2.2 The Utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across project life cycle stages and the contribution to Performance related to Scope**

Risk management, an Issue log, Project Charter, Monitoring reports and real time evaluations were the tools that were highly appraised by respondents when it came to managing the scope of humanitarian projects.

Through risk management tools, Planning with internal and external risks in mind became a possibility thereby significantly improving project design, grounding it in realities of the context of projects , and making it more likely for the projects to achieve expected results without having to deal with significant scope changes resulting from unexpected events or risks.

On the other hand, the issue log was being used on a day to day basis to track all of the issues in the projects that were taking place. Accordingly, the regular reports compiled through the use of this tool elevated project performance as project managers and teams were continuously being alerted to unresolved decisions, situations, or problems that could have prevented the projects from being delivered within scope.

Tools such as Real time evaluations and monitoring reports were important to ensure that the projects were being implemented in the right manner and in providing insight into what went well and what needs to be improved for in the implementation phase so as to achieve the desired outcomes.

Finally, project charter was a vital tool in every process of managing humanitarian projects at Save the Children International as it defined the management framework within which project decisions were being made. The application of the tool clarified authority and accountability structures and the decision making processes relating to project changes that extend beyond project managers agreed tolerances. As such, changes were being accommodated smoothly, decisions were being made quickly and cooperations with stakeholders bloomed enabling the humanitarian projects that were being implemented to perform as planned and in some cases beyond expectation.

#### **4.1.2.3 The Utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across project life cycle stages and the contribution to Performance related to Cost**

The Cost Performance Index and Work Breakdown Structure tool were praised by a majority of respondents when it came to project performance and cost as the tools allow the project teams to break the project work down into manageable 'work-packages' that form a foundation for more detailed planning, such as time and cost estimates. This development of accurate estimates will



help prevent unrealistic budgets thereby ensuring that humanitarian projects perform better in terms of staying in line with their planned costs. One major finding here was that Bottom-up Budgeting tools had negative impact on the performance of projects as it created conflict and overestimations resulting from competition between different departments (sectors) for better shares of resources.

The Budget versus Actual Report (BVB) tool was another tool that had a significant impact on performance. According to some of the study participants, the tool made it possible to Monitor project progress by comparing the budget with what actually happened during implementation. They were also able to Identify issues early on (such as overspending and underspending), so appropriate action can be taken to keep things on track. The resulting actions included budget amendments, no-cost extensions (NCE), informing the Save the Children member or project sponsor etc

#### **4.1.2.4 The Utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across project life cycle stages and the contribution to Performance related to Quality**

A significant number of project managers, coordinators as well as a monitoring and evaluation expert who took part in this study agreed that the performance of projects with regards to quality was subject to improvement and compliance as a result of the quality grid tool which describes the Minimum acceptable standards of quality, Monitoring, Evaluation and learning (MEAL) tools and indicator performance tracking table (IPTT). The IPTT is a tool that encompasses all the indicators of the project, the frequency with which they are measured, the targets to be achieved, as well as baseline and endline values.

Human Resource planning tools for Performance also played a significant contribution on the way projects performed as they made recruitment, briefing and training of skilled project personnel a reality. By using these tools, the organization was also able to hire and orient sufficient numbers of staff in a short period of time. The required number of staff in project support functions is understood by executives and project Managers (including new managers) know their responsibilities as a manager while being able to cope with a team of the size planned for them. Systems were also in place to move staff from ongoing projects to work on the emergency if required.

**The outcomes of the project Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning tool-** the respondents believe and emphasize that monitoring tools such as Project Profile Checklist and Project Profile Worksheet, help them understand whether the projects are progressing as planned in initial stages. In addition, monitoring serves as the benchmark for reducing schedule and cost overruns, while at the same time ensuring that quality standards are realized in the implementation stages of the project.

The monitoring tools are also viewed as a crucial part of Save the Children's project cycles as they allow the development of a culture of continuous improvement. This means that data and observation are used to drive decision making and planning, to develop a sense of responsiveness to the views of the children and communities, and that Save the Children learn lessons from its work which informs further programme development.

