Unpacking Partnerships for Planning Monitoring and Evaluation - Sustainability of Agricultural Projects Funded by Non-governmental Organizations Nexus. An Empirical Study in Bungoma County, Kenya

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Abstract

Guided by systems theory, this study examined how partnerships for planning M&E influences sustainability of agricultural projects funded by Non-Governmental organizations in Bungoma County, Kenya. Findings: Sustainability of agricultural projects had a general mean of 24.7080showingthat agricultural projects were not sustained. Partnerships for planning M&E had a general mean (GM) of 26.1460and a general standard deviation (GSDV) of4.52370 showing that there was an overall disagreement by the participants with the most of the items that measure partnerships for planning M&E implying that organizations did not effectively utilize partnerships for planning M&E as a component of M&E system. Partnerships for planning M&E were found to positively correlate highly with sustainability of agricultural projects H0: was rejected with r = 0.743, F (1,135) = 3.725, at p = 0.036< 0.05 and R-squared of 55.3%*. The study concluded that it is important to consider partnerships for planning M&E.*

Key words: Sustainability of agricultural projects: partnership for planning M&E, monitoring and evaluation system, systems theory.

I. Introduction

1.1 Partnerships for planning monitoring and evaluation

Participatory monitoring and evaluation differs significantly from conventional M&E in that the community, beneficiaries, and people involved in designing and implementing the project also are involved in monitoring and evaluation throughout the project's duration. In consultation and association with benefactors, the public, recipients, and implementers decide what is to be monitored and how the monitoring will be steered. Together, they examine the data gathered through monitoring and evaluate whether the project is on track in attaining its objectives. Based on this evidence, they decide together whether the project should continue in the same direction or if it needs to be modified (Shah, 2006). Participatory monitoring enables project participants to generate, analyze, and use information for their day-to-day decision making as well as for long-term planning. In participatory evaluation, just as in participatory monitoring, the recipient community and CBOs or FBOs together decide how to conduct the evaluation – its timing, scope, and methodology.

The group also decides what they would like to find out through the evaluation. They choose the matters and indicators that will be looked into by the evaluation and they help articulate the questions to be asked. They take part in collecting and analyzing data and presenting the results. If a project follows a participatory approach from the beginning, it is easy to conduct a participatory evaluation at the end Shah, (2006). While conventional monitoring and evaluation focuses on the measurement of results – service delivery, information dissemination and behavior change, participatory monitoring and evaluation focuses on the results and process. The main characteristics of this process are inclusion, collaboration, collective action, and mutual respect. Participatory M&E encourages dialogue at the grassroots level and moves the community from the position of passive beneficiaries to active participants with the opportunity to influence the project activities based on their needs and their analysis (Shah, 2006).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study reflects the first and the second sustainable development goals (SDG) which are: End of extreme poverty, including absolute income poverty ($1.25 or less per day) and end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture.

Ending extreme poverty, is measured by among others the percentage of population living below a country's poverty line while ending hunger, achieving food security and improved nutrition, and promoting sustainable agriculture is measured by among others, crop yield gap (actual yield as % of attainable yield).According to the Kenya economic survey report 2014, Bungoma County is one of the counties in top five contributors to national poverty index in the country with 3.79 per cent which is among others the reason for study location.As noted by Tanga and Mundau (2014), the efforts of NGOs to empower rural communities through poverty alleviation projects are to a greater extent proving to be unfruitful, the projects cannot continue once they are left in the hands of the community, and thus people's livelihoods are showing little or no improvement despite the efforts put in place. The importance of utilization of monitoring and evaluation system in the implementation of NGO projects has been recognized (Wasiams, 2007). Stakeholder engagement in M&E,which is a component of M&E system, encourages dialogue at the grassroots level and moves the community from the position of passive beneficiaries to active participants with the opportunity to influence the project activities based on their needs and their analysis which in turn increases the chance for project ownership, Shah, Mahlalela ,Kambou , and Adams,(2006).It is for this reason that the researcher conducted this study in order to determine how partnerships for planning M&E would influence sustainability of agricultural projects.

