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## Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems on the Performance of County Government Projects in the Lake Region Economic Bloc of Nyanza, Kenya

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### **Abstract:**

*In Kenya, the newly promulgated constitution of 2010 (CoK, 2010), provides the basis of monitoring and evaluation as an important tool for operationalizing Government projects to ensure transparency, integrity and accountability. The study was conducted in six Lake Region economic Bloc Counties namely, Migori, Homabay, Kisumu, Siaya, Kakamega and Vihiga. This study specifically assessed the effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems on the Performance of County Governments. The study was guided by the change and structural functionalism theories advanced by Emile Durkheim. The research was carried out using descriptive survey design which entails both qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures. The researcher used stratified random sampling techniques to draw a sample from the study population. The qualitative method focused on group discussion and in-depth interviews. The quantitative techniques employed questionnaires to 398 purposively selected subjects from the projects and programs. Data collection was from two main sources; primary and secondary. Data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics techniques. The study findings indicated that M&E systems indicated by the coefficient of effectiveness ( $R^2$ ) which is also evidenced by  $F$  change  $109.403 > p$ -values ( $0.05$ ). This implies that this variable is significant (since the  $p$  values  $< 0.05$ ) and therefore should be considered as part of effectiveness of M&E systems on the performance of County Governments projects. The study concludes that there is no adequate monitoring and evaluation system currently in place for County Government Projects that can facilitate the desired project performance and outcomes. The study recommends that the County Government should develop a clear M&E Systems for each county project with clear indicators, tools and process. This Study recommends further research to be done in the other Regional County Blocs.*

**Keywords:** M&E systems, effectiveness, transparency, accountability, integrity, projects performance

### **1. Introduction**

Monitoring and evaluation is an ongoing function that employs the systematic collection of data related to specified indicators in projects or programs. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is described as a process that assists project managers in improving performance and achieving results. The goal of M&E is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact (UNDP, 2008). Williams (2000) asserts that, monitoring provides management and the main stakeholders of a development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of expected results and progress with respect to the use of allocated funds. Monitoring is the continuous collection of data on specified indicators to assess for a development intervention (project, programme or policy) its implementation in relation to activity schedules and expenditure of allocated funds, and its progress and achievements in relation to its objectives. Monitoring provides essential inputs for evaluation and therefore constitutes part of the overall evaluation procedure. Evaluation is an organized and objective assessment of an ongoing or concluded policy, program/project, its design, execution and results. The aim is to provide timely assessments of the relevance, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability of interventions and overall progress against original objectives. According to Willard (2008), monitoring and evaluation is a process that helps program implementers make informed decisions regarding program operations, service delivery and project effectiveness, using objective evidence.

Developed countries like the USA, China and Russia have resorted to decentralization of resources. Decentralization refers to "the transfer of political power, decision making capacity and resources from central to sub-national levels of government (Zaltsman, 2006). This has led to resuscitation of old institutions that seemed to offer opportunities for decentralization and devolution. Since 1990s decentralization and devolution has been linked to

collective empowerment and democracy due to failure of institutional reforms to reduce poverty (Zaltsman, 2006). Democratic decentralization and devolution are more focused on democracy pluralism and human rights (Cook 2006, United Nations Capital Development Fund, 2004). Effective monitoring and evaluation is critical to the successful implementation and achievement of results for any project. Monitoring and Evaluation is understood to be part of programme managing cycle and as the best way of measuring progress, detecting problems, correcting them, improving performance and learning levels. Institutionalization of M&E has meant creation of M&E structures, systems and process with policy, legal and institutional arrangements to produce monitoring information and evaluation findings have been judged valuably by key stakeholders (Woodhill, 2006). Institutionalized M&E has served as an integral part of the development policy/programme cycle in improving the performance accountability to provide effective feedback which has improved planning, budgeting and policy making that has achieved development effectiveness.

In Canada, M&E system has invested heavily in both evaluation and performance monitoring as key tools to support accountability and results-based management. Furthermore, the current state of the M & E structure has evolved over time, as the central designers have recognized that the development and implementation of M & E is long term and iterative, therefore putting emphasis on the structure of implementation as an important mechanism in itself in developing an evaluation culture or "results culture" in an organization and across the entire system (Mulwa and Ngulu, 2007). According to ADB, (2009), since the early 1990s, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) has seen a steep climb within Sub-Saharan Africa, in terms of practice, profession and academic study. As a field of practice, specialized departments housing the practitioners now exist and the demand for evaluation of policies, projects, program and interventions remains on the increase. Legal and institutional frameworks for the practices of M&E are still weak in Africa (UNEG, 2017). As a profession, over 30 national evaluation associations under the umbrella body, the African Evaluation Association (AFREA) are in existence. As an academic field of study several institutions now offer programmes in M&E; notwithstanding the focus and locus dilemma regarding the discipline. Scholarship regarding the state of the field is thus of utmost importance to coherently describe the 'ups and downs' of the new field which has become a 'grown up child' having jumped the infancy stage (Basheka & Byamugisha, 2015)

In Africa, M&E systems operate in complex terrain. To some extent they are hostages to other forces in government and those in authority, however given a results driven reform agenda, incentives can be put in place for the evidence generated to support developments in delivering results and budgeting (UNICEF, 2008). Monitoring and evaluation are consistently designed to support valued change in people's lives, particularly the underprivileged (Pollitt, 2009). In effect, the tools of governance are aligned to citizenry, not internal bureaucratic desires. The significance of results placement for government is extensively deliberated, and finds manifestation in public management and development literature (Baker, 2000; Bamberger, 2009; OECD, 2005).

In Ghana, after several years of implementing the National M&E System, significant progress has been made (Kessides, 1993). However, challenges include severe financial constraints; institutional, operational and technical capacity constraints; fragmented and uncoordinated information, particularly at the sector level. To address these challenges the Clear report argues that the current institutional arrangements will have to be reinforced with adequate capacity, clear structures, systems and process to support and sustain effective monitoring and evaluation, and existing M & E mechanisms must be strengthened, harmonized and effectively coordinated (Koffi, 2002).

In Kenya, Monitoring and Evaluation forms part of a result culture in the public service that is meant to provide value and service for all Kenyans. In the planning and implementation of development efforts, monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that intended targets are reached, remedies are taken when projects are off-track, and the lessons learned are used to promote efficiency and effectiveness (GoK, 2015). Furthermore, the constitution of 2010 provides the framework and basis for M&E as an important part of operationalizing government activities both at the national government and County Government levels to ensure that transparency, integrity and accountability principles are embraced in resources allocation, usage and management at national and devolved levels of Government. In addition, the scope of M&E is derived from the articles and provisions related to planning under articles 10, 56, 174, 195, 225 and 227 of the Constitution of Kenya, 2010. It proposes a robust M&E process as essential for efficient and effective implementation of MTP 2013-2017, County Integrated Development Plans (CIDP), and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) Strategic Plans. The Act and Policies related to M&E, supports the implementation of a computerized National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) from the national, county and the local levels of government agencies, it established Ministerial M&E committee and County M&E committees chaired by Principal Secretaries and County Governors respectively MTP-2013-17, (GoK, 2015).

Furthermore, the legal mechanism spelt out in the 2010 Constitution has necessitated the development of M&E systems for the County Governments in Kenya. The constitution further demands adherence to transparency in conducting and management of public development projects and to the principle of good governance. The national and County Governments are therefore united in the recognition that performance monitoring and evaluation is a pivotal development process in the country. Both the national and County Governments are therefore increasing their focus on results and how they can better be measured (GoK, 2015). The Act and Policies related to M&E ensures that all Ministries and County Governments establish M&E units with specific budgets employ qualified M&E officers and acquire appropriate equipment for effective implementation of NIMES (GoK, 2012). It calls for capacity building and training on M&E both at national and local level throughout the MTP period to ensure effective implementation of NIMES. The stakeholders and the public are to access data on implementation of programs and projects at county levels through various channels, structures and forums. In spite of the foregoing, the influence of M&E systems, methods and structures on completion and success of the projects is not accorded significance in many County Government projects. In order for a county to achieve any meaningful

economic growth and development, there is need therefore for sound economic policies. These policies should be the guide to program and projects on which development is pegged. Mackay (2007) and UNICEF (2009) pointed out that M&E has emerged as a Key economic policy development and performance management tool which is aimed at reducing economic and project risks and uncertainties. Both argue that economic policy makers need the information generated from M&E to improve their economic performance while tax payers, donors and stakeholders need M&E results to ensure accountability of resources while at the same time improving the overall effectiveness of their policies (Kelly and Mangongo, 2015).

