

Monitoring Data Utilisation, Capacity Building and Organisational Performance of Humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County, Kenya

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Publication Date: 2026/10/13

Abstract: This paper examined the relationship between monitoring data utilisation, capacity building and organisational performance among humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in Kajiado County, Kenya. It was developed from the third and fourth specific objectives of a broader study on monitoring practices. The objectives were to examine the influence of monitoring data utilisation on organisational performance and to assess the effect of capacity building on organisational performance. The study was guided by Results-Based Management Theory, with Systems Theory and the Resource-Based View providing supporting perspectives. A descriptive correlational design was used. The target population comprised 80 staff members involved in programme management, monitoring, finance and field coordination; 65 completed questionnaires were analysed, giving a response rate of 81.3%. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression. Monitoring data utilisation had a positive, statistically significant correlation with organisational performance ($r = .624$, $p < .001$) and remained a significant predictor when the other monitoring practices were controlled ($B = .246$, $\beta = .308$, $p = .024$). Capacity building was also positively correlated with organisational performance ($r = .507$, $p < .001$) and was a significant independent predictor ($B = .238$, $\beta = .258$, $p = .018$). The findings indicate that performance is associated with the practical use of monitoring evidence and investment in staff skills, organisational support and information technology resources. Humanitarian NGOs should integrate monitoring findings into planning and management decisions and provide continuous, job-relevant capacity development.

Keywords: Capacity Building; Humanitarian NGOs; Kajiado County; Monitoring Data Utilisation; Organisational Performance.

How to Cite: Priscilla Ntete Maisiodo; George Ngaruiya (2026) Monitoring Data Utilisation, Capacity Building and Organisational Performance of Humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County, Kenya. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 11(10), 357-362. <https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/26oct476>

I. INTRODUCTION

Humanitarian non-governmental organisations operate in environments where needs can change quickly, resources are constrained and accountability to communities, donors and other Stakeholders is essential. In Kajiado County, humanitarian interventions address issues such as drought, food insecurity, water and sanitation, health, livelihoods and resilience. Organisational performance therefore depends on the ability to deliver services efficiently, achieve project objectives, maintain accountability and respond to changing community needs.

Monitoring generates information on whether activities are being implemented as planned and whether intended results are being achieved. However, collecting information does not automatically improve performance. Monitoring evidence has to be accessible, analysed, communicated and

used to inform planning, resource allocation and corrective action. Results-Based Management emphasises the use of performance information to assess progress towards intended results and improve implementation (Kusek & Rist, 2021). When monitoring data are collected mainly to meet reporting requirements, their contribution to organisational learning and performance may be limited.

Staff capacity is also relevant because employees need appropriate technical skills, organisational support and information technology resources to collect, interpret and apply monitoring evidence. Capacity building can include professional development, regular training, job-specific technical training, managerial support and access to suitable ICT facilities. The Resource-Based View recognises staff competencies and organisational capabilities as resources that can support effective performance (Barney, 2021). Systems Theory also directs attention to the links between people,

information systems, management processes and organisational outcomes (Arnold & Wade, 2021).

Previous research reviewed in the underlying project generally associates monitoring data utilisation and staff capacity with improved project implementation, accountability and organisational learning. However, much of the cited evidence concerns NGOs in urban settings, development projects or organisations outside Kenya's arid and semi-arid areas. Evidence focused on humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County is more limited. This paper addresses that contextual gap by examining two related practices: the utilisation of monitoring data and capacity building.

The paper had two objectives: (1) to examine the influence of monitoring data utilisation on organisational performance among humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County; and (2) to assess the effect of capacity building on organisational performance among humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County. The corresponding null hypotheses were that monitoring data utilisation has no statistically significant relationship with organisational performance, and that capacity building has no statistically significant relationship with organisational performance.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

➤ *Theoretical Review*

Results-Based Management (RBM) Theory provides the main theoretical foundation for this paper. RBM focuses on defining expected results, monitoring progress and using performance information to improve decisions and implementation. Applied to humanitarian NGOs, the theory suggests that monitoring information is most useful when managers and programme teams use it to identify implementation gaps, revise activities and assess progress against objectives. It therefore supports the expectation that monitoring data utilisation will be positively associated with organisational performance (Kusek & Rist, 2021).