Application of Monitoring techniques and development of a sizable monitoring capacity across the teams which support Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning (MEAL) also serves as a useful mechanism for Save the Children in its endeavor to achieve its global strategy and objectives, and quality in its project design and implementation. Below is a summary of some of the specific contribution of the MEAL tools on the performance of Humanitarian projects at Save the Children International-

#### **Accountability and results**

*“ measure and demonstrate impact of projects by providing evidence that projects are delivering lasting impact for children in line with the organizational strategy, mission, vision, and values”*  
(A1)

- create a sense of accountability to the organization itself, children, communities, donors and partner

#### **Effective and efficient use of fund**

- Support and guarantee that funds are being utilized and allocated effectively and efficiently
- ensure plans are progressing at a predetermined pace for the purposes of reporting
- Monitoring informs mid-course correction of project methodology

#### **Evidence and learning**

- Support claims that specific tasks work best to achieve lasting impact for children
- serve as benchmarks on which projects can be able to grow through learning

#### **Transparency**

- Increase clarity on Monitoring responsibilities and access to information

**Table 4.2** below presents a comparison between the research participants and their perceived value for a variety of project management tools and techniques, their utilization and importance for humanitarian projects to perform to expected levels or beyond.

**Table 4.2: Perceived importance and extent of utilization for varying project management tools and techniques in the humanitarian industry**

PMTT	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	A6	A7	A8	A9	A10	A11	A12	A13	A14
Work breakdown structure	X	X		X		X			X	X	X		X	X
Budget			X		X		X	X				X		
Logical Framework	X	X			X	X	X			X		X	X	
Progress Report		X	X			X			X			X		
Requirements Analysis				X			X				X			X
Risk Identification	X	X		X					X					X
Stakeholder Analysis	X			X		X	X			X	X			X
Baseline Planning	X	X				X					X	X		
Project Scope Statement	X		X	X				X			X		X	
Gantt Chart		X	X		X	X			X		X	X	X	
Milestone planning	X	X				X	X	X				X		X