1.3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the study was to investigate the influence partnerships for planning monitoring and evaluation on the sustainability of agricultural projects.

1.4research Hypothesis

The study tested the following hypothesis;

H1: Partnerships for planning monitoring and evaluation significantly influences sustainability of agricultural projects.

2. Literature Review

Theoretical and empirical literature was reviewed based on the concept of partnership for planning monitoring and evaluation

2.1 Partnership for Planning Monitoring And Evaluation, And Sustainability Of Agricultural Projects

Active stakeholder participation in planning for monitoring and evaluation is principally important to transfer know how, expertise, and possibly funding so that the implemented interventions are sustainable beyond specific donor intervention Guerra-Lo´pez, (2014)**.** The voices and views of stakeholders should be actively solicited. Engaging key stakeholders in a participatory manner helps to build consensus and gain a commitment to reaching the desired outcomes which includes sustainability of community based projects Kusek and Rist (2004). Aid agencies are nevertheless aware of the importance of increasing the active involvement of partner countries and developing M&E capacity in partner countries (Liverani & Lundgren, 2007). To date, however, relatively little strategic engagement appears to have taken place in this area, even amongst those aid agencies that mention it in their mandates, as they are struggling with their own persistent capacity-related weaknesses in the area of M&E (OECD/DAC, 2010).

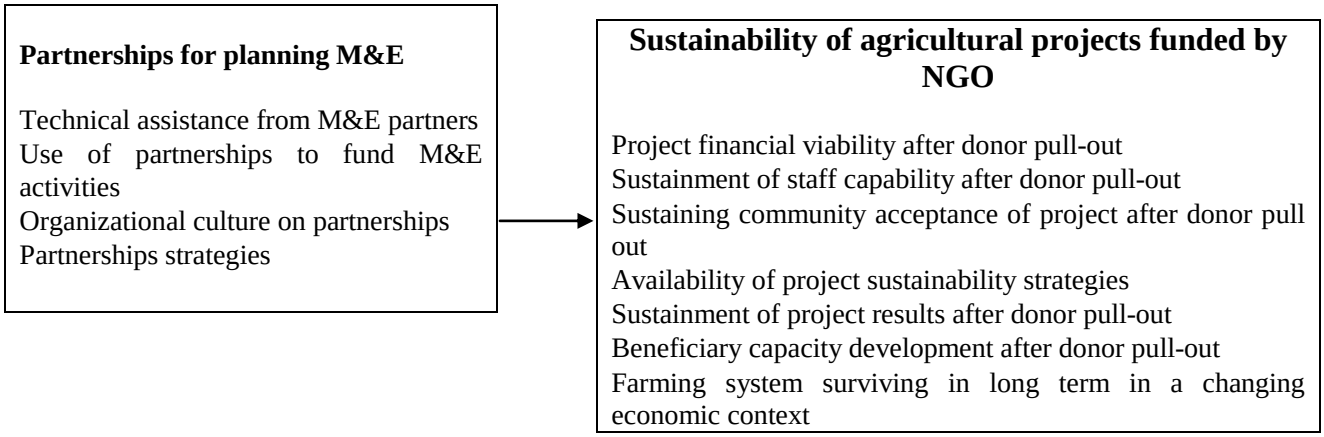
2.2 Sustainability of Agricultural Projects Funded By Non-Governmental Organizations

In relation to implementation of projects, sustainability is the probability that a project shall continue long after the outside support is withdrawn. Consequently, while thinking of project sustainability, three things must be born in mind; the community, project results and external assistance. A project is sustainable if the community/beneficiaries are capable on their own without the assistance of outside development partners, to continue producing results for their benefit for as long as their problem still exists. (Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega, 2015)

Ramsbottom, (2013) conducted a study entitled factors affecting social sustainability in highway projects in Missouri. The study stated that sustainability focuses on the interaction between a given project and the social, environmental, and the economic dimensions of the system enclosing it.
The study noticed that majority of the studies conducted focused mostly on the environmental aspects of sustainability rather than the economic ones; while very few studies discussed the social dimension. Social sustainability promotes the concepts of respect, awareness, diversity, vitality, and responsibility toward the workforce and the society by keeping them healthy and safe from harm during the different phases of a project.

