



**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**ASSESSMENT OF PERFORMANCE OF
MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM AT
SNV ETHIOPIA COUNTRY OFFICE**

**BY
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SGS/0411/2010A**

**JUNE, 2019
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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**THESIS SUBMITTED TO ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
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DECLARATION

I, hereby, declare that this thesis entitled “Assessment of Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation System at SNV Ethiopia Country Office” is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Tiruneh Legesse (Assistant Professor) and has not been presented for a degree in any other university. All source of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree.

Name

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June, 2019
Addis Ababa

ENDORSEMENT

This is to certify that Rahel Nebiyu has completed her thesis entitled “Assessment of Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation System at SNV Ethiopia Country Office”. As I have evaluated, her thesis, it is appropriate to be submitted as a partial fulfilment required for the award of Master of Business Administration in Project Management.

Advisor

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St. Mary`s University,

June, 2019

Addis Ababa

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PME	Project monitoring and evaluation
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
SNV	Netherlands Development Organization
SPSS	Statistical Packages for Social Science

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ABSTRACT

Many organizations view M&E as a donor requirement than a management tool for reviewing progress and correcting problems in planning or implementation of projects. This study was conducted to assess performance of M&E systems at SNV Ethiopia. It aimed to explore suitability of tools, the influence of management, relationship of training on M&E performance and identify gaps in M&E. Descriptive Survey design was used. Sixty respondents who involved in M&E activities, were purposively selected and data collected with questionnaire and interview guide then analysed using SPSS. SNV conducted M&E to meet donors demand followed by improvement of project implementation as reported by 75% and 60% of the respondents respectively. A range of tools used in M&E system including theory of change, performance indicators, results chains and logical frameworks. They were rated as most suitable and suitable to use as per 40% and 30% of respondents, respectively. The extent of ICT applications was not developed due to lack of skilled personnel and accessing data. Management at SNV used the feedbacks of M&E for learning more often. They also allocated resources. The majority confirmed that the management influence in M&E activities was effective. About 57% of the respondents did not take training on M&E in which all agreed it limited performance of M&E of projects. Lack of training and limited dedicated staff, use of ICT enabled tools and stakeholder involvement were gaps at SNV. In conclusion, SNV conducted M&E not only to comply with donors' requirement but also as a management tool to improve the performance of the current and future project implementations. Good performance of M&E system was due to suitability of the tools applied and management support. Absence of regular capacity building programmes was limiting the performance of M&E of projects. Therefore, SNV should invest on training of its employees on the M&E system and should also assign designated staff for M&E activities. SNV should upgrade the M&E system by introducing ICT and finally the management should be proactive in designing of M&E systems and offer timely support and guidance to ensure that M&E activities are well executed and results communicated to form part in decision making and future planning.

Key Words: monitoring and evaluation, SNV, management tool, performance

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with the background of the study and the organization under study. It also outlined statements of the problem, research questions, research objectives, as well as the significance and scope of the study.

1.1. Background of the Study

Monitoring is the concurrent process of tracking the implementation of activities of the project and attaining its planned outputs (Kultar *et al.*, 2017, 27). It helps to provide real time information of the progress of the project in terms of completing its activities and achieving its immediate outputs, both in terms of quality and target. Monitoring, thus, is an activity to see if an ongoing project is proceeding on track. It involves the process of systematically collecting data to provide real time information for all stakeholders (managers, funders, participants) on the progress of implementation and the achievement of desired outcomes.

Evaluation is a systematic research to see if a project has achieved its intended outcomes and impacts (Kultar *et al.*, 2017:27). Evaluation is done firstly to see whether the envisaged objectives and goals have been achieved or not, and secondly, to see whether the achievement is because of the project interventions. It should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision making process of both recipients and donors (Kusek and Rist, 2004:12)

Project monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is important to different people for various reasons. Kusek and Rist (2004) stated that M&E is important to project managers and their stakeholders (including donors/government) because they need to know the extent to which their projects are meeting the set objectives and attaining the desired effects. M&E upholds greater transparency and accountability in the use of project resources, which is particularly, required by funders or development partners. M&E strengthens project implementation, improve quality of project interventions and enhance learning.

The goal of monitoring and evaluation according to Kusek and Rist (2004) is to improve current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. Beside it is used for determining fulfilment of objectives, efficiency and effectiveness of a project. M&E should involve incorporation of lessons learned into decision-making process. It also relates to the worth or significance of an activity, policy or programme. Effective project monitoring and evaluation enhances the basis for evidence-based project management decisions.

Monitoring and evaluation systems is a set of components which are related to each other within a structure and serve a common purpose of tracking the implementation and results of a project (SAMDI, 2007). An M&E systems is made up of four interlinked sections, which are: setting up of the M&E systems, implementation of the M&E systems, involvement of the project stakeholders, and communication of the M&E results (Guijt *et al.*, 2002). Theoretically, „an ideal M&E systems should be independent enough to be externally credible and socially legitimate, but not so independent to lose its relevance“ (Briceno, 2010). It should therefore be able to influence policy making from recommendations of lessons learned as well as be sustainable overtime for it to be responsive to the needs of the stakeholders.

Globally, Monitoring and evaluation systems have been in existence since the ancient times (Kusek and Rist, 2004), however today, the requirements for M&E systems as a management tool to show performance has grown with demand by stakeholders for accountability and transparency through the application of the monitoring and evaluation by the NGOs and other institutions including the government.

1.1.1. Background of the Organization

SNV Netherlands Development Organisation is a non-profit international development organization founded in the Netherlands. SNV has built a long-term local presence in more than 30 countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Globally, SNV is working in three focus sectors namely, Agriculture, Clean Energy and WASH, promotes market-based solutions to develop meaningful and sustainable employment opportunities for thousands

of young people in developing economies (SNV, 2017). By enabling market actors to provide contextualized services for young people to acquire relevant market based skills and leadership competencies, as well as facilitating private sector engagement for better business performance (SNV, 2015). As it implements many different types of projects, it works with a common approach to ensure consistency in the management of projects across the organisation. A common approach sets common rules for running projects and gives a clear message to external stakeholders. SNV's approach to project management has 10 core principles that underpin how a project should be managed and executed. These core principles are based on standard project management approaches, but adapted to ensure SNV's own flavour in order to do justice to the development environment that SNV works in. These core principles can be remembered using the acronym SMART RECIPE (Sustainability, Matching Responsibilities with Authority, Ongoing Reflection, Be accountable Together, Relevance, Effectiveness, Coherence, Impact, Planning is ongoing, Efficiency) (SNV, 2018).