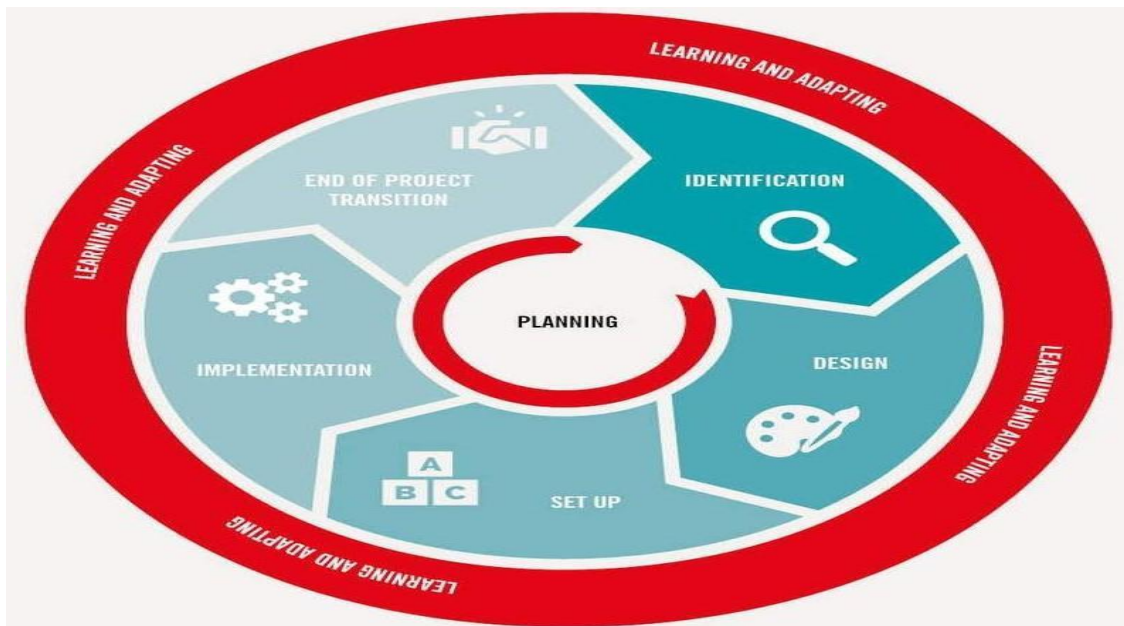
## 4.2 Data Analysis and Discussion

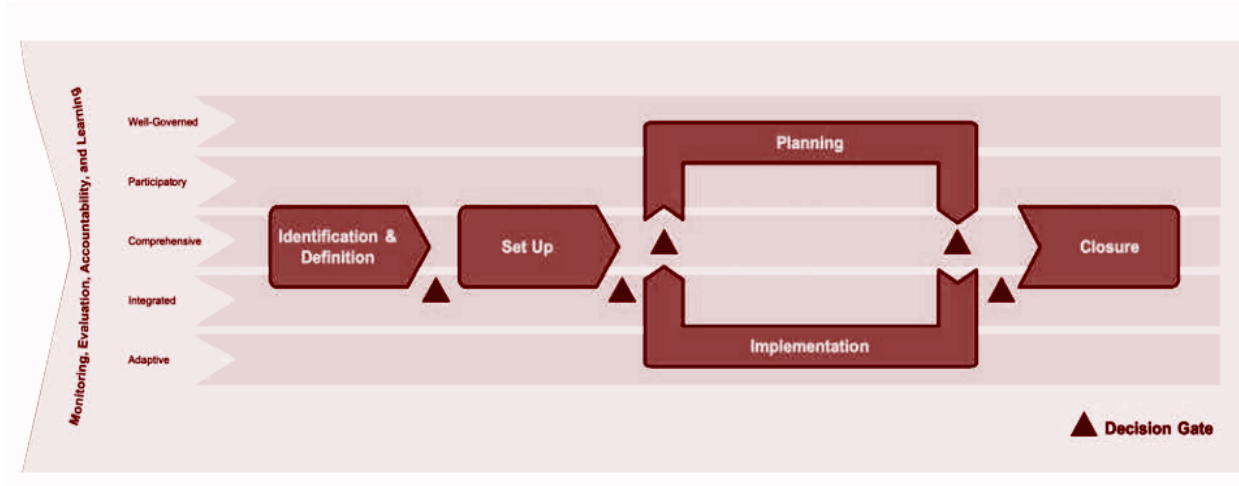
The qualitative content analysis was adopted for the analysis of this study. The main objective of content analysis is to reach the concepts and associations that could explain the obtained data. According to Yıldırım and Simsek (2006), qualitative research data is analyzed in four stages that start with the encoding of data, followed by determination of the themes attributed to the encoded data, then the organization codes and themes and finally Identification and interpretation of the findings.

As such, findings of this study were analyzed by grouping the data obtained from the research participants according to the similarities of the responses and the attribution of appropriate themes to the groups. Furthermore, the study participants who were interviewed were assigned code numbers (A1, A2 ...A14) while relevant interpretations were thereafter made under these codes.

The project management methodology being used by Save the Children International shares common characteristics with the model for the planning and management of humanitarian projects that was suggested by the PMDproBOK (2007). The projects of Save the Children Ethiopia appear to be managed by specific phases that are looped around a comprehensive life cycle with each phase having a particular set of tools, procedures and activities. By taking the humanitarian project life cycle model forwarded by the PMDproBOK as a theoretical base and comparing it with Save the Children's system ( Figures 4.2.1 and 4.2.2), a range of commonalities can be observed. This analysis was generated by taking the whole process (initial to closure) of project management into consideration.

**Figure 4.2.1: Save the Children’s Humanitarian project Management Lifecycle Model**





**Figure 4.2.2: PMDpro Phase Model**

As illustrated in the figures above, the first phase in both models appears to be focused around similar themes despite differences in terminology. However, while the PMDpro model merges identification and definition together and moves towards setup as the second phase, Save the children's model resorts towards design as a second stage of the cycle.

When moving on from the first stage, one can note that there are a few variations in the concept of some phases. For Example, the special emphasis on design by Save the Children requires project teams to establish the foundation of projects on the basis of their findings from the identification phase. The scope and details of projects are also developed during this specific stage. Another significant factor is that the phases of Save the children's project life cycle model don't necessarily happen sequentially. Each phase has some clear distinctive requirements, but in reality, the lines can blur. For instance, Set Up might have to begin whilst projects are still in Design, particularly when there is more than one donor. Some aspects of projects might also be set up and implemented whilst other aspects of the projects are being designed. As per the suggestions of some academics, projects in complex and dynamic environments may require a somewhat different approach to project management approaches (Remington & Pollack 2007).