2.10 Conceptual Framework

This study is guided by the following conceptual framework



3. Methodology

3.1 Research Paradigm

Pragmatism paradigm worldview was applied in this study. Pragmatism advocates the use of mixed methods in research. Pragmatism paradigm arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions (presumptive conditions i.e, hypothesis) as in post positivism. It focuses on what works and solutions to problems Patton (1990) Instead of focusing on methods, researcher emphasizes the research problem and uses all approaches available to understand the problem (Creswell, 2003).

3.2 Research Design

The study adopted a combination of descriptive survey, cross-sectional survey and correlational design. Quantitative approach was applied, consisting of closed-ended questions that would elicit information to be used for descriptive and inferential purposes. The qualitative approach with open-ended questions obtained in-depth information to be used to validate descriptive and inferential results (Mwanje, 2001).

3.3. Target Population

The target NGOs was selected in the criteria of having a functioning monitoring and evaluation unit, must have implemented agricultural projects and lastly the NGOs must have been in operation for not less than three (3) years. The study participants included project officers, project volunteers, M&E officers, data entry officers and project managers, implementing agricultural projects. The study had a target population of 216 participants for quantitative data which was made up of 153 Project officers, 20 M&E officers, 27 volunteers implementing agriculture projects, and 16 data entry officers from all the NGOs, also, the study had 27 project managers for qualitative data. (NGO's Finance and Administrations records for the selected NGOs, 2018). This is shown in table 3.1 and 3.2

Table 3.1: Category of target population by strata

	Target population by strata	No
1.	Project officers	153
2.	M&E officers	20
3	Volunteers	27
4.	Data officers	16
Total		**216**

3.4 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The study used probability sampling technique. This section discusses the sample size and the sampling procedure adopted in the study.

3.4.1 Sample Size

The study had a sample was 140 respondents for subordinate staff implementing agricultural projects that was selected from a target population of 216 using Yamane (1967) formula and 8 project manages that was purposively selected from a target of 27

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

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$216/1+216(0.05^2)$
$217/1.54=140$
n= is the required sample size
N= is the targeted sample size
e^2= error limit (0.0025)
Substituting N in the above formula gives a sample size of 140 respondents.

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure

To sample the respondents, stratified random sampling was used to ensure that all parts of a population are represented in the sample in order to increase the efficiency of the study (Kothari, 2009; Kotrlik and Higgins, 2001). The study used job positions (Project officers, M&E officers, volunteers, and data entry officers) held by the respondents in these organizations as strata. To have proportional representation from each stratum, a sample was drawn independently in the same ratio so as to have similar percentage of each total. Simple random sampling was used to ensure that each element in each stratum has equal probability to be selected for the study. Pieces of papers was written numbers equal to the elements in each stratum then random numbers selected up until the required numbers was reached as shown in the proportional allocation for each category. This process was be repeated until sample from each category is selected. The study also used purposive sampling method in the case of strata that has a single participant. Researcher also used purposive sampling to select 8 project managers from a total of 27. Table 3.3 and 3.4 shows the allocation of random numbers per category and per NGO.

Table 3.3: Proportional allocation of participants per category

The strata	Target population from strata	Proportionally allocated sample size	Sampling procedure
Project officers	153	99	Simple random
M&E officers	20	13	Simple random
Volunteers	27	17	Simple random
Data officers	16	11	Simple random
Total	**216**	**140**	

4. 0 Results

4.1 Demographic Information of Respondents

4.1.1 Demographic characteristics of respondents

The study was interested in the assessing background characteristics of the participants, the researcher sort to check on the distribution of participant's age, gender, and years of service in the organization.