The major phase in the evolution of M&E in Kenya was the introduction of the Kenya Vision 2030 in 2008, which replaced the Economic recovery Strategy (ERS) as the country's development blueprint. Vision 2030 became the principle driver of development in Kenya and therefore the basis for National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES). When in 2008, Kenya Vision 2030 as the national developmental policy replaced ERS; NIMES was re-oriented to M&E of the implementation of the Vision 2030. (GoK, 2012). The M&E responsibility was at this time, however, divided between Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (MED) and a new tailor made body, within the then, Ministry of Planning responsible for flagship programs and projects in Kenya Vision 2030. The Kenya Vision 2030 Board and its Secretariat were created for that purpose. NIMES was designed to have a three tier institutional relationship for generating M&E information. At the national level is MED, that provides leadership and coordinates the system by ensuring that two vital sources of M&E information, namely Annual Progress Reports (APRs) on the Medium Term Plan (MTP) of Vision 2030 and Annual Public Expenditure Review (PER) are ably and timely produced (GoK, 2012). At ministerial level are the Central Project Planning and Monitoring Units (CPPMUs). The CPPMUs produce Ministerial Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports (MAMERs), and Ministerial Public Expenditure Reviews (MPERs) which are synthesized into the APR and PER respectively. At sub-national level, the District Development Officers, supervised by the Provincial Directors of Planning, were meant to produce the District Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports, (GoK, 2012).

Furthermore, the budget process takes into account the PER which is complemented by the work that goes into preparation of Ministerial Annual Monitoring and Evaluation Reports that subsequently becomes Annual Progress Reports on the implementation of Vision 2030 from the NIMES system (GoK,2012). As one of the flagship projects of Kenya's M&E information, the Public Expenditure Review is an analysis, which covers vital factors as macroeconomic performance, spending trends, and implications for each of Kenya's socioeconomic and governance sectors. More recently the PER has begun to benchmark Kenya's economic management against selected peer countries that the country aspires to emulate. Despite the numerous efforts that have been made under NIMES and through the PER and APR, Kenya's M&E system still faces challenges (GoK, 2012). Kenya's Constitution has fundamentally changed central and devolved governance structures and provides an opportunity for strengthening her M&E system structures and methodology. By underscoring timely and accurate information sharing to support policymaking, the Constitution is calling for a stronger nation-wide and counties M&E systems and structures. This provides the greatest strength and opportunity for a county's M&E system in Kenya in support of the realization of the Kenya Vision 2030 blue print which is being implemented through successive five-year Medium Term Plans and is aimed at enabling the Kenyan nation to achieve the long-term development goals. Kenya is now in the second medium term plan cycle (2013-2017). It's also noted that the Government of Kenya works in two levels, the National Government and the County Government respectively. For the National Government to achieve its four Agendas, she relies heavily on the achievements of County Government projects.

Many projects at County level have coming up as a result of this. These includes schools, health facilities; roads and water amongst others, since the management of financial resources from the government towards the projects has been partly in question, the government has been reviewing laws and procedures of governing allocation for instance the so as to enhance project development, monitoring and evaluation. In furtherance of the same objective, the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) was established in 2004 by the Kenyan government. NIMES was launched during the London investment summit 2012. The system is used to trace development at both National and County Government level in the current devolved system of governance (GoK, 2013). In spite of the foregoing, the influence of M&E systems and tools on completion of the National Government projects is not accorded significance during projects design; planning and implementation face leave alone at the County Governments level. In the current system where there are no harmonized M&E systems, methods and structures in many projects, there is a possibility that this has impacted negatively on the level of completion of such projects. This creates formidable challenge in the County Governments, stakeholders and in the communities who are the beneficiaries at large hence the gap.

The Kenya Government's foremost strategy on economic development, Sessional paper No. 10 of 1965 on 'African Socialism and Application to Planning in Kenya' emphasized the importance of decentralized planning, implementation and monitoring and extended planning functions to provinces, districts, local authorities and municipalities now renamed County Governments under 2010 Constitution. This was to ensure the progress towards development made at each administrative unit. Various developmental committees were established to facilitate the coordination of development projects, activities and to provide assistance in monitoring and decision-making, among other objectives. Until the year 2000, M&E was not a strong feature in national and local government programs and projects. Information collection, analysis and reporting of results were in an ad hoc manner, and decision making at the local governments level was seldom based on verifiable evidence due to lack of comprehensive M&E policy and system. Integration of Monitoring and Evaluation into the planning process re-emerged in the year 2000 when the government came up with Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP). This was instrumental for the Government to quickly determine whether its policies were positively impacting the development process.

In 2007, the Government recognized the importance of M&E in promoting accountability and enhancing good governance, as a result the government through Ministry of Planning and National Development established a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit (MEU) to coordinate the implementation of NIMES. MEU later on became the Monitoring and Evaluation Department (MED). The Government of Kenya has undertaken development planning since independence. The ministry responsible for planning has been in existence even in the period prior to 2010 promulgated constitution of Kenya. Since then it has existed as a separate entity or a part of a wider Ministerial docket. The planning function has over the years been executed with complains of non-implementation of highly ambitious plans and projects. Execution of development projects has remained elusive over years partly because of weak or non-existent Monitoring and Evaluation, policy and Systems. Project supported by Development partners have normally had a good policy, systems and as such their performance has been regularly assessed, monitored and evaluated. Comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plans are included in their design and at times implemented through M&E units specifically established for each project or this purpose (Kelly and Mangongo, 2004).

## 2. Review of Literature

Monitoring and evaluation system refers to all the indicators, tools and process that the project uses to measure if a project has been implemented according to the plan (monitoring) and is having the desired result (evaluation). Campo (2005,) argues that monitoring and evaluation system is a component designed to screen, track and make a comparison of the project outcomes against the stated or planned targets. It's asset of principles or procedures according to which a project is done (SAMDI, 2007). It is a comprehensive project undertaking that offers guidance in the screening and tracking of an ongoing project, recording data and systematically evaluating the data for comparison purposes in line with the project's set goals and objectives.

M&E systems are integral procedures of reflection and communication supporting project implementation that is planned for and managed throughout a project's life (Nyonje, Kyalo and Mulwa, 2015). Monitoring and evaluation system should be as relevant as possible to the organization to ensure its reliability and independence (Gaarder and Briceño, 2010). It's also an arrangement and organization of interrelated elements in M&E system.

An effective M & E system should be able to offer conclusive information that can effectively be utilized towards better project success (Cabrera, Colosi and Lobdell, 2008). Through the system, any stakeholder should be able to identify the potential benefits of the project, ways of enhancing screening and tracking of the project as well as offer an outline of the successes, challenges and opportunities for future projects undertakings (Briceno, 2010).

Effectiveness of the M&E system focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, processes, examining the results chain, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack of achievement (CLEAR, 2012). Objectives of a development project should be consistent with the requirements of beneficiaries and organization's strategies, and also the extent to which they are responsive to the organization's corporate plan and human development priorities such as empowerment (Kusek and Rist, 2004). Development initiatives and their intended outputs and outcomes should also be consistent with national and local policies and priorities.

Monitoring and evaluation activities enable the stakeholders determine whether the body undertaking project implementation has adequate systems, structures, legal and technical mandate to implement projects on their behalf (Kimenyi, 2005). Post completion assessment is done to correlate between plans and real impact of the project. Evaluation looks at what the project managers planned, their accomplishments so far and how they achieved them. This can be done at the early stages of the project life or at the end of the implementation (Mulwa and Nguluu, 2007). For success, organizations should have systems, based on the resources allocated to M & E systems as well as involve all relevant stakeholders, enhance the capacity of the systems to ensure better implementation process is established within project (Chesos, 2010). Monitoring and evaluation systems are widely hindered by both internal and external pressure and factors that manifest themselves in the project cycle as different stakeholders push for the fulfillment of their agenda (CRS, 2009). M&E system is therefore basically indicators and tools that is used to measure if a program or project to ensure it implemented according to the plan in order to achieve the goals and is described in a document called an M&E plan. While introducing an M&E system in an organization, champions and advocates are needed to sustain the commitment needed over the long term (Collin and Stirrat, 2008). Identifying good practices and benchmarking help avoid the fatigue that typically accompanies any change process, as enthusiasm starts to wane over time. Evaluation professionals possess the necessary skill set to play a key role in providing functional advice and guidance to departmental/agency managers about the design and development of appropriate results-based performance monitoring systems (Boyle, Lyons, and Bamberger, 2007). Managers should be responsible for performance measurement and monitoring per se, a recognized role for evaluators should be to provide such assistance and oversight on results measurement and monitoring (Gladys, Katia, Lycia and Hellena, 2010).