Actively operating for more than 50 years in Ethiopia, SNV has built substantial experience and a solid track record in employment creation, increase in income, food security, as well as addressing the development challenges of the poor, inclusive of young men and women. Currently SNV-Ethiopia is implementing over 12 development projects in the above mentioned sectors (SNV, 2017). The success of those projects depends on various factors. One of the key factors for project success is having a sound monitoring and evaluation system and practices to make informed decisions and document lessons learnt for future programming, design and implementation (Kultar *et al.*, 2017: 27). Project monitoring and evaluation is an important element of the program management as it adds value to the overall efficiency of project implementation by offering corrective actions to the variances to the expected standard. Project managers are required to undertake more rigorous monitoring and evaluation of projects and develop framework and guidelines for measuring impact. By doing so, SNV would achieve project success and positively impacts. This research looked at the performance of existing Monitoring and Evaluation systems, at SNV Ethiopia.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Monitoring and evaluation, when carried out correctly and at the right time and place are two of the most important aspects of ensuring the success of any project (Charles and Humam, 2015). Unfortunately, these two although known to many project developers tend to be given little priority and as a result they are done simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most funding agencies without the intention of using them as a mechanism of ensuring the success of the projects (Biwott *et al.*, 2017). Many organizations view M&E as a donor requirement rather than a management tool for reviewing progress and identifying and correcting problems in planning or implementation of projects. Donors are certainly entitled to know whether their money is properly spent but the primary use of M&E should be for the organisation or project itself to see how it is performing and to learn how to do it better.

Many organizations implement different projects in different times and they focus only on the planned activities of the actual work. Measuring the performance of these projects to have clear information for better decision-making to meet their objectives has not been seen as important as other project activities. Because of that many organizations are not aware of the strengths and weaknesses of their project operation to improve or sustain the projects activities (FAO, 2010). They cannot also build greater transparency and accountability regarding the management of financial resources provided by donor agencies. This influences frequency of monitoring exercises to be undertaken by the program implementers and the practices are attached to the mercy of the budget holders. This in turn limits target groups/beneficiaries' participation in the monitoring and evaluation processes, and eventually jeopardizes the success of the program or project (MoFED, 2008; Kusek and Rist, 2004). As MoFED (2008) in Ethiopian public sectors, one of the major factors in project failure is weak project monitoring and evaluation.

At SNV despite the huge amount of resources provided to implement projects and the fact that these projects plays big role in improving lives of people in the community, M&E faces challenges and therefore, the performance of Monitoring and Evaluation system does not perform satisfactorily and there is need for intervention. Such a scenario makes

sustainability of projects poor or even none. Sustainability measures the extent to which benefits of initiatives continue after external development assistance has come to an end (UNDP, 2009: 170). Monitoring and evaluation, although very essential in improving performance, is also very complex, multidisciplinary and skill intensive processes. SNV has in place planning, monitoring and evaluation (PME) standards called Monitoring for Results Standards with the corresponding quality criteria, guidelines, formats and tools, to assist advisors to plan, monitor and evaluate interventions effectively. For SNV, the setting up of the monitoring and evaluation framework corresponds with Monitoring for Results Standard and is important for three purposes. The first one is reporting and accountability purpose that is important to show what SNV has achieved with the resources invested. Steering/managing purpose is the other one in which the management decisions based on what SNV has learnt and to adjust the intervention (logic, planning) where needed. Finally for learning purpose that is useful to reflect on and learn from what SNV has experienced and achieved so that SNV's practices can be continuously improved. Developing a project monitoring and evaluation manual by itself would not be enough rather building a result based M&E system is required by the growing pressure to improving performance which is also one of the requirements by the donors to check on the effective use of the donor funds, impact and benefits brought by the projects. Hence there is a need for establishment of rules for constructing minimum parameters for M&E for projects that can be used to track progress and effectiveness. For this the M&E unit should be strengthened financial as well as human resources. Though at SNV, very few staffs were assigned in the organization's M&E unit that was expected to support a large number of projects implemented by the organization. Also very little is known how far projects at SNV Ethiopia is using the project M&E as a management tool for reviewing progress, identifying and correcting problems in planning or implementation of projects. Thus, this study was thought to produce information in the area.

1.3. Research Questions

In line with the problem statement of this research, the following research questions were formulated:

1. To what extent tools used in Monitoring and Evaluation at SNV Ethiopia were suitable?
2. In what ways did management execute Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation systems at SNV Ethiopia?
3. To what extent did training of employees influence Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation practices at SNV Ethiopia?
4. What were the gaps in the existing monitoring and evaluation practices which need to be improved for future programming?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General Objectives

The general objective of the study was to assess performance of monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV Ethiopia.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The study specifically looked for:

- i. To explore whether the Monitoring and evaluation tools used at SNV Ethiopia were suitable.
- ii. To realise the influence of management on Performance of Monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV Ethiopia.
- iii. To assess how training of employees influenced Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation at SNV Ethiopia.
- iv. To identify gaps in the existing monitoring and evaluation system at SNV Ethiopia

1.5. Significance of the Study

It was hoped that the study was of significance to SNV Ethiopia and similar other organizations by contributing to a better understanding and knowledge of strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems. To project managers and programmes personnel, results of the study helped in the replication and maximization of strengths of Monitoring

and Evaluation Systems, as well as looked for remedy for shortfalls in the systems design, implementation and maintenance. The general public was also benefited from knowing the importance of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems as management tools in development programmes. Analysing the effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in organizations might lead to the installation of the Systems in key decision-making centres of the management, policy makers, donor organizations and other stakeholders. Finally, it also added to existing literature on the subject matter and served as a basis for further research.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The study was conducted at SNV Ethiopia. It was undertaking many projects in agriculture, energy and wash sectors. The study period covered from its inception 2018 to 2019 when it was carried out. The study was limited to assessing the performance of monitoring and evaluation system and its gap at SNV Ethiopia and also saw the level of management commitment and relationship with employees training in monitoring and evaluation system. It was understood that performance of M&E was measured using the demand for M&E as a management tool by the management and aligned with the SNV PME manual. Employees at SNV Ethiopia with different level of management were targeted as respondents.

1.7. Organization of the Study

The study comprised five chapters. The first chapter was introduction that included background of the study and organization, statement of the problem, research question and objectives, significance and scope of the study. The following chapter was reviewed related literature. In chapter three, research methodology with detail components of research design, sample size and sampling procedures, data sources and data collection method and data analysis procedure, reliability, validity and ethical consideration were included. Chapter four was dealing with the findings with their discussion of the subject matter. Finally, the last chapter included summary of main findings, conclusion and recommendation.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter covered a review of literature related to the assessment of performance of monitoring and evaluation systems. It reviewed literature under three thematic areas that included tools and methods used in M & E systems, influence of management on M & E systems, the relationship between training of employees on M & E systems. It also included the empirical literature review and the conceptual frame of the study.

2.1. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

PMI (2001) explains that monitoring and control of project work is “the process of tracking, reviewing, and regulating the progress to meet the performance objectives defined in the project management plan”. It further explains that monitoring includes status reporting, progress measurement, and forecasting. Performance reports provide information on the project’s performance with regard to scope, schedule, cost, resources, quality, and risk, which can be used as inputs to other processes. Monitoring and evaluating of projects can be of great importance to various players including project sponsors as it would ensure similar projects are replicated elsewhere as witnessed in various projects undertaken by the financial sector which revolve around a few areas (Marangu, 2013). Project monitoring and evaluation effectiveness is dependent on the approach of monitoring and evaluation, the monitoring and evaluation competency, downward accountability and sound involvements of monitoring and evaluation in project life cycle. There are various monitoring and evaluation approaches that have been singled out through literature review.