4.1.2 Age of the respondents.

Respondents were asked to indicate their age group in years. This was done to ascertain that respondents were normally distributed in respect to age since an individual's age was not a consideration in the selection of respondents in this study. Age groups were classified into five categories: 18-25, 26-35, 36-45, 46-55 and above 55 years. Responses on age are shown in table 4.2

Table 4.2: Distribution of respondents by age

Age	Frequency	Percent
18-25	9	3.8
26-35	34	14.4
36-45	65	27.5
46-55	18	7.6
Above 55 years	11	4.7
Total	137	58.1

The research findings on age of participants indicate that 9(6.6%) of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 25 years; 34(24.8%) between 26 and 35 years; 65(47.4%) of the respondents between 36 and 45 years; 18(13.1%) of the respondents between 46 and 55 years while 11(8%) of the respondents between above 55 years.

That 91.9% of the respondents were 55 years and below implies that majority of the respondents were at their productive age as employees and therefore in respect to sustainability of agricultural projects in non-governmental organizations, age of the respondents would be an insignificant factor. Therefore in determination of the influence of the monitoring and evaluation system on sustainability of agricultural projects funded by NGOs, other factors other than respondents' age were under consideration in this study

4.1.3 Gender of the respondents

Researcher sought establish whether or not respondents were males or females. This was done to establish that respondents were normally distributed between the two genders because in this study, none of the gender was given preferential consideration in the selection of respondents. Responses on gender are shown in table 4.3

Table 4.3: Distribution of respondents by gender

		Frequency	Valid Percent
Valid	Female	65	47.0
	male	72	53.0
	Total	137	100.0

Results on participants gender indicated that 65(47%) of the respondents were females while 72(53%) were males. This indicates that non-governmental organizations had complied with the requirement of employment of balancing the gender or be at least 30% of either gender (GOK, 2012). Respondents in this study were skewed favorably in respect to gender spread which enhanced the quality of the analysis of results given that the study was guided by pragmatism research paradigm which Anthony (2004) indicates as the best suited paradigm for mixed methods research design in that it incorporates multiple realities in research like the gender factor.

4.1.3Years of experience

The study was interested in establishing the distribution of respondents by years of service in the current organization, this was done to ascertain that respondents were knowledgeable about the organization they were responding about in respect to the influence of monitoring and evaluation system on sustainability of agricultural projects. Responses on years of experienceare shown in table 4.4

Table 4.4: Distribution of respondents by year of service in the current organization

Experience years	inFrequency	Percent	Valid Percent
1 – 5	20	8.5	14.6
6 – 10	85	36.0	62.0
11 – 15	18	7.6	13.1
Over 15 years	14	5.9	10.2
Total	**137**	**58.1**	**100.0**

The results on number of years in the current organization indicated that 20(14.6%) of the respondents had worked in their current organization for between 1 to 5 years; 85(62%) had worked for between 6 to 10 years, then 18(13.1%) had worked for between 11 to 15 years and 14(10.2%) had worked for over fifteen years.
The results showed that many respondents had worked in the this organizations for more than five years which was considered in this study sufficient to make objective responses on the monitoring and evaluation system and sustainability of agricultural projects.

5.0 Sustainability of agricultural projects funded by NGOs

This was the outcome variable of the study as informed by the existing empirical literature and the related theories.