Mukhererjee (1993) says that meeting project M&E capacity needs will be ensured by putting right, systems, structures, methods and process, acquiring the right people, by hiring already trained people, training your staff, hiring external consultants for focused inputs and also ensure the capacity of good quality through removing disincentives and introducing incentives for learning, keeping track of staff performance through regular evaluation, striving for continuity of staff and finding qualified person to coordinate. Human resources on the project should be given clear job allocation and designation befitting their skills and expertise, if they are inadequate then training for the requisite skills should be arranged (Bamberger, 2009). For projects with staff that are sent out in the field to carry out project activities on their own there is need for constant and intensive on-site support to the outfield staff (Musomba, Kerongo, Mutua and Kilika 2013).

One of the larger aspects of developing employee's skills and abilities is through the structures and systems, the actual organizational focus on the employee to become better, either as a person or as a contributor to the organization (Robinson & Pearce, 2004). The attention by the organization coupled with increased expectations following the opportunity can lead to a self-fulfilling prophecy of enhanced output by the employee facilitated by the systems and structures.

Taking a micro and Macro look at systems of M&E, suggests that capacity development goes beyond a simple technical intervention (DFID, 2002). To a great extent focused on inducing behavior change through existing structures and systems, a process that involves learning, moderating attitudes, and possibly adopting new values at individual, organization structures, and system levels on the management structure. Evaluation must also be independent and relevant. Independence is achieved when it is carried out by entities and persons free of the control of those responsible for the design and implementation of the development interventions (OECD, 2002; Gaarder & Briceno, 2010).

Research has shown that it is vital to determine what systems are appropriate to the project's needs, the given context, and issues of data, baseline and indicators (Hulme, 2000). Organization capacity building will typically include: upgrading systems and the conceptual and analytical skills in monitoring and evaluation, selection of indicators, data collection, data management and design of reporting systems. Also and perhaps most important, capacity building will include developing a result oriented management culture that seeks out and effectively uses information in decision making. Research has shown that institutions pay a lot of emphasis on systems and structures during initial level, but nothing is done to improve the systems and structures once they are on board (Gladys, Katia, Lycia and Helena, 2010). With changing dynamics in Monitoring and evaluation, organizations need to implement a continuous improvement strategy system to make them be efficient and relevant for projects success.

The project monitoring and evaluation system means the clarification of what is to be monitored and evaluated, by whom, how and when, should be set up during the planning phase of the project or at the latest in the beginning of implementation (Willard, 2008). Analysis of the problem and its context is carried out as part of the strategy project planning and can serve as a baseline for subsequent monitoring and evaluation. If such an analysis was not undertaken, it is essential to implement such an analysis at a later stage and make necessary adjustments in the planned intervention. (Gaitano, 2011). A monitoring system is a way of steering and organizing the monitoring work so that it is less time consuming and easy to implement. Monitoring systems vary in sophistication from a piece of paper and some notebooks or files, to electronic filing systems and databases (CRS, 2009). The most important thing is not how sophisticated the system is but whether the information needed for decision-making is collected, reviewed systematically and used for necessary adaptations (Hahn and Sharrock, 2010).

A well-designed and organized system will ensure that the right data are being collected at the right time during and after project implementation and that this data will help guide project implementation and strategic decisions (Hahn & Sharrock, 2010). It will also ensure that project staff and stakeholders will not be overwhelmed by the amount of data gathered and that a reasonable amount of time and money is being spent in collecting and analyzing data, and collating and reporting the information (Onchoke, 2013). Monitoring and Evaluation Systems has some components in order to function effectively and efficiently to achieve the desired project results.

Monitoring and evaluation should be evident throughout the lifecycle of a project, as well as after completion (Koffi, 2002). It provides a flow of information for internal use by managers, and for external use by stakeholders who expect to see results, want to see demonstrable impacts, and require accountability and trustworthiness on the part of the public sector (Bamberger, 2009).

Governments and organizations are accountable to stakeholders and this requires them to both achieve expected outcomes and be able to provide evidence that demonstrates this success (Kibua and Mwabu, 2008). As a consequence, increasing attention is now being given to funding rigorous impact evaluations that are capable of providing solid empirical evidence about whether or not a particular type of development intervention works (Makay, 2007). Producing this evidence is technically challenging and expensive and won't be feasible for all or even the majority of projects (Zaltsman, 2006). Nevertheless, as a vehicle of policy research it can, when applied to particular kinds of project, help inform decisions about how to allocate resources between different types of intervention, and between different project designs. The demand for evaluation clearly has implications for the design of M&E systems, structure and methods and is most likely to be met if the project and associated M&E process are designed with this in mind from the outset (UNICEF, 2008).

Monitoring and evaluation of projects can be a powerful means to measure their performance, track progress towards achieving desired goals, and demonstrate that systems are in place that support organizations in learning from experience and adaptive management (Woodhill, 2006). Used carefully at all stages of a project cycle, monitoring and evaluation can help to strengthen project design and implementation and stimulate partnerships with project stakeholders (Zwikael, 2008).

### *2.1. Organization of Systems and Functions for Monitoring and Evaluation.*

The adequate implementation of M&E system at any level requires that there is a unit whose main purpose is to coordinate all the M&E functions at its level (Gorgens and Kusek, 2009). While some projects or programs prefer to have an internal organ to oversee its M&E functions, others prefer to outsource such services (CRS, 2009). This component of M&E emphasizes the need for M&E unit within the organization, how elaborate its roles are defined, how adequately its roles are supported by the organizations hierarchy and how other units within the organization are aligned to support the M&E functions within the organization.

## *2.2. Frameworks and Logical Framework System for Monitoring and Evaluation*

The M&E framework system outlines the objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project and the indicators that will be used to measure them (IEG,2007). It also outlines the assumptions that the M&E system will adopt (Bamberger, 2009). The M&E framework is essential as it links the objectives with the process and enables the M&E staff to know what to measure and how to measure it (Backewell and Garbutt, 2005)

## *2.3. Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan and Costs Systems*

M&E system frameworks also involve Work plan and costs system (Jimenez and Patrinos, 2008). While the framework outlines objectives, inputs, outputs and outcomes of the intended project, the work plan outlines how the resources that have been allocated for the M&E functions will be used to achieve the goals of M&E (Brent,2006). The work plan shows how personnel, time, materials and money will be used to achieve the set M&E functions (Weiss, Hoegl, & Gibbert, 2014).

## *2.4. Monitoring and Evaluation Communication, Advocacy and Culture System*

This refers to the presence of systems policies and strategies within the organization to promote M&E functions. Without continuous communication and advocacy initiatives within the project to promote M&E, it is difficult to entrench the M&E culture within the program (CRS, 2009) Such communication and strategies need to be supported by the project hierarchy (Maina, 2013). The existence of the project M&E policy, together with the continuous use of the M&E system outputs on communication channels are some of the ways of improving communication, advocacy and culture for M&E.

## *2.5. Monitoring and Evaluation Routine Systems*

M&E consists of two aspects: monitoring systems and evaluation systems. This component emphasizes the importance of monitoring, refers to the continuous and routine data collection that takes place during project implementation (Hahn, & Sharrock, 2010). Data needs to be collected and reported on a continuous basis to show whether the project activities are driving towards meeting the set objectives (PMI, 2004). They also need to be integrated into the project activities for routine gathering and analysis.

## *2.6. Monitoring and Evaluation Surveys and Surveillance Systems*

This may involve majorly the National Government level M&E plans and entails how frequently relevant national surveys are conducted in the counties. National project surveys and surveillance needs to be conducted frequently and used to evaluate progress of related county projects (Cohen, & Palmer, 2004). For example, health projects done by both national and counties M&E plans, there needs to be related surveys carried out and used to measure indicators at the national level and county levels because both the National Government and County Governments are involve in the provision of health care at different levels.