There are many reasons why we should undertake M&E. The main ones are to know whether our project meets its objectives and whether it is leading to the desired effects among its beneficiaries (PMI, 2001). Through data gathering, we generate detailed information about the project’s progress and the results it has obtained. By doing M&E, we build greater transparency and accountability regarding the management of financial resources provided by donor agencies. Also the information we generate through M&E

provides project managers with a clearer basis for decision-making. Through M&E, we can find out if the project is running as initially planned and inform us about the strengths and weaknesses of project implementation. M&E allow us to detect unexpected and unintended results and effects of projects to identify the internal and external factors that influence the performance of the project. M&E document and explain the reasons why project activities do succeed or fail and informs how project planning and implementation can be improved in the future (Gorgens and Kusek, 2009).

Information supplied by Monitoring and Evaluation Systems is used as a crucial management tool in achieving results and meeting specific targets. Such information, which reveals the level of progress, performance and problems, is crucial to managers striving to achieve results. As Baum, *et al*, (1985) argue, these systems are actually one of the “techniques” for managing programme/ project implementation, especially because they provide an early warning to project management about potential or actual problems. Subsequently, when problems are identified, questions about assumptions and strategy behind a given programme or project may be raised.

This way, they aid development managers make choices and decisions on running projects and programmes. Monitoring and Evaluation Systems can also aid in promoting greater transparency and accountability within organizations and government (Rubin, 1995). Development professionals work to make positive change happen through their programs and initiatives. However, it is very hard for them to measure their projects’ impact and evaluate how efficient they are. The best development projects are identified by their impact and their efficiency, and the best way to measure these is through a good project monitoring and evaluation system.

2.2. Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Performance management is defined as the way organizations achieve their goals, usually accomplished with the activities carried out by individuals who are part of it (Flapper *et al.*, 1996). Also, performance management involves setting goals, managing to get and compare the achievements with the expected results (Poister, 2010). Knowing the

performance capability provides information to guide the planning and control process at organizational level, which is why their appropriate measurement increases its value. Performance measure is the process of quantifying action, within which the measurement corresponds to the process of quantification and action is what leads to results (Neely et al., 2005). According to Neely (1997) and others, performance measure is a method of data collection that can be used to inform and to benefit those who are responsible for the decision making.

Performance measure is an issue that is often discussed but rarely defined (Neely et al., 2005), and quantified by measures that are usually implemented through metrics or indicators. According to Flapper et al (1996) the indicators are important within an organization since they assess what should be measured and the control limits within which the performance should be. The level of performance that an organization reaches is based on the efficiency and effectiveness of the actions taken (Neely et al., 2005). The efficiency is based on the relationship between production and inputs, with a focus on process productivity measures and resource utilization, while the effectiveness is based on the idea of appropriate outputs of the process (Radnor and Barnes, 2007). Then, the management capacity in an organization is related to plan actions to accomplish their objectives and the actions executed after assessing the performance of the plan (efficiency and effectiveness).

The structural arrangements of an M&E system are important from a number of perspectives; one is the need to ensure objectivity, credibility and rigor of the M&E information that the system produces (Mackay, 2006). Khan (2003) concurred that the conceptual design of an M&E system is supposed to address issues with regard to the objectives of the system, competent authority, credibility of information, its management, dissemination and recycling into the planning process with special emphasis on community participation. M&E systems should be built in such a way that there is a demand for results information at every level that data are collected and analysed. Furthermore, clear roles, responsibilities, formal organizational and political lines of authority must be established (Kusek & Rist, 2004: 114). There is often a need for some structural support for M&E, such as a separate evaluation unit which at the very least needs one person who is the internal champion identified to make sure the system is implemented

and developed. Moreover, the systems must be consistent with the values at the heart of the organization and work in support of the strategy.

2.3. Tools and Methods Used in M&E Systems

Projects require different M&E needs depending on the operating context, implementing agency capacity and donor requirements. It is therefore important, when preparing an M&E plan to identify methods, procedures, and tools to be used to meet the projects' M&E needs (Chaplowe, 2008). Various M&E approaches and tools have been used in the development sphere. They have undergone changes in parallel with dominant development paradigms in the development discourse (Swaans, 2013). The main monitoring and evaluation approaches are currently based on the positivist and constructivist paradigms. The former are linear, rigid and quantitative approaches, while the later are more nonlinear and qualitative, allowing room for measuring complex process (Rogers, 2012). Some believe that a combination of these methods can work best, while others insist that fusion of these tools is not possible as they are completely different (Swaans, 2013).

There are many tools and techniques used to aid project managers in planning and controlling project activities which include: project selection and risk management tools and techniques; project initiation tools and techniques; project management planning tools and techniques; project management executing tools and techniques; and project management monitoring and controlling tools and techniques (Carstens, 2013). Organizations like United States Agency for International Development (USAID) policy on M & E require that their grant recipients document their M&E systems in a Performance management Plan, which is a tool designed to help them set up and manage the process of monitoring, analyzing, evaluating and reporting progress towards achieving objectives (USAID, 2014). The Performance management Plan also serves as a reference document that contains targets, a detailed definition of each project indicator, the methods and frequency of data collection, as well as who is responsible for collecting the data. It will also provide details on how data will be analyzed and evaluations required to complement monitoring data. A successful M&E system therefore should be modified to specific setting with allowance for flexibility and imagination. A well prepared and executed M&E

will contribute to both project outcomes and international standards of doing things (Jha *et al.*, 2010).

It is significant to note that although they have elaborated steps to follow through, they absolutely point out that, choosing amongst the numbers of steps to follow in setting out the M&E system must not be a threat but for the intention of decreasing uncertainty as to the sequence and activities necessary at each step, it is good to have a comprehensive and elaborated steps (Kusek & Rist, 2004). Therefore, in building such a system, it is vital to provide enough distinction amongst key tasks involved. Therefore according to (Kusek & Rist, 2004) the ten steps for designing an effective M&E systems are conducting a readiness assessment, agreeing on outcomes to monitor and evaluate, selecting key indicators to monitor outcome, baseline on data indicators, planning for improvement, monitoring for results, the role of evaluations, reporting your findings, using your findings as well as sustaining M&E system in the organization.

2.4. Influence of Management on M&E Systems

Project management is the team in charge of the project and it includes: project manager, project staff, M&E staff and implementing partners (CARE, 2012). To ensure the success of the M&E systems, the management needs to support it (World Bank, 2011). The Management team of the project is the backbone of the project itself. Through their actions and moves they determine the direction of the project. They have the right and responsibility to know what is happening in the program or project, which aspects need corrective action, what the results are expected, and which lessons can be learned and shared with one another, but they should not simply be recipients of monitoring and evaluation reports (IFAD, 2002). One effective way for management to contribute to the achievement of program or projects objectives is to be directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation process - in the formulation of critical questions and in the collection and analysis of data. This enables them to participate directly in the assessment of the relevance, performance, and success of the program or project and in recommending how to improve the quality of current and future interventions (UNDP, 2009).