Other scholars such as Andersen (2008) also support this notion by arguing that projects with goals that are difficult to foresee or are continually being defined, such as deliverables or shifting tasks, would be included in this scheme because the next action would be planned based on the prior phase, and so on. As a result, rather than drawing a formal plan, the project's earliest phases

would dictate the approach to project development. The implementation would be mostly self-determined. However, such a hazy and ambiguous backdrop appears to be appropriate in the case of the NGO programs and organizations examined in this study.

Therefore, one doesn't have to complete a Phase or Procedure before beginning another. However, Save the Children applies major control points called decision gates which it uses to review, conclude and accept the products for a particular Phase of the project and to move on to the next phase. Thus it can be concluded that Save the Children's project management methodology uses a semi-structured approach with a flexible approach that defines project boundaries, budget, tasks, deadlines, scope, and minimum standards for quality. Furthermore, the stakeholder management strategy promotes a better understanding of the project context, the establishment of common project goals, and a participatory approach to project implementation.

#### **4.2.1 The utilization of Project Management Tools and Techniques across the developmental and humanitarian project life cycle stages**

It has been stated earlier that because the study proposition focuses on the utilization of project management methodologies in a specific phase contributing to the project performance, prior to examining this proposition, the author assessed whether or not the utilization of Project management methodologies are significantly different across phases of the project life-cycle. The findings from such examinations indicated that there are significant differences in the utilization of project management methodologies across project phases. In other words, each specific phase in the Project life cycle had a set of distinct tools and techniques being utilized in association with it. In addition, the results illustrated that multiple tools, and techniques are significantly used in more than one phase but none of them are dominantly utilized throughout all the five phases of the project life cycle. The problem tree, needs analysis, project charter, Gantt chart, Logical framework, work breakdown structure (WBS), stakeholder analysis matrix, the objective tree and risk analysis matrix had greater extent and frequency of usage in most phases which goes on to show that these tools are amongst the most favored project management tools that are being used at Save the Children Ethiopia. This could be attributed to the user-friendly nature of the design, importance and simplicity of utilization provided by these tools (Nurre & Weir,

2017). This notion was also supported by some participants who stated that the reason is that the tools were preferred as they were simple and basic tools which provided them with vital and basic data regarding tasks expectations, progress and status of the projects they are engaged in.

One of the major findings in this study showed that the need for compliance with regards to the application of monitoring and evaluation tools was perceived by a majority of the respondents as having restrictive effects. On the contrary to this existing trend of Save the Children Ethiopia, some studies claim and support the merits of applying more flexible approaches to project management tools of monitoring and evaluation by arguing that more flexibility can strengthen the project team's capacity for responsiveness and preparedness to change (Larson & Gray, 2011; Kerzner, 1997; PMI, 2008 and Burke, 1999).

Another key findings of this study was that even in the presence and application of extensive planning tools, participants found planning to be a difficult task due to the urgent or time-sensitive nature of emergency and humanitarian projects, corroborating research findings by Corti (2011) who explained that not having enough time to plan was a major challenge for humanitarian response projects. This notion is also supported by the research of Hermano, et al (2013) regarding the use of project management tools in emergency and humanitarian projects, which found lack of sufficient planning time to be a significant constraint.

Nonetheless, stakeholder management was deemed a crucial planning tool by all interviewees and a central theme throughout the interviews as well. This emphasis on stakeholders was also apparent in respondents' responses to the management of changes in project plans, scope, or design, where their primary concern was the communication of change to project teams, senior management, and external stakeholders via the use of different communication and stakeholder management tools. All participants were highly interested in and knowledgeable about the concept of stakeholder management tools utilization in all project cycles and this usage of stakeholder management was found to be formal across departments and teams..

Stakeholder management is regarded as an important aspect of humanitarian projects, and PMI (2008) recommends the extensive use of stakeholder management tools for development and humanitarian projects, as it can serve valuable for enhancing the efficacy and efficiency of planning.

The review of literature had a broader project management methodologies included, but the participants did not place as much focus on mainstream project management methodologies since the tools and techniques were discussed specifically in relation to the humanitarian project management arena. Concepts including internal and external environmental analysis tools were discussed in the review of the literature (Frame, 2014), but again participants appeared to relate those methodologies to standard project management processes rather than to humanitarian and emergency project management tools.