Systems Theory provides a complementary explanation. Humanitarian NGOs operate through connected functions, including programme implementation, monitoring, finance, human resources and information management. Monitoring data must move between these functions and be incorporated into decisions for the organisation to respond effectively. Capacity building can strengthen the people and systems involved in this process (Arnold & Wade, 2021).

The Resource-Based View is relevant to the capacity-building objective because employees' skills, organisational knowledge, ICT resources and internal capabilities can support effective implementation. Training is unlikely to produce sustained benefits where staff lack the tools or management support needed to apply what they have learned. Capacity development is therefore considered broadly, including professional competencies, technical training, organisational support and access to ICT facilities (Barney, 2021).

➤ *Monitoring Data Utilisation and Organisational Performance*

Monitoring data utilisation refers to the extent to which an organisation analyses, interprets, communicates and applies monitoring information in decision-making and planning. Its practical indicators include the accessibility of monitoring information to relevant staff, staff ability to analyse data, communication through reports and meetings, and integration of findings into organisational plans. These practices can help managers identify delays, respond to implementation problems and allocate resources in line with observed needs.

Studies summarised in the underlying project report positive relationships between data use and programme or project outcomes. Kimani et al. (2022), for example, examined monitoring data utilisation in donor-funded projects in Nairobi County and reported associations with project implementation, accountability and stakeholder satisfaction. Wairimu et al. (2023) linked the use of monitoring information among international NGOs in Kenya with transparency, coordination and donor confidence, while also identifying weak data systems and limited staff skills as constraints. These studies provide a rationale for examining organisational rather than project-level performance in Kajiado County.

Data use may nevertheless be limited by inaccessible information, weak analytical skills, inadequate communication or a management culture that treats monitoring primarily as a compliance requirement. The present study therefore examined both the reported level of data utilisation and its statistical relationship with organisational performance.

➤ *Capacity Building and Organisational Performance*

Capacity building refers to the development of staff competencies and the provision of organisational systems and resources needed to perform assigned responsibilities. In this paper, it was measured through opportunities for professional development, regular employee training, technical training relevant to project responsibilities, organisational support and access to appropriate ICT facilities. These indicators reflect the premise that performance depends not only on employees' knowledge but also on whether they have practical support and tools to apply it.

Evidence reviewed in the underlying project suggests that capacity building is associated with improved monitoring quality, accountability and programme implementation. Kamau et al. (2021) examined capacity building and NGO performance in Kenya, while Magesa et al. (2023) examined monitoring capacity and project sustainability among development organisations in Tanzania. The reviewed literature also indicates that funding and technical constraints can limit the effectiveness of capacity-building initiatives. The current paper adds evidence from humanitarian NGOs operating in Kajiado County, where programme delivery takes place amid drought-related and other humanitarian pressures.

➤ Conceptual Framework

The paper treated monitoring data utilisation and capacity building as explanatory variables and organisational performance as the outcome variable.

Monitoring data utilisation Use in decisions; accessibility; staff data-analysis skills; communication through reports and meetings; integration into planning	Organisational performance Service-delivery efficiency; accountability; achievement of project objectives; donor satisfaction; achievement of organisational goals
Capacity building Professional development; regular training; job-related technical skills; organisational support; ICT facilities	

Fig 1 Conceptual Relationship: Monitoring Data Utilisation and Capacity Building → Organisational Performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive correlational research design to examine relationships between monitoring practices and organisational performance at one point in time. The target population comprised 80 staff members working in humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County, including project managers, monitoring officers, finance officers and field coordinators. A total of 65 completed questionnaires were returned and analysed, representing a response rate of 81.3%.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire with Likert-scale items. Monitoring data utilisation was assessed through use of monitoring information in organisational decisions, accessibility to relevant staff, staff analytical skills, communication through reports and meetings, and integration into organisational planning. Capacity building was measured through professional development, regular training, technical skills training, organisational support and access to ICT facilities. Organisational performance was measured through service-delivery efficiency, accountability, project achievement, donor satisfaction and achievement of organisational goals.