The management plays a big role in budget allocation. Being the key decision makers in a project, they contribute significantly in deciding what should be given a priority in the budget. It calls for their commitment to the implementation of Monitoring and evaluation systems. It through this they will be able to look into it that adequate budget is set aside for this endeavour. However most project in Africa and other developing countries have suffered a great deal due to lack of budget to implement Monitoring and evaluation systems (IFAD, 2002). Most managers show little or no interest at all in the implementation of active Monitoring and evaluation systems (World Bank, 2000).

For an M&E to function as a managing tool, the project management and M&E staff need to identify and act on the project improvements. Also for the M&E to be more effective it should be coordinated by a unit within the project management in order to facilitate management's quick use of the M&E information (Guijt and Woodhill, 2002). It is the project management also that decides when project evaluation should be done (Welsh, 2005). If the project management fails to pay attention to the operations of the M&E, it diminishes its importance to the rest of the project staff. The M&E process hence provides useful information for decision-making to all levels of project management (Gaitano, 2011).

2.5. Training of Employees on M&E Systems

Any project is only as strong as its human resource capabilities. According to Musomba (2013), the technical team's ability to conduct evaluations and the value of participation of human resources in policymaking process, motivation to impact decisions can be huge determinants of how the M&E lessons are learnt, communicated and perceived. Evaluations need to be undertaken by individuals with the relevant skills, sound methods and adequate resources as well as transparency in order to secure their quality (Jones et al, 2009). This implies the need for the personnel to be highly trained in order to secure the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation. Some organizations have full-time staff members and others do not. Irrespective of whether there is a full-time staff member responsible for M&E, each organization implementing activities should nominate a person

to amend daily record keeping tools to ensure compliance with the national program monitoring system (UNDP, 2009)

The capacity of staff to design or carry out M&E tasks, the number of staff available, the time they have to devote to M&E, and the money available. The extent of these key resources will perhaps have the greatest influence over the conduct of M&E (Kamara and Muturi, 2017). In some cases projects can use outside help, such as consultants, to help set up or maintain M&E systems or approaches; but it is still by and large internal staff who will be the primary stakeholders (Gorgens, and Kusek, 2009). In addition, the money available to an organisation has to be spread across many different areas, and the requirement to keep overhead costs down often means that less money is spent on M&E than might be desirable (Kamara and Muturi, 2017).

2.6. Empirical Review

Globally, Monitoring and evaluation systems have been in existence since the ancient times Kusek (2004), however today, the requirements for M&E systems as a management tool to show performance has grown with demand by stakeholders for accountability and transparency through the application of the monitoring and evaluation by the NGOs and other institutions including the government (Gorgens and Kusek, 2009). Lewis & Kanji, (2009) observe that accountability is a complex challenge for NGOs, because they have multiple constituencies and need to be accountable in different ways to a variety of different groups and interests. According to Mackey (2010), a number of governments have devoted the effort necessary to build high-performing M&E systems.

Monitoring and evaluating of projects can be of great importance to various players including project sponsors as it would ensure similar projects are replicated elsewhere as witnessed in various projects undertaken by the financial sector which revolve around a few areas (Marangu, 2012).

M&E plan assists in managing the process of assessing and reporting progress towards achieving project outputs and outcomes, and to identify what evaluation questions will be

addressed through evaluation (USAID, 2014). Specifically, the M&E plan describes indicators, who is responsible for collecting them, what forms and tools will be used, and how the data will flow through the organization (Bullen, 2014). This means, without M&E plans, many M&E systems will fall into disuse because too little attention is given to detail at the planning stage (Sinister, 2015).

In the UK, the largest NGOs are struggling with the complex issues associated with aggregating their experience on large scale (Davies, 2000). In Yemen, M&E functions of a project were carried out by the M&E department of a government agency responsible for M&E in several projects using national guidelines. This agency had much experience and was able to commence project M&E activities at an early stage. However, the agency did not have direct access to the project's M&E resources and had limited funds. Obtaining authorization for activities and resources was a lengthy procedure. This affected M&E budgeting and adoption of M&E systems recommended by the project. The government agency did not prioritize M&E for this project and so the organizational structure was hindering effective adoption of M&E systems (Furman, 2001).

UNDP (2009) observes that staff entrusted with monitoring should have required technical expertise in the area. Among Donor funded projects in NGOs, Nyakundi (2014) found out that staff technical skills affect the implementation of M&E, in that necessary skills play a key role in providing functional advice in the development of appropriate results-based performance monitoring systems. There are simply too few people in most Sub-Saharan African countries with the necessary skills and capacity of designing and implementing M&E activities... as such many NGOs lack the technical expertise, knowledge and understanding of M&E (Emmanuel, 2015). Among NGOs implementing HIV/AIDS projects in Botswana, Muzinda (2007) found that implementing the monitoring and evaluation process was not effectively done due to, among other reasons, inadequate finances, lack of expertise, stringent and multi-donor reporting requirements. Although the study by Muzinda didn't elaborate on performance of the NGOs HIV projects in the country, the study showed that all the projects implemented by the local NGOs in Botswana were not effectively monitored and evaluated (Muzinda, 2007).

In government infrastructural projects in Kenya, study by Wanjiku (2015) noted inadequate training and M&E expertise observing the absence of M&E expertise such as design skills particularly Log Frame design, indicator setting, design of data collection instruments, with non-existent with data collection skills.

Limited investigations done on the area of monitoring and evaluation in Ethiopia at different places. Mekonen (2013) studied public business organizations monitoring and evaluation system in Addis Ababa. He found correlation of -0.597 between expectation and practices. Most of his respondents (90%) agreed that there is no separate budget for monitoring and evaluation system. The main challenges of Ethiopian Country Program Evaluation included: the program/project evaluation always presents constraints in terms of time and resources given for such evaluation, inconsistencies and limitations with the quality and comparability of data available with reared to coding and disbursements did not gives a clear understanding of resource use and limited evaluative data was available (ECPE, 2010).

A research was done by Sisay (2017) to evaluate the role of monitoring and evaluation on the success of projects at Save the Children. It was found that projects implemented by the organization generally were successful as a result of strong monitoring and evaluation system, competent monitoring and evaluation team, strong downward accountability mechanism and closely monitoring the projects at all stages of the project life cycle. Sisay (2017) also found that management support was a contributing factor for the success of the projects.

2.7. Conceptual Framework

Conceptual framework involved forming ideas about the relationship between variables in the study and showing the relationship graphically (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). In this research study, the independent variables were Tools and Methods, Management role and Level of training. Those variables in turn affected the state of Monitoring and evaluation systems in SNV Ethiopia and therefore, the dependent variable was performance of M&E systems that could not be directly controlled.