Similarly, many participants of the study found organizational support intended for the development of skills and knowledge in the application of project management tools and techniques to be favorable but not a critical factor for ensuring the success of projects. During the study, one project manager explained that because most tools are easy to teach and use, they can be simply supported by any experienced project manager without the need for a high level organizational support. However, a review of literature identified many authors that championed the value of routine learning and development support for project teams pertaining to the dynamic nature of projects. For instance, Ramazani and Jergens (2015) argue that regular training and skill development support can enhance project team members' capacity of effectively meeting project objectives. The authors also stated that organization-supported training and professional development activities should be integrated with particular organizational and project structures so as to generate the most value. PMI (2008) also backs an organizational level support for continuous professional development activities targeted at project team members and managers.

Almost every respondent of the study did not associate the frequency of utilization and value of project management tools and techniques on performance of projects to the type, size and length of humanitarian projects. This finding refutes the concept by Besner & Hobbs' (2008) study that indicated large projects tend to significantly utilize project management tools and techniques while smaller projects make lesser use of them.



#### **4.2.2 The utilization of Project Management Methodologies, tools and techniques across the project life cycle stages and the contribution to Project Performance**

As was expected based on the review of literature, including material by PMI (2008), the applicability of project management tools to improve the performance and success probability of humanitarian projects emerged as a relevant issue. This role of project management methodologies to achieve objectives stated goals was discussed by Golini & Landoni (2014) who stated that extensive utilization of project management tools was identified as a crucial factor that enables project teams to utilize information and structure their work successfully.

The findings support the proposition of the study which presumed that positive relationships existed between the utilization of Project management methodologies in different phases of the project life cycle and different project performance criteria or measures. For instance, the objective tree, stakeholder power map and needs identification tools which were being used in the initial phase, contributed to performance related to the schedule of the project. Similarly, the setup stage was associated with tools such as project charter and risk management plan which contributed to the quality and scope related aspects of performance. Furthermore, WBS and budget were among the prominent tools used in the planning and implementation stages whereby they were tipped as contributors to cost related performance. After action reviews, logical framework and planning tools were also being utilized in multiple phases of the life cycle where they were found to be contributing simultaneously to schedule, cost and scope. Simply put, project management tools and techniques that contribute to project performance criteria of scope, quality, schedule and cost are associated with one or more of the five project life- cycle phases.

The results of the study also identified the triple constraint of delivering projects within the boundaries of initially planned time, cost, scope of the projects, and with acceptable quality standards as the primary determinant of excellent project performance, but then added value by supplementing this conventional industry definition. Crawford & Bryce (2003) reaffirmed the significance of each of the triple constraint factors for the successful completion of projects. Additionally, a successful project was defined as one that results in beneficiary or stakeholder satisfaction with project deliverables. In addition, a well-performing project was defined as one

in which the team engaged in learning new tools and the organization grew its project management expertise through lessons learned. As potential contributors to project performance assisting in the achievement of project objectives, team-building tools that enable project managers to train, construct, coach, and support teams were also discussed.

#### **A. The Identification and Definition Phase**

The majority of respondents highly commended baseline, communication plan and needs identification tools as vital tools that highly influence performance of projects during this stage. Similarly, (Pinto & Slevin, 1989; PMI 2008; Andersen et al., 2009), all stressed the importance of these tools as determinants of better project performance. Moreover, many of the best time-saving tools that should be utilized at this stage are already familiar to participants, but may become passive during lengthy projects with numerous redundant activities, for instance. This is basic human behavior, and it is recommended that project managers take precautions to maintain the project team's commitment, dedication, and reporting to enhance performance.

#### **B. The Setup Phase**

During this phase, tools and techniques including the Project Charter, responsibility assignment matrix (RACI diagram), and Kick-off meetings were found to be the most critical factors when it comes to the performance of projects. These findings were in line with the findings of Besner and Hobbs (2006) who also presented similar results. However, risk management tools were identified by respondents as being important contributors to performance relating to the setup stage.

#### **C. The Planning Phase**

During the planning phase, project management tools and techniques that significantly contribute to project performance criteria are those intended for the purposes of developing detailed scopes, schedules or budgets. WBS, Budget, activity plans and project schedule seem to be the significant contributors to project performance because all of them were found to be positively associated with multiple criteria of project performance. WBS was especially found to be contributing towards cost, schedule and scope aspects of performance. The author, in line with

the findings of reviewed literature, also agrees that the use of WBS could lead to enhanced performance related to the aforementioned criteria of performance (PMI, 2008; Youker, 2003).