Table 4.10: Distribution of responses on the sustainability of agricultural projects funded by NGOs

	Items	*N*	*Mean*	*Standard deviation*
4a	*The organization has strategies to retain financial viability of projects after donor pull-out*	*137*	*1.9270*	*1.15450*
4b	*After donor pull-out, the organization have effective strategies to retain the staff skills obtained from the project*	*137*	*3.3869*	*1.20201*
4c	*The organization have effective strategies to maintain community acceptance of projects after donor pull out*	*137*	*3.5036*	*1.02988*
4d	*The organization has project Sustainability strategies*	*137*	2.8467	1.33885
4e	*There are strategies to retain project results after donor pull out*	*137*	*3.6350*	*1.34425*
4f	*After project termination, the organization has effective strategies to retain beneficiary skills required for their capacity empowerment.*	*137*	*2.3869*	*1.23222*
4g	*The organization has strategies to ensure farming systems of beneficiaries survives in long term despite changing economic context*	*137*	*2.0584*	*0.88090*
4h	*The organization has effective strategies to ensure project sustainability*	*137*	1.9708	1.25406
4i	*Beneficiaries' farming systems survives in long term despite changing economic context*	*137*	1.6277	1.09818
4j	*The organization has effective strategies to retain financial viability of projects after donor pull-out*	*137*	1.3650	1.04231

Table 4.10 shows ten items that measure sustainability of agricultural projects, the table presented means and standard deviations. Researcher established the general mean using actual scores that ranged from 50 indicating strongly agree and 10 indicating strongly disagree when each values attached to each response were multiplied with the number of total items. The general mean for all item in table 4.10 was found to be 24.7080with a standard deviation of 4.30998. The value of general mean showed that there was an overall disagreement by the participants with the most of the items that measure sustainability of agricultural projects. The implication here is that agricultural projects were not sustained. The mean had a small standard deviation which shows a consensus among participants on this issue. Results of the interview guides supported this finding in that most of the key informant participants emphasized on lack of project sustainment when asked about their take on the sustainability of agricultural projects in the organization. Participants were convinced that project sustainability was elusive in the organization. Main gaps noted by interview guide participants were: That finances were highly strained therefore finance resource were only budgeted for until the terminal end of the project and not post project, high employee turnover which worked against efforts meant to maintain skilled staff, glaring lack of project sustainability strategies, and noticeable absence of effective strategies to retain beneficiary skills. My finding on sustainability agrees with the work of (Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega, 2015)which stated that project sustainability is a major challenge not only in Kenya, but also in many developing countries. Most projects implemented at huge amounts often tend toexperience difficulties with sustainability.
Donors such as the World Bank, DFID, USAID and other bilateral aid agencies have been expressing concerns on project sustainability, while the trend with implementation of projects is showing significant improvement, post-implementation sustainability is rather disappointing with very few projects being sustained.

My study result also confirms the statement of the problem which stated that majority of agricultural projects have generally been unsuccessful to bring sustainable benefits to the target groups, and even though numerous projects highlight fundamentals of sustainability in their proposal stage, the actual implementation still seems to lack emphasis on sustainability (Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega, 2015).

A study conducted by (Kikwatha, Kyalo, Mulwa, & Nyonje, 2018) also investigated project sustainability, and in its findings: The study found a mean score for sustainability as 3.2521 and standard error 0.3072. The measure for sustainability was therefore 3.25 which was neutral opinion in the Likert scale implying that there was the uncertainty about sustainability of dairy goat projects. The same study findings by Kikwatha (2018) was supported by Focus Group Discussions (FGD) which found that participants expressed a mixed reaction when asked if the dairy goat project has been sustainable and has impacted positively on their lives. While study by (Kikwatha, Kyalo, Mulwa, & Nyonje, 2018) found a mixed reaction and uncertainty on project sustainability, my study on the other hand found total lack of project sustainability.

6.0 Partnerships for planning monitoring and evaluation,and sustainability of agriculturalprojects

This section analyzed the first objective of the study and determined the descriptive statistics on partnerships for planning M&E, correlation between partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects, and regression of partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects.