The conceptual framework showed the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable. The study showed how Tools and Methods, Management Influence, Training of employees influenced the performance of M&E systems. Tools and methods were those used in project initiation, planning execution and monitoring to ensure that controls were in place. To ensure success of M&E systems, the management needed to support it through strategic planning, tracking indicators and identifying areas of improvement. Equipping employees with specific skills through training was important in the M&E system. When those themes were blended to interlink, the outcome was performance of M&E systems.

Performance of monitoring and Evaluation system was measured in two dimensions that were: Demand for M&E as a management tool by the management and Aliment with the SNV PME manual. For the system to perform this, two indicators have to work.

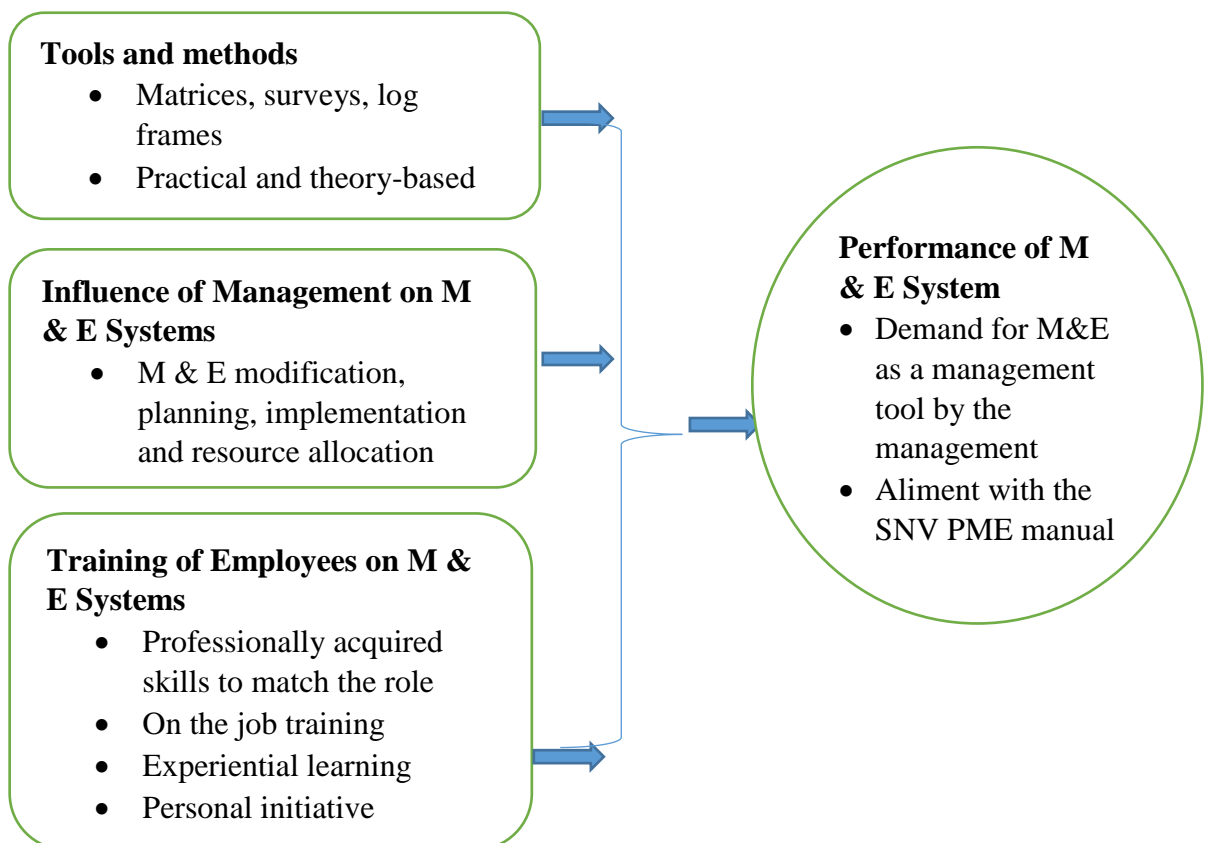


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework (Adopted from Charles and Humam, 2015 and developed by the researcher)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter hereunder, began with research design. It gave details on research design, target population, sample size, sampling procedures, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques, methods and instruments of data collection, pilot study, instrument reliability, instrument validity and ethical considerations of the study.

3.1. Research Design

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive research design in this study was key in describing the nature of the M&E system, the influence of training of personnel and management on M&E performance. A descriptive survey design allowed for an in-depth analysis and understanding of a particular phenomenon as it existed in the present condition (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). It also attempted to examine situations in order to establish what the norm is, i.e. what could be predicted to happen again under the same circumstances (Kothari, 2004). Thus, the research design in this case was throwing light on all points mentioned above keeping in view the objectives of the study and the resources available. However, it ensured the minimization of bias and maximization of reliability of the evidence collected. The design appropriately referred to as a survey design since it took into account all the steps involved in a survey concerning a phenomenon to be studied (Kothari, 2004).

In descriptive survey design, objectives were predetermined allowing data collection relevant and sufficient to the study problem (Kothari, 2004). The researcher was able to define clearly, what was needed to measure and found adequate methods for measuring it along with a clear cut definition of ‘population’ she wanted to study. Since the aim was to obtain complete and accurate information in the said studies, the procedure to be used was carefully planned. According to Kothari (2004), in descriptive survey design made enough provision for protection against bias and maximise reliability, with due concern for the economical completion of the research study. He also said several data collection methods were available for the purpose and the researcher may use one or more of these methods to a sample of individuals.

3.2. Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

The population under study was a total of 101 employees of SNV Ethiopia, Addis Ababa office working on 12 projects. The projects were all development projects in agriculture, energy and wash sectors. They were implemented in different part of the country. The profile of the projects was showed below in Table 1.

Table 1. Project Implemented by SNV Ethiopia

S.N	Name of projects	Project Period	Project Phase
1	Enhancing Dairy Sector Growth in Ethiopia (EDGET)	2013-2017	Closing
2	Gender and Youth Empowerment in Horticulture Markets (GYEM)	2016-2019	Closing
3	Horticulture Livelihood, Innovation and Food Safety in Ethiopia (Horti-LIFE)	2016-2018	Closing
4	Innovations Against Poverty (IAP)	2016-2020	Implementation
5	Livelihoods for Resilience Activity (GRAD II)	2017-2021	Implementation
6	Livelihoods Improvement for Women and Youth in Addis Ababa (LI-WAY)	2017-2022	Implementation
7	National Biogas Programme of Ethiopia (NBPE II)	2014-2018	Closing
8	Biogas Dissemination Scale-Up Programme (NBPE+)	2017-2022	Implementation
9	Inspiring Water Entrepreneurship in Tigray (iWET)	2017-2022	Implementation
10	WASH for Trachoma Elimination (WASHTRA)	2018-2021	Implementation
11	Sustainable Sanitation and Hygiene for All (SSH4A Este)	2017-2020	Implementation
12	Transform WASH (TWASH)	2017-2021	Implementation

(Source: SNV, 2017 and 2018 ChSA annual report)

Purposive sampling was used for the recruitment of participants for the study. The selection criteria for inclusion were professional who were working in the M&E unit, decision makers and who could articulate their experiences as it related to the phenomena being investigated. The study targeted 60 employees that were directly or indirectly involved in M&E activities. Out of which 5 were M&E officers, 12 were decision making

staff and 43 technical advisors. The rest of the employees had no clear knowledge and information on the organization's M&E activities. Thus including those staff in the study might lead to incorrect conclusion.