#### **D. The implementation Phase**

The defined project performance criteria were highly correlated with the project management tools and techniques utilized for task monitoring and control during the implementation phase. It was discovered that the Gantt chart, reporting tools, and indicator performance tracking table (IPTT) all had a favorable effect on project performance criteria relating to schedule and quality. The project teams can benefit from using reporting tools by using them to interact with funders, comprehend their demands, or pinpoint the root of issues for project monitoring and management.

#### **E. The Closure Phase**

After Action Reviews, audits, project closure meetings, the Project Closure Checklist, and lessons learned all made a substantial contribution to the project's performance in terms of quality, scope, and cost during the closure phase. For knowledge sharing and organizational learning to be used in future projects, it has been discovered that recording the lessons learned using record keeping technologies is essential. To report the final status of the projects based on the budget, scope, timeline, or minimal quality requirements that were defined during the setup and planning phases, project closing checklists and meetings were used. As a result, their use helps projects perform better in terms of cost, overall performance, and specification requirements. Utilizing the lessons discovered aided in learning and knowledge sharing.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Summary, Conclusion, Recommendations and Limitations of the Study**

#### **5.1 Summary of Major Findings**

In terms of the application of project management tools and techniques throughout the stages of the life cycle of humanitarian projects, this research identifies the following findings that are distinct contributions to the literature.

The study affirms that a large variety of project management tools and techniques are widely employed in one or more phases of the life cycle of humanitarian projects, however none of these tools were found to be used in all of these stages. The tools and techniques utilized often depend on the specific stage of the life-cycle and its intended results or deliverables. In light of the findings from a descriptive study that carefully examined the case of a well-structured, capable international organization implementing a variety of large humanitarian and emergency response projects under complex conditions, this study extends and contributes to existing literature by identifying and presenting the extent and types of project management tools and techniques utilized at each stage of the humanitarian project life cycle. This study also describes a variety of project management tools and approaches that help projects perform better in terms of cost, time, quality, and scope. Aid organizations and their project teams are tipped to benefit if they choose to use project management tools and techniques that are in line with the characteristics of each stage in the life cycle of a humanitarian project and those tools that have been tipped as major contributors to enhanced project performance in terms of time, cost, quality, and scope in order to manage humanitarian projects effectively.

Finally, the study results support the research's proposition, which held that there were positive relationships between the use of project management approaches at various stages of the project life cycle and various project performance metrics or measurements.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

### **5.2.1 Concluding Remarks**

The question about the type of project management tools, technique, methods and practices that contribute to the performance of projects is frequently raised, despite the fact that it is widely acknowledged that noble intentions are no longer sufficient in the aid world of growing professionalism. This issue has also received much discussion in numerous literature, with many coming to the conclusion that further study into the methods and tools to be used in the management of humanitarian projects is necessary. This served as the motivation for conducting the current study, which is intended to add to the knowledge base and be shared for debate among experts, groups, and scholars of interest.

As such, the first research question related to the purpose of the study aimed to identify the utilization of project management methodologies at multiple levels of the humanitarian project life-cycle. The results demonstrated the methodologies that were predominantly used were contingent upon specific phases of the project life-cycle. Accordingly, needs assessment, problem tree, logframe, objective tree and stakeholder management tools were amongst those utilized in the initial phase. The setup phase had the project charter and risk management tools being applied during execution. The Planning phase on the other hand was mainly conducted using Network Diagram, HR plan, Gantt Chart and critical path analysis and WBS tools. Tools to include budget, scheduling network diagram, earned value analysis and cost performance index were amongst the main tools being used during the implementation phase while during the closure phase, tools in the likes of after action review, project closure checklist, lessons learnt reports and meetings were mostly being applied. The study therefore, contributes to existing literature by identifying and presenting the project management tools and techniques used in each phase of the humanitarian project life cycle based on the findings of a qualitative case study

The research questions from the second to fifth attempted to identify the contribution of different project management tools and techniques on the performance of humanitarian projects in terms of time, scope, quality, and cost parameters or criteria. Accordingly, an activity matrix, WBS, problem tree, the Venn Diagram, and stakeholder matrix were discovered to be some of the essential techniques with regard to schedule-related project performance. Similar to how Risk

management, an Issue log, Project Charter, Monitoring reports, and real-time evaluations were highly regarded techniques for managing project scope effectively. When it came to project cost-related performance, the majority of respondents praised the Budget Cost Performance Index and Work Breakdown Structure tool, while the requirements list, minimum standards, monitoring, evaluation, and learning (MEAL) tools, and indicator performance tracking table were found to be crucial contributors to improved project quality. These findings corroborate the proposition made by the author at the beginning of this study which assumed the utilization of project management methodologies, tools and techniques across project life cycle stages as having a positive relationship with performance. Humanitarian organizations and their Project teams should be cognizant of this relationship and make extensive use of these tools and techniques in order to enhance project performance and thereby fully realize the objectives of their aid related projects.