## *2.7. Monitoring and Evaluation Databases Systems*

The County Government, National Government and other agencies are among other entities are seeking data that are relevant for their purposes. The need for M&E systems to make data available can therefore not be over-emphasized (Willard, 2008). This implies that M&E systems need to develop strategies of submitting relevant, reliable and valid data to national and County Government databases.

## *2.8. Monitoring and Evaluation Human Capacity*

An effective M&E system implementation requires that there is adequate skilled staff employed in the M&E unit, but also that the staff within this unit have the necessary technical know-how and experience (Bardhan, Krishnan, & Shu, 2007). As such, this component emphasizes the need to have the necessary human resource that can run the M&E function by hiring employees who have adequate knowledge and experience in M&E systems implementation, while at the same time ensuring that the M&E capacity of these employees are continuously developed through training and other capacity building initiatives to ensure that they keep up with current and emerging trends in the field ( Saltzman, 2006).

## *2.9. Monitoring and Evaluation Planning, Coordinating and Managing System*

A prerequisite for successful M&E systems is the existence of M&E partnerships. Partnerships for M&E systems are for organizations and institutions because they complement the organization's M&E efforts in the M&E process and they act as a source of verification for whether M&E functions align to intended project objectives (Zaltzman, 2006). They also serve auditing purposes where institutions, technical working groups, communities and other stakeholders are able to compare M&E outputs with reported outputs (Fitzpatrick, Jody and Blane, 2010).

## *2.10. Monitoring and Evaluation Data Usage and Dissemination System*

The information that is gathered during the project implementation phase needs to be used to inform future activities, either to reinforce the implemented strategy or to change it (Zaltsman, 2006). Additionally, results of both monitoring and evaluation outputs need to be shared out to relevant stakeholders for accountability purposes. (Mackay, 2007). Institutions should therefore ensure that there is an information dissemination plan either in the M&E plan, Work plan or both.

Data analysis and use helps policy and governance stakeholders make strategic, informed decisions related to the identification and prioritization of projects interventions, policy and program development, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (Foreit, Moreland, and LaFond, 2006). The broad use includes a series of linked but discrete actions, including the assessment of data needs, collection and analysis of data, synthesis and interpretation of data, and translation and targeted communication of data to decision makers and beneficiaries. Data users employ data to answer a specific question or inform a decision in the policy or project process. Data are essential to supporting effective policy and program development, implementation, and M&E. Data are analyzed throughout these processes to help stakeholders understand project issues, advocate for change, design appropriate strategies, prioritize interventions, and develop and amend action plans.

Nutley (2012), avers that it's important that data be continuously fed back into the policy development process to ensure that decisions are being made based on the most current evidence. Successful use of data in projects is achieved when evidence-based information is considered and applied to the process of policy and program design, advocacy, policy dialogue, planning, resource allocation, and program review or improvement, communication and dissemination of information is often necessary to facilitate data use (Moynihan, 2008).

Institutions M&E systems must have the capacity and supporting structures to regularly gather, analyze, interpret, share, store, and use data (National Treasury, 2007). The stakeholders benefit from the ability to analyze and interpret data and translate and distill complex data into useful evidence to support the efforts of policymakers, project managers, and advocates and guide implementation, and managers to make and implement program and service delivery decisions and monitor accountability. Institutions must have mechanisms to regularly produce high-quality that support the synthesis and use of data and ensure the flow of information throughout the system.

### *2.11. Monitoring and Evaluation Research System*

One aspect of M&E system is research. The other is evaluation. Evaluation of projects is done at specific times most often mid- term and at the end of the project Evaluation is an important component of M&E system as it establishes whether the project has met the desired objectives (Markay, 2007). It usually provides for institutional learning and sharing of successes with other stakeholders and beneficiaries.

### *2.12. Monitoring and Evaluation Data Auditing and Supervision System*

M&E system needs a plan for supervision and data auditing (Linna and Steckler, 2002). Supportive supervision implies that an individual or an institution is able to supervise regularly the M&E processes in such a way that the supervisor offers suggestions on ways of improvement. Data auditing implies that the data is subjected to verification to ensure its reliability and validity (Markay, 2007). Supportive supervision is important since it ensures the M&E process is run efficiently, while data auditing is crucial since all project decisions are based on the data collected. Monitoring and evaluation systems is a particular procedure for accomplishing or approaching monitoring and evaluation activities. It's a systematic procedure for conducting M&E activities, while M&E approach is a way of doing monitoring and evaluation of projects (Linna and Stecker,2002). There are different approaches and methods in monitoring and evaluation. The Monitoring and Evaluation Systems Strengthening Tool (MESST) was developed under the premise that it is important to understand the system through which data are generated, aggregated and reported in order to assess their quality (Mukherejee,1993). This tool includes checklists that Programs or projects can use to, assess their monitoring and evaluation (M&E) plans, Take stock of the capabilities of Management Units to manage data related to the implementation of the projects, and assess the data-collection and reporting systems for each project area, including the ability to report valid, accurate and high quality data related to implementation (Boonstra,2013). The M&E Systems Strengthening Tool has been used and accepted by many programs and projects.

A good M&E system helps identify promising interventions early so that they can potentially be implemented elsewhere having data available about how well a particular project, practice, program or policy works (Hahn, & Sharrock, 2010). It also allows judicious allocation of scarce resources to the interventions that will provide the greatest benefits (UNEG,2017). A well designed M&E system also describes process for data collection and usage, purposes and usage of data to be collected both qualitative and quantitative and frequency of data collection. The key characteristics of an effective M&E system includes the measures and reports on output that reflects the critical stated strategic objectives of the institution (Zaltsman,2006). It provides clear indicators against which the institution is working and being measured on, and that within the institution, information for the outputs being measured if available and verifiable, it identifies the key issues and root of the problems that is being addressed through a cost-effective manner and regularly updated (AMES,2012). It provides a rationale for how future performance targets are set and makes the decision making of management level easy and efficient and reports its findings in a positive way.

## **3. Theoretical Framework**

The study was anchored on two theories namely the Structural Functionalism Theory of change respectively. Structural functionalism theory was advanced by Emile Durkheim 1858-1917). The theory suggests that a human society and organizations are like an organism and is made up of structures called social institutions. These institutions are specially structured so that they perform different functions on behalf of the society or the organizations. The theory of change is verified by evidence on the chain of objectives and expected results.

### 3.1. Structural Functionalism Theory

This theory was advanced by (Emile Durkheim, 1858-1917). The theory suggests that a human society is like an organism and is made up of structures called social institutions. These institutions are specially structured so that they perform different functions on behalf of the society or the institution. The theory attempts to explain how human society is organized and what each of the various social institutions does in order for society to continue existing. According to the theory, a result of being interrelated and interdependent, one organ can affect the others and ultimately the whole. The whole can also affect one or all the social institution. It shows or points out why and how some institutions operate relatively well compared to others.

### 3.2. Theory of Change

The approach involves change process for the intervention showing how the specific intervention is intended to work. It tends to address the traditional evaluation questions of whether and to what extent the project intervention has worked. The theory of change is developed on the basis of a range of stakeholders' views and information sources. In addressing the County Government monitoring and evaluation of projects performance issues using theory based approach to monitoring and evaluation, the County Government identifies among other core issues, related to project objective, relevance (i.e. need or priority), and performance (i.e. effectiveness and efficiency) that should be addressed in all project monitoring and evaluations undertaken in response to success.

The theory of change in evaluation can be traced back to the late 1950s with Kirkpatrick's 'Four Levels of Learning Evaluation Model', context, input, processes and products and the use of logical frameworks (logframes) or logical models which set out causal chains usually consisting of inputs, activities, outputs and outcomes and goals.

This theory suggests that a framework is essential to guide monitoring and evaluation and explain how the project is supposed to work by laying out the components of the initiative and the order or the steps needed to achieve the desired results in order to increase the understanding of the project's goals and objectives, defines the relationships between factors key to implementation, and articulates the internal and external elements that could affect the project's success (Davis and Newcomer, 2006).