The questionnaire constructs recorded Cronbach's alpha coefficients above .70 in the pilot reliability assessment. The reported coefficients were .822 for monitoring data utilisation, .816 for capacity building and .935 for organisational performance. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson product-moment correlation and multiple linear regression in SPSS Version 28. The regression model in the underlying study included

automated reporting and control of overheads alongside the two variables considered in this paper. Consequently, the reported regression coefficients for monitoring data utilisation and capacity building represent their independent associations with organisational performance while controlling for those additional practices. Statistical significance was assessed at the .05 level.

Participation was voluntary, and the underlying study reported that confidentiality and anonymity were maintained. Because the design was cross-sectional and relied on respondents' reports, the results are interpreted as associations rather than definitive evidence of causation.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

➤ Monitoring Data Utilisation

Monitoring data utilisation had an overall mean of 4.18 (SD = 0.756), indicating that respondents generally agreed that their organisations used monitoring information in routine management processes. Communication of monitoring information through reports and meetings received the highest mean (M = 4.38, SD = 0.678); 98% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed. Use of monitoring data in organisational decisions recorded a mean of 4.22, while integration into organisational planning recorded a mean of 4.21. Staff skills in analysing monitoring data had a mean of 4.10. Accessibility to relevant staff recorded the lowest mean among the five items (M = 4.00), although 94% agreed or strongly agreed that monitoring data were easily accessible.

Table 1 Descriptive Results for Monitoring Data Utilisation. Percentages and Descriptive Statistics are Reproduced from the Underlying Study.

Monitoring data utilisation indicator	Mean	Standard deviation	Agree/strongly agree
Used in organisational decisions	4.22	0.694	97%
Accessible to relevant staff	4.00	0.852	94%
Staff have adequate data-analysis skills	4.10	0.679	95%
Communicated through reports and meetings	4.38	0.678	98%
Integrated into organisational planning	4.21	0.872	97%
Overall	4.18	0.756	—

The correlation analysis showed a positive, statistically significant relationship between monitoring data utilisation and organisational performance ($r = .624$, $p < .001$; $n = 65$). This indicates that respondents who reported stronger use of monitoring information also tended to report better

organisational performance. In the multiple regression model, monitoring data utilisation remained a significant predictor ($B = .246$, $\beta = .308$, $t = 2.316$, $p = .024$), holding automated reporting, control of overheads and capacity building constant.

Table 2 Correlation and Regression Results for Monitoring Data Utilisation.

Relationship / predictor	Statistic	Result	Decision at $\alpha = .05$
Monitoring data utilisation and organisational performance	Pearson r	.624, $p < .001$	Significant positive association
Monitoring data utilisation in regression	B; β ; t; p	.246; .308; 2.316; .024	Reject null hypothesis

The result supports the RBM proposition that monitoring information is valuable when it informs decisions rather than being collected only for reporting. The high ratings for communication, decision-making and planning suggest that respondents perceived monitoring information as part of organisational management. The significant regression coefficient adds evidence that data utilisation was associated with performance beyond its overlap with the other monitoring practices included in the model. The result is consistent with the studies reviewed by Kimani et al. (2022) and Wairimu et al. (2023), which linked monitoring information use with project implementation, accountability, coordination and donor confidence.

Accessibility was the lowest-rated data-utilisation item, though its mean remained positive. This indicates an area where NGOs could review whether relevant information reaches all staff who need it, in a usable form and at the right

time. The finding should be interpreted with care because the study relied on self-reported perceptions and did not independently audit the quality or actual use of organisational monitoring records.

➤ Capacity Building

Capacity building recorded an overall mean of 4.14 (SD = 0.848), indicating generally positive perceptions of staff development and organisational support. The highest-rated item was the provision of adequate support for employees to perform their duties ($M = 4.38$, $SD = 0.678$), with 98% agreeing or strongly agreeing. Access to appropriate ICT facilities recorded a mean of 4.21, with 97% positive responses. Technical training relevant to project responsibilities recorded a mean of 4.10, while professional development opportunities and regular training each recorded a mean of 4.00.

Table 3 Descriptive Results for Capacity Building. Percentages and Descriptive Statistics are Reproduced from the Underlying Study.