The findings also noted that tools, methods, and methodologies are only as effective as the person or entity utilizing them. Even the most experienced individuals and well established organizations, however, must use some sort of technique, method, system, and tools if only to understand how these outcomes were obtained and to replicate them. As a result, the study concludes that there must be at least some form of criteria for selecting methods, systems, and tools that places more emphasis on the presence of essential performance enhancing components than on particular methodologies. One such criteria for the selection of project management methodologies, tools, and techniques is following a bottom up approach which begins with current best practices at the field level, where the provision of humanitarian aid is undertaken by aid players in the sector, as opposed to being primarily based on mainstream literature or discussions from partners' most knowledgeable members.

On a final note, the results of this study have further corroborated the need for additional research regarding the practice of project management methodologies in the humanitarian aid sector. Future studies of such kind can be focused on the utilization and impact of project management tools and techniques on project performance in relation to the type, size and length of humanitarian projects. Similarly future research can be geared towards comparison of tools based on the level of usefulness as well as the timing (the when), context (the where) and application (the how) of which they are used.

### **5.2.2 Theoretical Implications**

The theoretical framework adopted in this paper revolved on previous research that covered the subject of Project Management methodologies and project performance. The theories that were presented in Khang and Moe (2008), Corti (2011) and Melton (2014) indicate that certain project management methodologies, tools and techniques must be used at each project life-cycle stage of humanitarian projects while the likes of Youker, (2003), Besner and Hobbs (2006) and PMDpro (2020) assert that project management methodologies, tools and techniques such as Budget, WBS, schedule network diagram, Gantt chart, quality reports, monitoring, requirement analysis, scope statement, and Log-frame evidently contribute to cost, schedule, quality and scope related performance of projects. However, the theories by White & Fortune (2002) illustrate that limited PM tools and techniques are utilized by organizations. Similarly Diaz (2010) notes that certain Project Management tools and practices are misused or avoided due to lack of understanding their well-articulated merits.

The preceding research and theories that were presented in this paper covered broader perspectives and involved participants from varying as well as vast sectors and countries. However, the theoretical contribution of this study is based on data collected from a local level institution based in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the findings from this study indicated compatible results with the previous theories and models that were discussed in the reviewed literature. Furthermore, the study revealed a relatively distinct finding that practitioners perceived additional tools and techniques such as needs assessment, objective and problem trees and after action reviews and real time evaluations to be major contributors to the performance of humanitarian projects.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

The findings of the study demonstrated a relatively formal and strong culture, knowledge and good practice of project management methodologies as well as the impeccable contribution of project management tools and techniques in the improvement of project performance and overall success. On the basis of these findings and the literature analyzed, this research recommends the following:

1. During the first two phases of the project life-cycle, those undertaking humanitarian projects should give special attention to proper needs identification, resource, risk management and needs assessment tools. As the review of literature showed, management of humanitarian projects is highly time sensitive, volatile and constrained by the scarcity of resources. Thus, utilization of tools that permit a fast and comprehensive identification of needs, proper management of resources, extensive assessment of risks and change can significantly help improve performance of projects through better planning and use of the resources which contribute to cost ; assessment and monitoring of risks which in turn contribute to quality, schedule and scope. Similarly, project management tools and techniques such as detailed implementation plan, HR plan, risk management plan and Logframe should be used during planning phase while MEAL plan, risk response, communication plan and WBS are recommended for usage during the implementation phase as they have been found to be top contributors to all four parameters of project performance. Finally, lessons learnt, sustainability and exit strategy ought to be used in the closure phase of a project and such uses do contribute to improvements in schedule, cost, scope and quality related performance of humanitarian projects. .