The theory of change reflects the underlying process and pathways through which the hoped for change (in knowledge, behavior, attitudes or practices, at the individual, institutional, community or other level) is expected to occur (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Helene Clark and Andrea. Anderson in Theories of Change and Logic Models: argues that theory of change adequately describes the actions, the desired change, and the underlying assumptions or strategy that is essential for monitoring and evaluating of project. This is in congruence with Corlazzoli and White (2013) on theories of change in monitoring and evaluation that using theories of change during the monitoring stage of project implementation provides feedback on whether a project, programme or strategy is on track to accomplish the desired change and if the environment is evolving as anticipated in the project or programme design. The power of using theories of change is not only important in monitoring but also in evaluation. Using theories of change during evaluation enables evaluators to ask hard questions about why certain changes are expected, the assumptions of how the change process unfolds, and which outcomes are being selected to focus on and why. This theory is incorporated as part of evaluation process whereby its relevance, efficacy and effectiveness is interrogated in relation to its use in monitoring and evaluation.

This study identified structural functionalism and the change theory as a basis of its theoretical frame work since it endeavors to establish the performance of M&E in the County Government's projects. This will include systems, methods and structures in relation to effective monitoring and evaluation.

## 4. Conceptual Framework Model

Conceptual frameworks are diagrams that identify and illustrate relationships among relevant organizational, institutions, individual and other factors that may influence a project and the successful achievement of goals and objectives (Abma & Wilddershoven, 2005). They Help determine which factors will influence the project and outline how each of these factors (underlying, structural, cultural, economic socio-political etc.) might relate to and affect the outcomes. They do not form the basis for monitoring and evaluation activities, but will help explain project results.

## 5. Study Objective

The purpose of the study was to assess the effectiveness of M&E systems on the performance of County Government projects in the Lake Region Economic Bloc counties of Nyanza, Kenya

## 6. Research Methodology and Design

### 6.1. Description of the Study Area

The Lake Region Economic Bloc Counties is one of the most densely populated regions of Kenya with over 10 million people which constitute about 25% of the population in Kenya. Their Economic Blueprint presents the socioeconomic aspirations of 14 counties in the Lake Basin Region and seeks to boldly secure and shape the region's economic destiny. There Economic Blueprint was designed to guide development efforts by leveraging existing assets, addressing constraints and defining key steps that leaders and citizens of the region can take to transform the shared vision of prosperity into reality.



The Lake Region counties which form the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) is made up of 14 counties bordering the Lake Victoria, it acts as a one-stop shop for investors seeking opportunities in the region. It identifies seven strategic intervention areas (projects), namely: Agriculture, Tourism, Education, Health, ICT, Financial Services and Infrastructure. The fourteen (14) counties that constitute the Lake Region in the blueprint are Bungoma, Busia, Homa Bay, Kakamega, Kisii, Kisumu, Migori, Nyamira, Bungoma, Kakamega, Kericho, Transzoia, Siaya and Vihiga. They not only have similar ecological zones and natural resources, they have analogous cultural histories that date back to historical migrations and trading routes. Thus a partnership between the counties is both essential and timely and creates a practical framework through which County Government efforts can be pooled to harness the abundant natural resources, build on existing strengths and address challenges. For each of the intervention areas, the blueprint has designated a flagship project to be implemented in the region. Their flagship projects are: an agricultural commodities exchange, a regional bank, specialist hospitals and educational centers of excellence in each county, creating a Lake region ring road and tourism circuit. The Lake Region Economic Blueprint was developed through a consultative process by the County Governments, including the public a part from individual counties' integrated development plans. Each of the counties identified one key pillar project for the economic bloc. The Lake Region Economic Blueprint is aligned with the national development plans of Vision 2030 and its Medium Term Plan II for 2013-2017, as well as the County Integrated Development Plans for each County Government.

### 6.2. Research Design

The study was conducted through a descriptive survey design, this described the situation and state of the affairs and conditions currently exist as regards monitoring and evaluation in the counties. Descriptive survey design is appropriate because it is not restricted only to the fact findings, but may often results in the formulation of important principles of knowledge and solutions to problems (Kerlinger, 2009). The design has been selected to facilitate rapid and cost effective collection of data and for its potential at enabling one understand the population as part of it. Furthermore, the researcher looked at the problem at hand thoroughly to define it, clarify it, and obtained pertinent information that may be useful to County Government's policy makers and oversight agencies. Several researchers have recommended it as the best for this kind of research (Orodho, 2004; Dane, 2000).

### 6.3. Target Population

Population is an identifiable total group or aggregation of elements/people that are of interest to a researcher and pertinent to the specified information problem Hair (2003). This includes defining the population from which our sample is drawn. According to Salkind (2008), population is the entire of some groups. This is also supported by Sekaran and Bougie (2010), population is defined as entire group of people the researcher wants to investigate. The population of study consisted of a total of 100,000 project staff, stakeholders and benefactors drawn from the 6 counties which are part of Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) and will include County Chief Officers, Directors, Departmental Heads, Monitoring and Evaluation Officers, Oversight Committees Members, County Assembly Members, Senior Staff of Departments, Beneficiaries, Boards and Committee Members, Partners, Stakeholders and Members of the Public and Tax Payers.

### 6.4. Sample and Sample Techniques

The six selected Counties within the Lake Region Economic Bloc (LREB) that participated in the study included Kakamega, Vihiga, Siaya, Kisumu, Homabay, and Migori County Governments who were selected randomly. Researchers such as Mugenda & Mugenda (1999) suggest that one may use a sample size of at least 10 per cent, but for better, more representative results, a higher percentage is better. To obtain sufficient sample, the following model was adopted as described by Yamane (2000).

Sample size calculation  $n = Z^2pq$

P= Proportion in the target population estimated to have a particular characteristic =0.6

Z=Standard normal deviation set at 1.96 which corresponds with 95% confidence level

$q = (1-p) = 1-0.6=0.4$

d= degree of accuracy desired, set at 0.05

Therefore  $n = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times 0.6 \times 0.4}{0.05^2} = \frac{3.8416 \times 0.24}{0.0025} = \frac{0.921984}{0.0025} = 397 \sim 398$

Group A: Proportion of respondents involved in M&E  $= \frac{398 \times 60}{100} = 239$

Group B: Proportion of respondents in projects benefiting from M&E  $= \frac{398 \times 40}{100} = 159$

Total sample size = 398

The number was distributed as follows: 66 respondents from each of the six counties totaling to 398 respondents and further distributed as follows, Chief officers- 15, Directors- 30, Departmental Managers -60, Project officers – 120, MCAs -20, County Assembly officers-15, Oversight committees -25, Partners-20, stakeholders-10, beneficiaries - 50, Ward Administrators-15, M&E officers-18. Multi-stage sampling will be utilized; cluster sampling will be used to segregate the population into subpopulation representing the target population. This will form the primary sampling units (PSU). Further sampling was done to identify departments/ministries and sectors from which individuals was investigated drawn.

Purposive sampling techniques was used to identify key informants and respondents knowledgeable in the field of study who constituted the focus group members, this sampling techniques has been suggested by Lwonga (2009) because it involves selection of individuals or objects that yield the most information about the subject under study. Additional secondary data was obtained from reports, publications, journals, policies and legislation.

### 6.5. Data Collection Instruments

The study used Likert scale questionnaires to collect data from respondents who were project officers depending on different departments. Interviews were administered to departmental project managers while focused group discussions were administered to officers who carry out projects at county level. It was used to obtain information and to provide an opportunity for the researcher to capture respondent's views on a whole range of issues.

There were three kinds of instruments administered; Likert Scale Questionnaires for the technical team which will include the M&E officers and departmental heads, interviews for Senior officers and Focused Groups Discussion for MCA,s. Likert Scale Questionnaires are useful instruments of collecting primary data since respondents can read and then give responses to each item and they can reach a large number of subjects (Orodho, 2004).

Likert Scale Questionnaire use also provides greater anonymity, through questionnaire coding and discrete analysis of the respondent personal details. Statpac (2011) notes that use of questionnaire are less intrusive than telephone interviews or face to face conversations. However, questionnaire format can be limiting in the case of illiterate respondents but again the research assistants were used in clarifying the questions.

### 6.6. Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the degree to which results obtained from the analysis of data actually represent the phenomena under study, Mugenda and Mugenda (2003), Validity has to be assured both internally and externally. Internal and external validity relates to the overall organization of the research design (Twycross & Shields, 2004). This study recognized the reciprocal balance between the two. External validity relates to the freedom of generalization provided for in the study. Internal validity on the other hand explained the degree to which the design of study actually render itself sufficient in answering the research questions or accepting /nullifying the stated hypothesis. To enhance external validity therefore the study endeavored to draw a representative sample that is randomly selected from the stratified target population of the citizenry in the mentioned counties as outlined in the sampling procedures.