6.1 Partnerships for planning monitoring and evaluation

Table 4.11: Distribution of responses on the partnerships for planning M&E

		N	Mean	SD
5a	*There is M&E technical assistance from partners*	**137**	3.5255	.97075
5b	*Technical assistance from partners is not effectively utilized by the staff**R***	**137**	2.0438	1.22995
5c	*M&E Partners provides much needed support towards M&E tools development*	**137**	3.8321	.96687
5d	*My organization effectively utilizes M&E tools support from partners*	**137**	2.0803	.76752
5e	*The organization uses partnerships to fund for M&E activities*	**137**	2.1825	1.30169
5f	*Funding provided through partnerships towards M&E activities is utilized efficiently*	**137**	1.2774	.63859
5g	*The organization has a favorable culture on partnerships*	**137**	3.6058	1.17797
5h	*The organization culture for partnerships is effective*	**137**	2.0876	1.13419
5i	*The organization has an effective M&E partnerships strategies*	**137**	3.0547	0.18768
5j	*There exists an effective communication system for M&E partners as a partnerships strategies*	**137**	1.9562	.51261

R: The scale of the item was reversed during analysis

Researcher established the general mean using actual scores that ranged from 50 indicating strongly agree and 10 indicating strongly disagree when each value attached to each response were multiplied with the number of total items in table 4.11. The general mean for all items was26.1460and a general standard deviation of 4.52370. The mean had a relatively small standard deviation meaning that there was consensus among the participants on responding to this item. The value of general mean showed that there was an overall disagreement by the participants with the most of the items that measure partnership for planning M&E. This implies that organizations did not utilize partnerships for planning M&E as a component of M&E system. A study conducted by (Fakoya et al 2001) stated that lack of stakeholder's participation in M&E policy has been pointed out as a main impediment to commercial fish farming projects. Additionally, a study byCodd (2011), stated that stakeholder participation in M&E process assesses what works and what doesn't and in essence make amends for improvement of projects. The same study also noted that engagement of locals helps build stakeholder capacity to handle their issues. In their studies, they observed that stakeholder capacities can be enhanced by employing local languages when pursuing evaluation practices and then utilizing scientific tools to extend the evaluation findings from the local level to wider areas. The studies further revealed that participatory processes are a means of reducing tensions among participants otherwiseresponsible for resource-based conflicts.As a consequence, various stakeholders end up learning to work together towards a common objective. This discussion implies that partnerships for planning M&E was important therefore an implication that failure to utilize partnerships for planning M&E might affect sustainability of agricultural projects negatively.

6.2 Relationship between partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects

The study sought to establish the relationship between partnership for planning M&E and the sustainability of agricultural projects. The study also tested the null hypothesis there no significant relationship between partnership for planning M&E and the sustainability of agricultural projects. Both correlation index (r) and p-value were computed as shown and presented as shown in table 4.13

Table 4.13: Correlations between partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability ofagricultural projects.

		Partnershipsfor planning M&E	Sustainability of agricultural projects
Partnerships for planning M&E	Pearson Correlation	1	.743
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.036
	N	137	137
Sustainability of agricultural projects	Pearson Correlation	.743	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.036	
	N	137	137

Table 4.13 shows a correlation index r= 0.743. This shows a strong positive correlation between partnership for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects. This implied that the more the organization embraced

partnerships for planning M&E the more agricultural projects were sustained. Further analysis sought to test null hypothesis

H0: There is no significant relationship between partnership for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects

The p-values was found to be p=0.036 at 0.05 level of significant. This led to rejection of null hypothesis that stated:Partnership for planning M&E has no significant relationship with sustainability of agricultural projects. The alternative hypothesis was adopted. In a further analysis, one of the project managers responding to an open ended questions said the following:

"….For any organization to achieve project sustainability, stakeholder engagement is key…..partnerships in monitoring and evaluation is unavoidable when sustainability of projects is the end product……"

This qualitative result supported the quantitative result which found a strong relationship between partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects. This result agrees with the work of Conlin and Stirrat, (2008) which stated that partnerships for M&E was important for sustainability of agricultural projects because it attempts to include a range of stakeholders to develop new methods of measuring sustainability, which improves projects in terms of sustainability. Further, Katz and Sara (1997) found that the community-based approach significantly increased sustainability. The analysis found that there exist a strong linkage between participation of the community members and sustainability of the projects. Sustainability was achieved owing to the fact that community members were able to access information,capacity build at all levels, trained in operations and maintenance, control over funds, and good quality construction. Study by Katz and Sara (1997) was supported by Tulder et al., (2014) which stated that implementation of sustainability considerations in organizations has traditionally been discussed as a top-down process, in which external pressure mounts up and organizations react by addressing sustainability in their strategies.