2. Organizations working in the humanitarian, developmental and emergency response sectors should at least support the following minimum tools: (1) stakeholder management, (2) work breakdown structures, (3) Needs assessment, (4) risk identification and register (5) Gantt chart, (6) Logical Framework, (7) status and progress reports (8) Monitoring Evaluation and Learning tools, (9) Feedback and reporting tools, (10) Communication tools . Other required and important tools should be determined on the basis of the material and human resources available, the operational context and on a project by project basis.



## **5.4 Limitations of the Study**

The main aim of this study was to investigate the practical practice of project management in the humanitarian and emergency response sector in order to contribute viable insight for subsequent studies. It is important to note that the intent of this study was not to draw broad generalization of findings, but rather to offer valuable and reliable information gleaned from an analysis of a single organization that might improve the understanding of processes, methodologies and practices related to the management of humanitarian projects.

The quality of qualitative research can be estimated and judged based on validity and reliability criteria (Thagaard, 2013). The validity of methods may further be appraised through an examination of the credibility and authenticity of the presented results. The data for this study was collected using interviews with staff and management personnel involved in the projects of Save the Children Ethiopia. Triangulating the findings by performing systematic observation of ongoing projects or conducting interviews/ focus group interviews with external stakeholders could have improved the credibility and authenticity of the findings (Thagaard, 2013). However, observation and focus group interviews were not conducted, as the study had a very limited timeframe. Such additional input could have been useful to gain a deeper understanding of perspectives and experiences of stakeholders and for highlighting similarities and differences between them (Doody et al, 2013).

If a researcher is to be unbiased, he must acknowledge and consider his own point of view and how it may influence the study being undertaken (Malterud et al, 2017). The researcher's history of working at Save the Children Ethiopia as well as his interest in developmental and humanitarian-aid related issues may have influenced the research process on a subconscious level, as may his limited experience as a qualitative researcher and interviewer. Lastly, the reliability of the research process may have been influenced by the selection of participants (Malterud et al, 2017). Purposive sampling, a method heavily reliant on the personal judgment of the researcher may to some degree expose the study to researcher bias (Maul, 2018).

Because the study had the aim of examining the effects of project management methodologies on project performance, the sample will be limited to project managers, executives, project team members and other staff of solely Save the Children Ethiopia. Nonetheless, beneficiaries of projects as well as the experiences of other humanitarian organizations could have been included to get better understandings and encompass multiple perspectives.

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## **APPENDIX- Interview Guiding Questions**

### **A. Personal details**

1. Name.....
2. Job Title.....
3. Department.....
4. Years of project management experience.....
5. Age.....
6. Gender.....
7. Educational level.....

### **B. Research Questions**

1. What are the specific project management tools and techniques that are used at the Identification and definition phase of humanitarian, emergency response and development projects ?
2. What are the specific tools and techniques that are used at the setup phase of humanitarian, emergency response and development projects ?
3. What are the specific project management tools and techniques that are used at the planning phase of humanitarian, emergency response and development projects ?
4. What are the specific project management tools and techniques that are used at the implementation phase of humanitarian, emergency response and development projects ?
5. What are the specific project management tools and techniques that are used at the closure phase of humanitarian, emergency response and development projects ?
6. Have you received any training, templates or detailed instructions regarding the use of Project management tools and techniques ? If yes, how do you assess the organizational support you have received in terms of training, templates or detailed instructions it provided ?
7. What were the main challenges related to the utilization of project management tools and techniques ?

8. In your view, does the use of project management tools and techniques in the management of humanitarian, developmental and emergency response projects contribute to the quality of projects delivered to beneficiaries? If yes, which project management tools and techniques most contribute to the quality of your projects ?

9. In your view, does the use of project management tools and techniques in the management of humanitarian, developmental and emergency response projects have any contribution for the execution of projects within or below the initially planned schedule/time? If yes, which project management tools and techniques most contribute to the timely execution and delivery of your projects ?

10. In your view, does the use of project management tools and techniques in the management of humanitarian, developmental and emergency response projects have any contributions for the execution of projects within or below their initially planned costs/budget? If yes, which project management tools and techniques most contribute to the execution and delivery of your projects within or below the initially planned costs/budget ?

11. In your view, does the use of project management tools and techniques in the management of humanitarian, developmental and emergency response projects have any contributions for the execution of projects within their initially planned scope? If yes, which project management tools and techniques most contribute to the execution and delivery of your projects within their initially planned scope ?