There was three major ways of testing research work validity. These included Construct validity, Content validity and Criterion validity. Content validity is the extent to which research instrument measure what they are intended to measure (Oso & Onen, 2005). To establish validity, the instruments were given to the supervisors to evaluate the relevance of each item in the instrument to the objectives and rate each item on the scale. Validity were determined using Content Validity Index (C.V.I). This was symbolized as  $n\frac{3}{4} / N$ .

Content validity of the instrument was further ascertained through peer review and scrutiny by research experts, comprising of my supervisor, to ensure that the content in the questionnaire was appropriate and relevant to the study. Supervisor's opinion was sought to check the content and format of the research instrument.

### 6.7. Reliability of the Instrument

Consistency is very important in Research, Kothari (2004), a measuring instrument is reliable if it provides consistent results. This means that the instrument should give the same results if administered repeatedly. This study used internal consistency technique to ensure reliability. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that in this approach, a score obtained in one item is correlated with scores obtained from other items in the instrument.

This is in agreement with Trochim (2002) that Reliability would refer to the consistency of the measured results over repeated attempts. Cronbach's coefficient alpha (KR20) is then computed to determine how items correlate among themselves.

The formula is as follows:-

$$KR20 = \frac{k(S^2 - \sum s^2)}{S^2(k - 1)}$$

Where k = Number of items used to measure the concept  
 $S^2$  = Variance of all scores  
 $s^2$  = Variance of individual items

Uma (2006) observes that the closer the reliability coefficient gets to 1.0, the better, and further that in general, reliabilities less than 0.60 are considered to be poor, those in the range of 0.70 acceptable, and those over 0.80 good.

#### 6.7.1. Methods of Data Analysis

Primary data from the field was edited, coded then responses translated into specific categories. Coding is expected to organize and reduce research data into manageable summaries (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Quantitative data collected was analyzed, presented and interpreted using both descriptive statistics while thematic analysis techniques was used to analyze qualitative data collected in the open ended questions. Inferential and Descriptive statistics was used to describe the data.

The analyzed data was presented in form of tables. Linear regression analysis was used to establish the relationship and magnitude between Monitoring and evaluation systems process, methods, structures and policies (independent variables) and project performance (dependent variable). The data obtained was also analyzed using SPSS

software version 18. Data analysis was also done using multiple regression models since it allows simultaneous investigation of the effect of two or more variables.

The model was to establish the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems process, structures, methods, policies and Performance of projects. The regression model:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \epsilon$$

Where Y= measure the key indicator being Performance of project

$\beta_0$  =Constant

$\beta_1$  to  $\beta_3$  =Regression coefficients

$X_1$  = Structures

$X_2$  = Systems

$X_3$  = Methods

$X_4$  = Policies

$\epsilon$  = Coefficient of error

The coefficient of multiple determinations ( $R^2$ ) was used in this analysis to estimate the percentage of variation in the dependent variable that can be explained by the set of independent variables. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) statistics was used to test the significant of the regression model. Further, in the analysis of variance, the assumption when using student's t-test is that the samples have been drawn from a normally distributed population with equal variances.

The t-test was used to determine the ability of each of the independent variables in explaining the behavior of the dependent variable. Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) was used to determine the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

### 6.8. Results and Discussions

The data was analyzed, presented and discussed according to the research question guiding the study. The overall objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation structure on the performance of County Governments projects in Lake Region Economic Bloc of Nyanza, Kenya. The principal guiding factors on the analysis presented in this chapter are the specific objectives of the study.

#### 6.8.1. Questionnaires Return / Response Rate

No. Of Questionnaires Administered	No. Of Questionnaires Filled and Returned	Percentage (%)
398	372	93%

Table: 1 Response Rate  
Source: Survey Data, (2018)

During the research study, the researcher distributed 398 questionnaires reflecting 100% of the questionnaires in six randomly sampled County Governments. Sixty six (66) questionnaires were distributed in each of the six counties to different levels of monitoring and evaluation or related projects personnel's. 372 (93%) of the questionnaires were returned fully answered while 26 (7%) of the questionnaires were not returned or not properly answered thus not being able to be used for analysis in this research study. This was necessary to establish whether the study was representative or not.

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) a 50% response rate is adequate, and a response rate greater than 70% is very good. Hence the response rate of 93% was excellent. This response rate can be attributed to the data collection procedures and research timing and duration, where the researcher pre-notified the potential participants and applied the drop and pick method to allow the respondents ample time to fill the questionnaires, another factor contributing to high questionnaire return rate was that the data collection was conducted during the months of November and December which is a period where most projects are slowed down as employees compile their annual reports before close of the year, these enabled the researcher to find most of the respondents in their offices and not in the field.

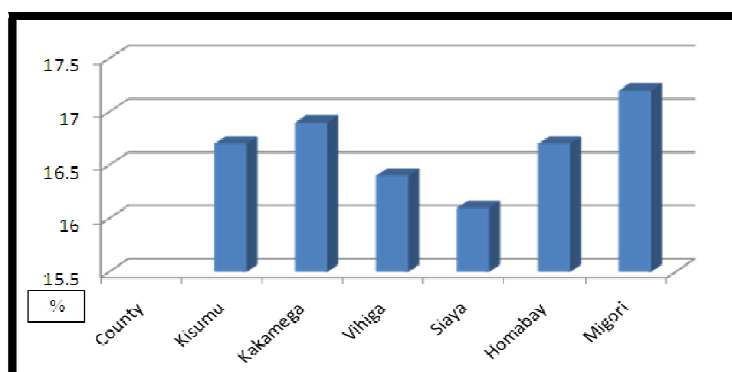


Figure 1: Respondents County of Employment  
Source: Survey Data, (2018)

Figure 1. Above shows the distribution of respondents within the six counties of study selected randomly from fourteen counties forming the Lake Region Economic Bloc of Nyanza, Kenya. Kisumu had 62 (16.7%), Kakamega-63 (16.9%), Vihiga-62 (16.4%), Siaya-60 (16.1%), Homa- Bay-62 (16.7%) and Migori-64 (17.2%) questionnaires return rate per county. Majority of counties had more than 91% questionnaire return rate on overall. There were sixty six (66) respondents from each of the six (6) counties and totaling to three hundred and ninety eight (398) respondents for the entire study. The questionnaires were distributed as follows Kisumu-66, Kakamega-66, Vihiga-66, Siaya-66, Homa-bay-66 and Migori-66 project respondents.

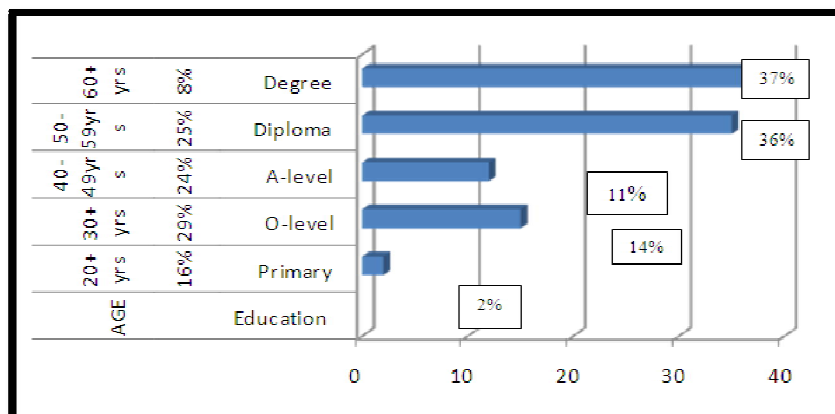


Figure: 2 Distribution of Respondent's Age against Education Level in the County Government Projects  
Source: Survey Data, (2018)

In Figure 2.Above, on the level of education, degree holders were leading with 132 respondents being undergraduate and above accounting for (36.6%) of respondents, the diploma holders were 130 respondents being (36%) of total respondents. A level certificate holders were 40 (11.1%), O-level certificate 52 (14.4%) and Primary certificate holders 7 respondents translating to (1.9%).

During the focus group discussions, the researcher sought to find out why there is almost equal or small difference in the number of degree holders and diploma holders in the County Governments projects. The researcher found majority of former local government staff who were absorbed in counties went back to colleges and universities to either do a degree or a diploma course as a means to get promotion or move from one department to another or to avoid being rendered redundant in the projects.