3.3. Methods and Instruments of Data Collection

Semi structured questionnaire and interview guide were used for collecting data. Questionnaire was used because it was easy to administer and at the same time it generated a large layout of needed data (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). Questionnaires are economical, ensure anonymity, and permit use of standardized questions, save time especially the self-administered as the respondents were given an ample time to think and fill the questionnaire at ease, hence minimizing errors. It was designed in sections and instructions was also given.

An interview guide was also used for elicit information from the senior management including project managers on the ways how monitoring and evaluation is being practiced and functional at SNV Ethiopia.

Document analysis was made to gather information that was not be captured in the responses in the questionnaires and others used. The Information was collected from paper documents as well as computer databases and policy documents from SNV Ethiopia. Document analysis had advantages over other data collection methods because the documents were expected to be complete, detailed, and consistent and well-structured (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). They also saved time since they were readily available. Both the primary and secondary sources helped to triangulate data from different perspectives regarding the research problem.

3.4. Data Analysis Procedures

This was the process of collecting, modeling and transforming data in order to highlight useful information, suggesting conclusions and supporting decision making (Cooper and Schindler, 2008). The data collected was examined and checked for completeness and

clarity. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive statistics including frequencies and percentages while qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis by counting various aspect of the content. Qualitative data was also transformed into quantitative data and analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) in accordance with the main objectives of the study. The data was then presented using frequency tables and charts.

3.5. Reliability

Reliability estimates the consistency of the measurements (Adams, et al, 2007). The reliability of the questionnaire was evaluated through Cronbach’s Alpha which measures internal consistency. Cronbach’s Alpha was established for every objective in order to determine if each scale would produce consistent results as shown in Table 2. The findings of the pilot study showed that all the four scales were reliable as their reliability values exceeded the acceptable threshold of 0.7 (Namdeo and Rout, 2016). According to Sekaran and Bougie (2010), reliability less than 0.6 are considered to be poor, those in the 0.7 range, acceptable, and those above 0.8 are good. The closer the reliability coefficient gets to 1.0, the better.

Table 2. Reliability Test

Scales	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of Items
Tools and Methods used in M&E system	0.846	12
Management Influence in M&E system	0.739	4
Employee training	0.722	4
Challenges of M&E system	0.766	7

(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

3.6. Validity

The data collecting tool was pretested using few number of respondents before the actual data collection activities started. Thus the validity of the data collection instrument was tested. Using the questionnaires and interview guide, three M&E staff of SNV Ethiopia

was interviewed and accordingly questions were modified, removed or added after evaluating the responses received from the interview.

3.7. Ethical Considerations

Fulfilling the ethical duty of confidentiality was essential to the trust relationship between researcher and participants, and to the integrity of the research project. Respondents was asked their willingness to participate in this study. Also to protect the information from unauthorized access, use, disclosure, modification, loss or theft, appropriate cautions was taken. Each respondent was coded appropriately to increase the confidentiality of their responses.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presented data analysis and interpretation of the research findings. The study targeted 60 respondents drawn from 12 project managers, 5 M&E officer and 43 technical advisors. All respondents replied and returned their questionnaires, therefore, the response rate was excellent enough (100%) for analysis and reporting. According to Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50% is adequate for analysis and reporting, while a response rate of 70% and over is excellent.

The chapter includes demographic information of the respondents, study responses on the assessment of monitoring and evaluation system and performance at SNV Ethiopia country office and also findings on four key objectives areas of the study were presented and interpreted using frequency tables, pie charts and bar graphs.

4.1. Research Findings

4.1.1. Demographic Data of Respondents

The result showed that more than half of the respondents, 53% were of age bracket 31-40 years. A sizeable number, 25% were between 41-50years while 13% and 8% of the respondents were above 50 and below 30 years respectively. The findings therefore revealed that majority of people working on projects at SNV were of productive age bracket and are mature people who were advantaged with knowledge in M&E and thus can help in assessing the performance of M & E systems in SNV Ethiopia.

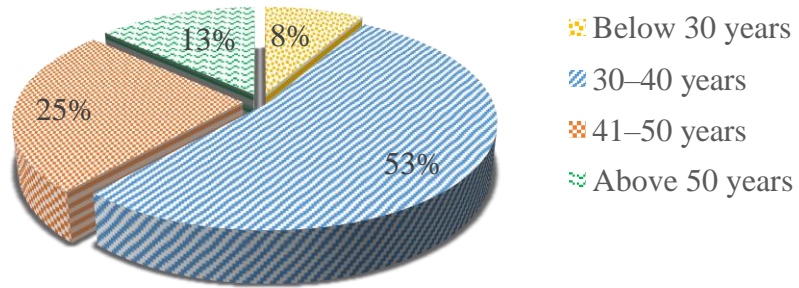


Figure 2. Distribution of Respondents by Age
 (Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

4.1.2. Education Level of Respondents

From the findings, most of the respondents, 90% indicated that they had achieved Masters and above degrees as their education level, while 10% attained degree certificates. This implied that almost all of the employees of SNV attained college training, indicating that they might have the knowledge, capacity, skills and management expertise to easily understand and conduct M & E activities well.

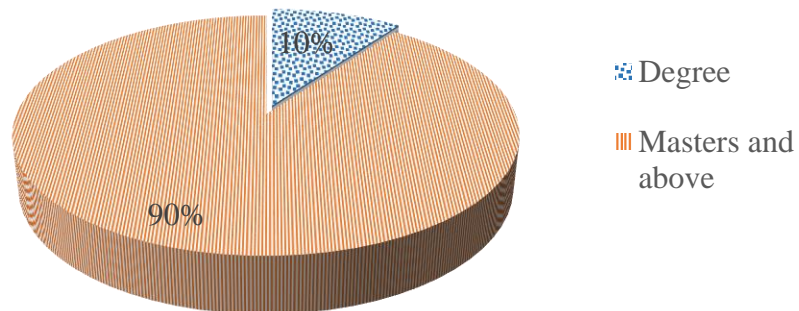


Figure 3. Level of Education of the Respondents
 (Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

4.1.3. Practice of M&E in Projects

4.1.3.1. Involvement in Conducting M&E

The study found out the distribution of respondents' involvement in conducting M&E activities in any projects at SNV. Most of the respondents, 70% stated to have conducted monitoring and evaluation of projects, while 30% did not conducted monitoring and evaluation of projects at SNV. These findings were indicative that employees who worked at SNV Projects had a vast experience in conducting M&E of projects.