6.3: Regression analysis of partnerships for planning M&E on sustainability of agricultural projects

The study also sought to establish how much partnerships for planning M&E explained variation in the sustainability of agricultural project through regression analysis. The model and the key that used was as follows:

$$\boldsymbol{\gamma = \alpha + \beta 1 \chi 1 + \varepsilon}$$

y= Sustainability of agricultural projects
a=constant (Y-intercept)
β_1= Beta coefficient
X_1= Partnerships for planning M&E
e= error term

This was presented in tables 4.14

Table 4.14: Model Summary for partnership for M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	RStd. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.743[a]	.553	.539	.84261	2.322

a. Predictors: (Constant), Partnerships for planning M&E
b. Dependent Variable: Sustainability of agricultural projects

Table 4.14 shows a Pearson r of 0.743 which indicates a positive correlation exhibited between the various bivariate variables implying that the more the organization embraced partnerships for planning M&E the more agricultural projects were sustained. This confirms the correlations value in table 4.13. The results also shows an R^2 of0.553 which shows that 55.3% of the variability of the response variable which was sustainability of agricultural projects funded by NGOs was accounted for by predictor variable which was partnerships for planning M&E.

$$R^2 = \frac{\varepsilon\,(Estimate - Mean)^2}{\varepsilon\,(Actual - Mean)^2} = \text{Regression Sum of Squares/Total Sum of Squares}$$

Table 4.15: ANOVA table for partnership for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regress on	700.245	1	700.245	3.725	.036
	Residual	19.589	135	188.00		
	Total	1265.504	136			

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability of agricultural projects
b. Predictors: (Constant), Partnerships for planning M&E

Table 4.15 shows an F-statistic of 3.725with a p-value of 0.036. This is reported as $F = (1,135) = 3.725, p = 0.36, R^2 = 0.553$. It shows that the regression model hence the variability that was explained was statistically significant. Since the calculated p-valueis less than 0.05 the null hypothesis was rejected.
The model($\boldsymbol{\gamma = \alpha + \beta 1 \chi 1 + \varepsilon}$) was found to be fit since the predictor variable accounted for 55 .3% of the variability ofoutcome variable and which was statistically significant.

Table 4.16: Coefficient table for partnership for M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	16.194	.111		19.717	.000
	Partnerships for planning M&E	9.040	.046	.743	.852	.036

a. Dependent Variable: Sustainability of agricultural projects

Table 4.16 works by substituting the beta value as well as the constant term, the proceeding regression equation model was as follows:

$$Y = 16.194 + 9.040\,\chi 1$$

The results in table 4.16shows that a unit increase in the value of partnerships for planning M&E increased the value of sustainability of agricultural projects by 9.040times holding other variables constant, the units totaled to 25.234 units for a unit increase in the value of partnerships for planning M&E.

This was above average number in terms of units comparing with a total number of units which was 50 from the general mean for all items that was calculated in table 4.11. This contribution was also statistically significant with a p-value of 0.036.

The results agrees with work of Chouinard and Cousins, (2013), which noted that participatory evaluation is particularly relevant because of the following reasons: Firstly, participatory evaluation has been shown to be particularly potent in fostering learning about programs and the contexts within which they operate this means that partners can adopt the best cultures that suit the implementation process. Secondly, participatory monitoring and evaluation provides an indirect approach to capacity building which includes technical support and fund mobilization. To the extent that local actors, program community membersand stakeholders are involved in the co-production of evaluation knowledge they stand to benefit significantly. Such benefits are often framed as 'process use' (Cousins 2007; Patton 2008).