The research question of this study was derived from the research objective. In order to answer the objective, several sub- questions answering the objective were developed. The questions sought to assess Monitoring and Evaluation Systems on the performance of County Governments Projects. In order to get answers to ascertain this research question, the researcher inquired from the respondents their views on a number of issues on Monitoring and Evaluation Systems of County Governments Projects. These included statements touching on Systems process, procedures on M&E among others. Focus group discussions and interview scheduled was also conducted and clarified in the discussions.

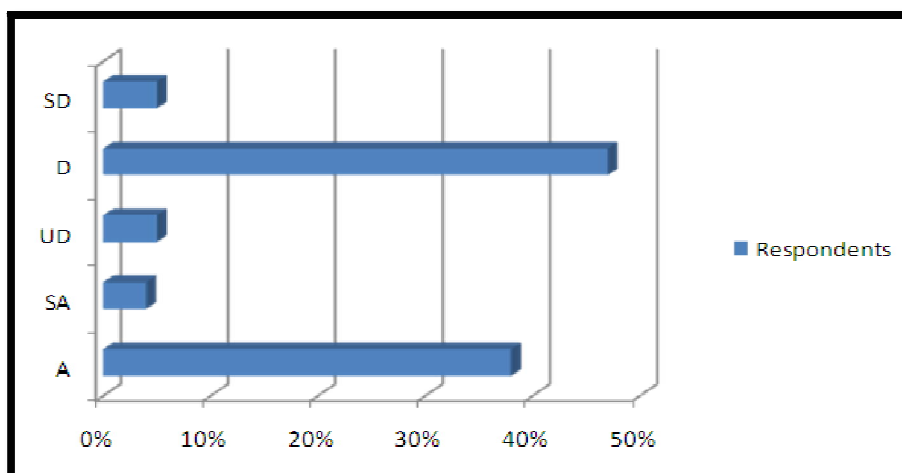


Figure 3: Respondents Perception on Set of System Process for Conducting M and E in County Government's Projects  
Source: Survey Data, 2018

Figure .3 above, depicts the respondents perception as to whether the County Governments Projects has a system process for conducting Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects. total of 195 (53.%) of respondents' beliefs that the County

Governments projects has no system process for conducting monitoring and evaluation of which 175(47%) disagreed and 20 (5.%) strongly disagreed. While 158 (42%) agreed that there is a procedure, of which 143 (38.%) agreed and 15(4%) strongly agreed. 19 (5%) of respondents were undecided.

During the focused group discussion and interview schedules with the staff, the respondents stated that while there had been some elements of procedures in terms of directives and guidelines in some projects like health from time to time, this procedures and guidelines had been merely on short term basis to address specific issues arising during Project implementation or closure period and mostly driven by donors for specific Projects. However, there is no standardized Monitoring and Evaluation procedures cutting across all Projects. It was also observed that there is no County documented procedures or guidelines for Monitoring and Evaluation of Projects.

Furthermore, during the focused group discussions, the respondents explored the need for Monitoring and Evaluation System Procedure to provide the necessary feedback for effective Projects interventions and to add on, there is hardly any Project Evaluation Reports for the Projects that had been completed and shared with, Staff, Stakeholders and Beneficiaries. They noted that this was an area that still required the much needed attention by the County Government leadership. The respondents noted that the absence of Monitoring and Evaluation Procedure Framework in the County Governments Projects limits effective Public Service Delivery thus constraining the acceleration of Development in Counties and therefore leads to negatively overall citizens benefits in those projects. As shown in the figure 3 above, the procedure for Monitoring & Evaluation of County development projects is not clear and timely established to guide the implementation of full Monitoring and Evaluation function for projects

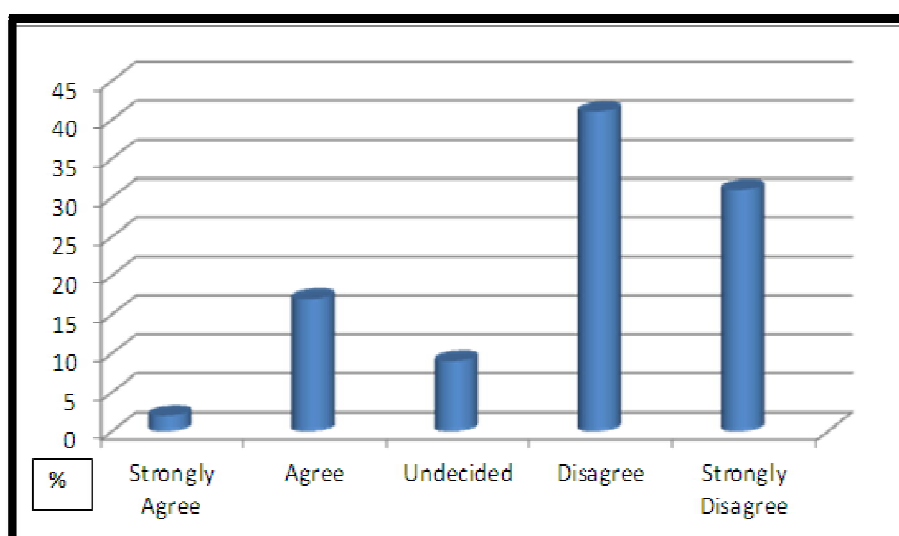


Figure 4: Below Perception of the Respondents on Whether the M&E Systems Process of County Governments Feeds into National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (NIMES)  
Source: Survey Data, (2018)

From the above figure 6., the findings reveals that majority of the respondents 269 (72%) disagree that the County Monitoring and Evaluation Systems feeds into NIMES, of which 154 (41%) and 115 (31%) disagree and strongly disagreeing, a total of 70 ( 19%) of the respondents agreed that the system feeds into NIMES in which 63 (17%) agreed and 7 (2%) strongly agreed, while 33 (9% ) of the respondents were not aware whether it feeds on to the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (NIMES) or not.

During the focus group discussions, the respondents noted that the County Governments Monitoring and Evaluation Systems was in its infant stage. Even though they were being evaluated by the parent Ministry of Devolution on the implementation of Result Based Monitoring and Evaluation Systems (RBMES) including Result Based Project Management (RBPM). The Counties were yet to develop or come up with M&E Departments to address the challenges. So far only some Departments were carrying out M&E on their Projects and has guidelines on the same, examples include Health Department which feeds her data into the parent Ministry of Health through Health Management Information Systems (HMIS)

The constitution of 2010 provides the framework and basis for M&E as an important part of operationalizing government activities both at the National Government and County Government levels to ensure that Transparency, Integrity and Accountability Principles were embraced in resources allocation, usage and management at National and Devolved Levels of Government. Furthermore, the scope of M&E is derived from the articles and provisions related to planning under Articles 10, 56, 174, 19 of the planning Acts/Laws of Kenya. The planning Acts proposes a robust M&E process as essential for efficient and effective implementation of Medium Term Plans (MTP), County Integrated Development Plans (CIDP), and Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDA) Strategic Plans.

The Act related to M&E, supports the implementation of a computerized National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System (NIMES) from the National, County and the Local Levels of Government Agencies, it establishes County M&E committees chaired County Governors. The County M&E system must feed into National Integrated Monitoring and

Evaluation Systems (NIMES) data for planning purposes and national decision making to enable the achievement of performance including the Big Four (B<sub>4</sub>) Agenda and Vision 2030.

Furthermore, the legal mechanism spelt out in the 2010 Constitution have necessitated the development of M&E systems for the County Governments in Kenya (GoK, 2015). The County Government Act No. 17 of 2012 chapter 8 of CIDP section 108(1) further states the role and importance of monitoring and evaluation of County Government projects. The constitution of Kenya further demands adherence to transparency in conducting and management of Public Development Projects and to the principle of good governance. The National and County Governments are therefore united in the recognition that Performance Monitoring and Evaluation is a pivotal development process in the Country. Both the National and County Governments are therefore encouraged to increase their focus on results and how they can better be measured (GoK, 2015).

The Act and Policies related to M&E ensures that all Ministries and County Governments establish M&E Departments or units with specific budgets for effective implementation of NIMES (GoK, 2015). The stakeholders, beneficiaries and the public are to access data on implementation of projects at County levels through various Systems, Structures and Methods. The effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Information Systems (MEIS) on the success of the Projects performance should be accorded great significance in the County Government Projects.