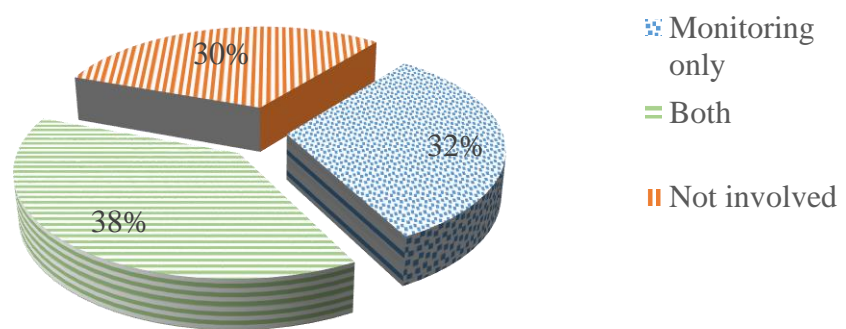


Figure 4. Involvement in Conducting M & E of Any Project at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

4.1.3.2. Reason for Doing M&E

The study indicated that the majority of the respondents, above 70% agreed with the different reasons listed in Table 3 below for conducting M&E at SNV Ethiopia. The reasons included project improvement, ensuring lessons from existing projects, compliance to donors and management, impact measurement, attract additional funding, portfolio performance management and improve value for money. Most of the respondents, 75% and 60% were strongly agreed that SNV was conducting M&E to meet donors demand and improvement of project implementation respectively. Reasonably, 58.3% of respondents strongly agreed that ensuring lessons learnt from existing projects was the other main reason for conducting M&E at SNV, while 53.3% strongly agreed with impact measurement. The other reason for doing M&E that could not be ignored was to attract additional funding as indicated by 40% of the respondents.

Table 3. Reasons for Conducting M&E at SNV

Reason for doing M&E	Strongly disagree %	Disagree %	Neutral %	Agree %	Strongly agree %
Project improvement	3.3	3.3	5.0	28.3	60.0
Ensuring lessons from existing projects		1.7	13.3	26.7	58.3
Accountability: To meet donor demands			6.7	18.3	75.0
Portfolio performance management	1.7	3.3	23.3	38.3	33.3
Impact Measurement	1.7		16.7	28.3	53.3
Compliance (other than donor)	1.7		16.7	40.0	41.7
Improve Value for Money	1.7	6.7	21.7	40.0	30.0
Accountability to management	1.7	3.3	11.7	56.7	26.7
To attract additional funding	1.7	1.7	16.7	40.0	40.0

(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

Many organizations view M&E as a donor requirement rather than a management tool for reviewing progress and identifying and correcting problems in planning or implementation of projects. Differently, SNV conducted M&E not only to comply to donors' requirement but also as a management tool. It used M&E for the improvement of project implementation, ensuring lessons learnt from existing projects and impact measurement. Gorgens and Kusek (2009) in their study showed the requirements for M&E systems as a management tool to show performance has grown with demand by stakeholders for accountability and transparency. Another also indicated M&E were done simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most funding agencies without the intention of using them as a mechanism of ensuring the success of the projects (Biwott *et al.*, 2017). Donors are certainly entitled to know whether their money is properly spent but the primary use

of M&E should be for the organisation or project itself to see how it is performing and to learn how to do it better.

SNV as a project based organization it has to attract additional funding sources. To this end some respondents indicated the organization did M&E to be appealing for additional funding sources.

4.1.3.3. Use of M & E Guidelines in Projects

From the study it was observed that most of the targeted staffs, 73% knew that SNV has planning, monitoring and evaluation guideline, however there were still a few respondents, 27% who did not have information about the guideline (Figure 5).

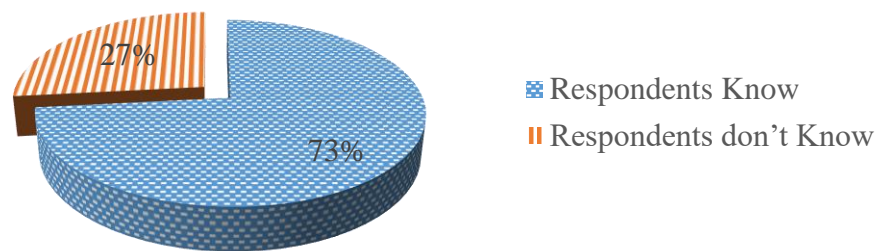


Figure 5. Employees Awareness on SNV's PME Guide
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

During the study respondents were asked about the mostly utilized M&E guideline in their projects at SNV. Around half of the responders, 48% confirmed that donor monitoring and evaluation guidelines were mostly used in projects implemented by SNV Ethiopia. The next mostly used M&E guideline by the projects was SNV's PME, as it was reported by 40% of the respondents (Figure 6). There were other guidelines including international and other NGO's guides that were used by projects at SNV as trailed by very few participants at 5% and 2% respectively.

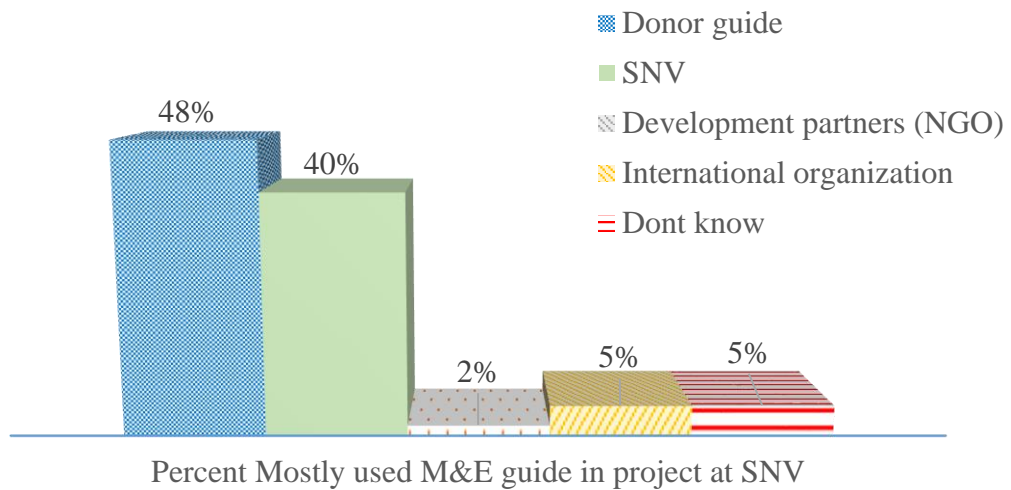


Figure 6. Utilization of M&E Guide
 (Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The study revealed that SNV had a planning, monitoring and evaluation guideline and the majority of the respondents knew it. This showed that the majority was using it or referring while they were conducting M&E activities. However there were a few respondents did not know if SNV had PME manual. Though the management believed that as a project team working to achieve common corporate goal, all the project staff should have known about the PME manual. There were also few respondents, 5%, who did not know the guideline their project team was following. At SNV, projects used either donors' or the organization's guideline for planning, monitoring and evaluation of projects. While the donor was leading, as SNV they had internal PME objectives and requirements that every project was expected to respect as much as possible (SNV, 2016). Developing an M&E plan, tools and guideline documents is the necessary foundation for building an M&E system (UNDP, 2009).