Capacity-building indicator	Mean	Standard deviation	Agree/strongly agree
Professional competency development opportunities	4.00	0.858	94%
Regular employee training	4.00	0.818	94%
Technical training relevant to project duties	4.10	0.919	95%
Adequate organisational support	4.38	0.678	98%
Access to appropriate ICT facilities	4.21	0.872	97%
Overall	4.14	0.848	—

Capacity building had a positive and statistically significant correlation with organisational performance ($r = .507$, $p < .001$; $n = 65$). The regression analysis also showed a significant positive coefficient ($B = .238$, $\beta = .258$, $t = 2.428$,

$p = .018$), after controlling for automated reporting, control of overheads and monitoring data utilisation. The null hypothesis of no statistically significant relationship was therefore rejected.

Table 4 Correlation and Regression Results for Capacity Building.

Relationship / predictor	Statistic	Result	Decision at $\alpha = .05$
Capacity building and organisational performance	Pearson r	.507, $p < .001$	Significant positive association
Capacity building in regression	B; β ; t; p	.238; .258; 2.428; .018	Reject null hypothesis

The findings suggest that training and support are relevant to organisational performance when considered alongside other monitoring practices. Employees who have the skills to collect and analyse information, together with the support and ICT resources needed to perform their duties, may be better equipped to implement programmes and contribute to accountability. This interpretation is consistent with the Resource-Based View, which treats employee competencies and organisational capabilities as resources that support performance, and with the capacity-building studies reviewed in the underlying project (Kamau et al., 2021; Magesa et al., 2023).

The results also suggest that capacity building should not be reduced to attendance at training sessions. The high

rating for organisational support and the positive rating for ICT access indicate that respondents understood capacity as including the conditions that enable staff to apply their skills. However, the cross-sectional design cannot establish whether capacity-building practices caused better performance, and the findings may not generalise to all NGOs beyond the sampled organisations in Kajiado County.

➤ Combined Interpretation

Both monitoring data utilisation and capacity building were positively associated with organisational performance at the bivariate and multivariable levels. Monitoring data utilisation had a larger standardised regression coefficient ($\beta = .308$) than capacity building ($\beta = .258$) in the model reported by the underlying study. This difference indicates

that data utilisation made a somewhat larger unique statistical contribution within that model; it does not establish that it is universally more important than staff capacity in other settings.

The two practices are also conceptually connected. Monitoring information can inform decisions only when staff can access, interpret and communicate it, while capacity development can help employees apply evidence in routine programme management. The results therefore support a practical approach that combines stronger use of monitoring data with continuing investment in staff competencies, management support and ICT resources.

V. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The paper examined monitoring data utilisation and capacity building in relation to organisational performance among humanitarian NGOs in Kajiado County. Monitoring data utilisation was positively and significantly associated with performance ($r = .624$, $p < .001$) and remained a significant predictor in the regression model ($\beta = .308$, $p = .024$). Capacity building was also positively and significantly associated with performance ($r = .507$, $p < .001$) and remained a significant predictor ($\beta = .258$, $p = .018$). The findings are consistent with the view that organisations are better positioned to achieve results when monitoring evidence is used in management and staff have the skills and resources required to implement programmes.

Humanitarian NGO managers should establish regular review meetings in which programme and management teams discuss monitoring findings, identify implementation gaps, agree on corrective actions and track follow-up. Monitoring reports should inform work plans, resource allocation and programme adjustments rather than being prepared solely for donor compliance. Organisations should also ensure that relevant staff can access clear and timely monitoring information.

Capacity-building plans should include regular professional development, technical training in data collection and analysis, mentoring and follow-up to establish whether staff apply new skills. Training should be supported by adequate ICT facilities and management support. Donors and relevant coordination bodies should consider providing resources for staff development, information management and monitoring systems as part of programme support.

At the theoretical level, the findings are consistent with Results-Based Management and the Resource-Based View: evidence use and organisational capabilities were both associated with performance. Future research could use longitudinal designs, interviews and organisational records to examine whether improvements in data utilisation and capacity building precede measurable changes in service delivery, accountability and project outcomes. Studies across multiple counties could also assess whether the relationships differ by NGO size, programme area or operating conditions.

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