The need for M&E systems to make data available can therefore not be over-emphasized (Willard, 2008). This implies that M&E systems need to develop strategies of submitting relevant, reliable and valid data to National and County Government databases.

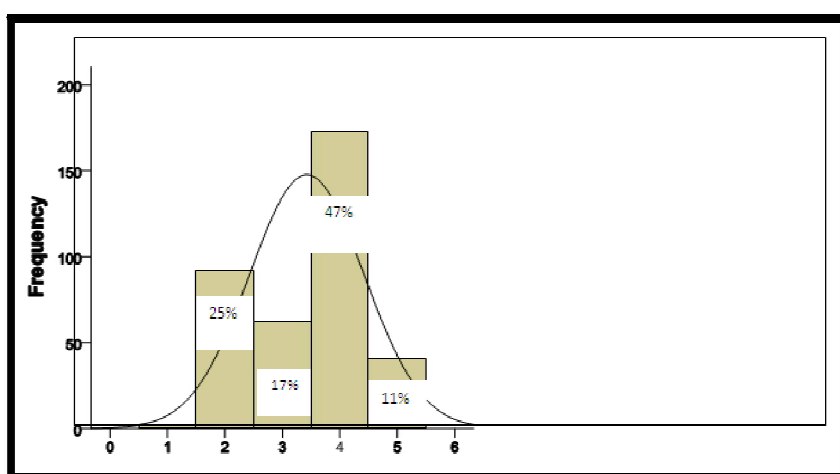


Figure 5: Respondents View on Whether M&E System Assess Project Impacts  
Source: Survey Data, (2018)

Figure 5 above shows the respondents view on M&E Systems being able to assess the Project impacts on beneficiaries. 216 (58%) of the respondents view County M&E Systems as not being able to assess the projects impacts, while only 94 (25%) of the respondents agree that it assess the Project impacts. 62 (17%) of the respondents were not able to either agree or disagree on the ability of the M&E Systems to assess the Projects impacts. During the interview and focus group discussion, the respondents indicated that the County Government Projects had not developed Projects impact Monitoring and Evaluation measurement tool to be able to assess the long term consequences of achieving Projects outcome.

The need to develop systems on impact Monitoring and Evaluation to assesses the consequences of Project activities to the target population. The impacts are usually the long term effects of a Project. However, for Projects with no defined timelines, there emerges then a need for measuring impact change in order to show whether the general conditions of the intended beneficiaries are improving or otherwise. The Project Monitoring and Evaluation Systems monitor impact through the pre-determined set of indicators (UNDP, 2009). Monitoring both the positive and negative impacts, intended and un-intended impacts of the Project becomes imperative if the Monitoring and Evaluation System is to be effective and yield good Project performance (UNDP, 2009).

This study agrees with Bamberger (2009), that impact evaluation systems are important in assessing the project effectiveness in achieving its ultimate goals. This is to determine how the Project achieved its objectives and how results affected overall Project goals. As an attempts to determine the direct impact on the Project performance, this study findings further supports Gertler, Martinez, Premand, Rawlings, and Vermeersch (2007), that Project impact evaluations should focus on long term, sustained changes as a result of the Project. This is to assess what changes has been brought about or attributed to the Project undertaking through the influence of systems and other factors at play.

### 6.9. Regression Model

Model	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Std Error of Estimate	Change (Statistics)				
					R <sup>2</sup> Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	0.888 <sup>a</sup>	0.896	0.887	0.44738	0.964	109.403	4	9	0.000

Table 2: Regression of the Coefficient of Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Structure

Source: Survey Data (2018)

Predictors: (Constant), M&E Systems/Procedures, M&E Structure, M&E Methods and M&E Policies

The table 2 above variables, collectively, show that 87.7% of variation or change in the effectiveness of M&E structure is explained by the variables considered in the model, being M&E systems procedures, M&E structure, M&E methods and M&E policies indicated by the coefficient of effectiveness (R<sup>2</sup>) which is also evidenced by F change 109.403 > p-values (0.05). This implies that these variables are significant (since the p values < 0.05) and therefore should be considered as part of effectiveness of M&E systems on the performance of County Governments projects. This study therefore identifies monitoring and evaluation systems process, monitoring and evaluation structure, monitoring and evaluation method and monitoring and evaluation policies as effective M&E systems on the performance of County Government Projects.

#### 6.9.1. Correlation Coefficient

To measure the correlation, Pearson was used to measure the degree of association between variables. Pearson correlation coefficients range from -1 to +1. Negative values indicates negative correlation and positive values indicates positive correlation where Pearson coefficient indicates weak correlation, Pearson coefficient > 0.3 < 0.5 indicates moderate correlation and Pearson coefficient > 0.5 indicates strong correlation.

	M&E systems procedures	M&E structures	M&E methods	M&E policies	Effectiveness of M&E
M&E systems Procedure	1				
M&E structure	0.624	1			
M&E methods	0.601	0.598	1		
M&E policies	0.628	0.611	0.543	1	
Effectiveness of systems	0.771	0.634	0.542	0.739	1

Table 3: Correlation Coefficient

Source: Survey Data (2018)

Correlation Is Significant at the 0.05 Level (1- Tailed)

The analysis above shows monitoring and evaluation systems procedures has the strongest positive (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.771) influence on effective M&E systems. In addition, M&E policies, M&E structures and M&E methods are positively correlated to effectiveness of M&E systems (Pearson correlation coefficient = 0.793, 0.634 and 0.542) respectively.

The correlation matrix implies that the independent variables: being M&E systems procedures, M&E structure, M&E method and M&E policies are crucial on the effectiveness of M&E systems and performance of the projects as shown by their strong and positive relationship with the dependent variables.

#### 6.9.2. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Significance
Regression	19.392	2	9.696	7.907	.000
Residual	452.472	369	1.226		
Total	471.864	371			

Table 4: Analysis of Variance

Source: Survey Data (2018)

Predictors: (Constant), M&E systems processes, M&E structures, M&E methods and M&E policies

The value of the F statistic, 7.907 indicates that the overall regression model is significant hence it has some explanatory value, which means that, there is a significant relationship between the predictor M&E systems procedure, M&E structures, M&E method and M&E policies (taken together) and the effectiveness of M&E systems on the performance of the projects.

## 7. Conclusions

The effectiveness of M&E system on the performance of projects is determined by various M&E system factors and procedures guidelines, these are mainly the M&E systems process, M&E policies systems put in place, M&E structure systems and M&E data collection, analysis and dissemination method system. Effective monitoring and evaluation calls also for involvement of stakeholders from the initial project planning stage to implementation and evaluation phases.

M&E systems forms an integral procedure of reflection and communication supporting project implementation that is planned for and managed throughout a project's life (Nyonje, Kyalo and Mulwa, 2015). Monitoring and evaluation systems should be as relevant as possible to the institution to ensure its reliability and independence (Gaarder and Briceño, 2010). It's also an arrangement and organization of interrelated elements in a M&E system. An effective M & E system should be able to offer conclusive information that can effectively be utilized towards better project success. Through the systems, the stakeholder and beneficiaries should be able to identify the potential benefits of the project, ways of enhancing screening and tracking of the project as well as offer an outline of the successes, challenges and opportunities for future projects undertakings (Briceno, 2010).

Effectiveness of the M&E system focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, processes, examining the results chain, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack of achievement. Objectives of a development project should be consistent with the requirements of beneficiaries and organization's strategies, and also the extent to which they are responsive to the institution's corporate plan and development priorities such as empowerment (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

The project monitoring and evaluation system means the clarification of what is to be monitored and evaluated, by whom, how and when and should be set up during the planning phase of the project or the beginning of implementation (Willard, 2008). It also involves steering and organizing monitoring and evaluation work.

## 8. Recommendations

In most cases an M&E system refers to all the indicators, tools and processes that is used to measure if a project has or is being implemented according to the plan and is having the desired result. Monitoring and evaluation systems is often described in a document called an M&E plan.

The County Government should develop a clear M&E Systems for each project with clear indicators, tools and process and well documented in the County M&E plan. This system should be developed with the involvement of county stakeholders and project beneficiaries of each project undertaking.

The County Government M and E system should be built into the initial project inception or design in order to permit periodic appraisal of the project's performance, physical outputs, benefits, expenditures and impacts for effective project performance.

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