My study also agrees with Kimweli, (2013) who also stated that participatory monitoring and evaluation in food security projects contributes to the success of food security projects. Also my study agrees with Ababa (2013), as discussed in (Oino, Towett, Kirui, & Luvega, 2015) who stated that despite development aid to Kenya rising steadily supporting several projects all geared towards development, some of the projects have, however, been successful and little evidence is available on the true impact of funded programs on the lives of the poor in Kenya. The study states that one of the most critical obstacles is the extent to which the projects are able to be sustained or persist despite the exit of donors.

As Kusek and Rist (2004) stated, more and more partnerships are being formed to achieve development goals. Partnerships may be formed at the international and multilateral, regional, country, and governmental levels. Whatever the case, the same results-based monitoring system can be applied to partnership efforts, given scarce resources and ambitious development objectives, development partners need to leverage resources to achieve the desired goal. Therefore, the means and strategies wasbe set by multiple partners. One must look beyond one's own organizational unit when considering available inputs. Partnerships may be created elsewhere in one's own organization or even with other organizations inside or outside the government. When resources are cut or diminished, governments and organizations may need—or be forced to enter into—partnerships with others to reach goals that may be similar. Collaborations can include the formation of partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, and the international donor community. By combining resources, outcomes are more achievable—even during times of input constraints. Failure to utilize partnerships for planning M&E might also have influence project sustainability because, like Kusek and Rist, (2004) notes that there is an interaction between means and strategies (inputs, activities, and outputs) and outcome targets (pathway to sustainability of agricultural projects). Targets are set according to what the means and strategies potentially can yield.

Views from interview guide were in support of feedback from questionnaire. In her own words one of the respondents said the following

" Involving stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation process provides direct benefit to the organization in terms of resource mobilization, it also enhances learning from one another hence building capacity, this will eventually translate to project sustainability
The challenge that organizations face is overlooking the role of stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation process at project design stage"

7.0 Conclusion

This section presents the conclusions made in the study. Research objective one in this study was to examine the extent to which partnerships for planning M&E influence sustainability of agricultural projects. Partnership for planning M&E was measured by the following indicators: availability of technical assistance from M&E partners, use of partnerships to fund M&E activities, organizational culture on partnerships and availability of partnerships strategies.

The results this section showed that organizations did not fully utilize partnerships for planning M&E. This is seen where the items that measure partnerships for planning M&E had a small general mean score of 26.1460and a general standard deviation of 4.52370 as shown in table 4.11. These items had the highest value of 50 (5x10) when values attached to each response were multiplied with the number of total items. The value of general mean showed that there was an overall disagreement by the participants with most of the items that measure partnerships for planning M&E. This implies a poor utilization of partnerships for planning M&E as a component of M&E system.

The results from table 4.11 shows that respondents did not agree that organizations had a well-established M&E system in terms of partnerships for planning M&E.

Despite low utilization of partnerships for planning M&E, majority of the respondents agreed that partnerships for planning M&E influences sustainability of agricultural projects in terms of helping sustainagricultural projects (Results for item 5.1a to 5.1d). Both descriptive and inferential analysis pointed to a positive relationship between partnerships for planning M&E and sustainability of agricultural projects. This shows that majority of the respondents agreed that partnerships for planning M&E influences sustainability of agricultural projects. The correlation in this test was statistically significant showing that results could be generalized to the study population

8.0 Recommendations

Partnerships for planning M&E was identified as the main predictor variable in the study. It had the strongest Pearson correlation as a single variable and the relationship was also statistically significant. The implication of this finding for policy and practice is that organizations ensure its full utilization. The study established that despite the importance of partnerships for planning M&E, organizations poorly utilized it. This implies that there was still big need to enhance, embrace and utilize technical assistance from M&E partners, partnerships to fund M&E activities, and to ensure effectiveness of organizational culture on partnerships so as to ensure utilization of partnerships for planning M&E as a component of M&E system.

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