4.1.3.4. Responsibility of M&E

Monitoring and evaluation was part of all projects at SNV and according to the study it was a responsibility of different groups including dedicated staff in the organization and project, project management, consortium members, outsourced companies, donor assigned contracts and government (Figure 7). The responsibility was depended on the nature of the project. From the result, 70% and 60% of the respondents, reported that monitoring

activities of projects at SNV were done by dedicated projects staffs and project management. Project monitoring was also done by consortium members and the dedicated staff in the organization as reported by 38% and 33% of the respondents respectively.

During the study, around 61% of the respondents indicated that project evaluation activities were mostly done by outsourced contracts, but still dedicated staffs in the project and SNV were responsible for evaluation activities as it was stated by 44% and 40% of respondents respectively (Figure 7). Others, 32%, 32% and 21% indicated that project management, consortium members and donor assigned contracts also involved in project evaluation activities.

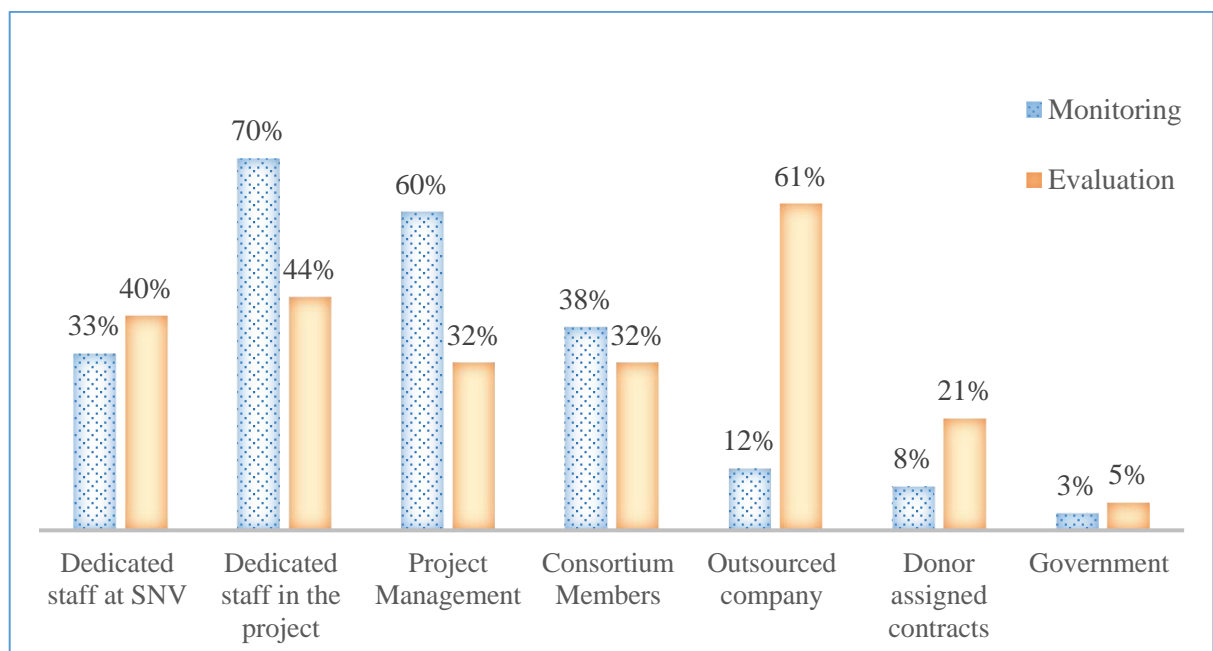


Figure 7. Responsibility of M&E Activities in Projects at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The responsibility of monitoring activities was mainly done for dedicated staff in the project and the project management while evaluation activities most of the time were left for outsourced contracts. Similarly, KPMG (2014) indicated that more frequently used evaluation approaches include commissioned consultancy.

4.1.4. Tools and Methods used in M&E systems at SNV

The study sought to find out the distribution of the respondents in terms of tools and methods used in M & E system at SNV. The findings are explained in Table 4 below. As the result showed, more than 70% the respondents indicated a number of planning, monitoring and evaluation tools listed below in the table were used at SNV Ethiopia. From the findings, majority of the respondents, 100%, 93%, 92%, 92% and 88% confirmed that reporting tools, planning and reporting schedule, theory of change, performance indicators and results chains/ impact analysis respectively, were widely used in M & E systems, besides 85% of respondents indicated to have used beneficiaries' feedbacks approaches. There were still more tools used in M&E system at SNV including indirect/proxy indicators, logical frameworks, cost benefit analysis as reported by 75%, 73% and 73% of the respondents respectively.

Table 4. Tools and Methods Used in M&E System at SNV

Tools used	Frequency	Percent
Logical frameworks	44	73
Theory of change	55	92
Results chains/impact analysis	53	88
Reporting tools	60	100
Planning and reporting schedule	56	93
M&E Matrix/ M&E plan/ Measurement plan	43	72
Performance indicators	55	92
Beneficiary feedback	51	85
Indirect/proxy indicators	45	75
Cost benefit analysis	44	73

(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

There is a range of tools and methods that might be applied to monitoring and evaluation of projects, programmes, outcomes and any other programmatic activity. Those who manage programmes and projects must determine the correct mix of tools and approaches

for each project (UNDP, 2009). At SNV, projects used different types of tools and methods depending on their nature and size. World Bank (2002) indicated that the choice of which to use in a given context depended on considerations such as the purpose for which M&E is intended, the main stakeholders, how quickly the information is needed and the cost. Almost all projects used theory of change (ToC), which was their most common tool for developing or sharing the concept of an intervention logic with partners, donors, clients and other stakeholders. Use of ToC have been researched by different scholars. According to Auriacombe (2011) using a theory of change as part of the process of developing a policy, as well as the programme logic to unpack the different stages of the policy process, made it easier to develop and implement policy. Theory of change was best seen as theory of change thought to be a flexible approach to think through fundamental issues (Vogel, 2012). Vogel (2012) also realized theory of change to be applied well, demanded an institutional willingness to be realistic and flexible in programming responses, both at the design stage and, more importantly, in implementation and performance management. Another study by KPMG (2014) showed that theory of change and results chains were more frequently used and helped to explain how interventions were having an impact. The same study also found that performance indicators and logical frameworks were the most frequently used techniques in development sectors.

4.1.4.1. Suitability of Tools and Methods

Further, the study diagnosed the respondents to rate the suitability of the tools that they had preferred. They were able to rate in a scale of 1 - 5, from extremes of “most suitable” to “not suitable” as it was showed in the figure below.

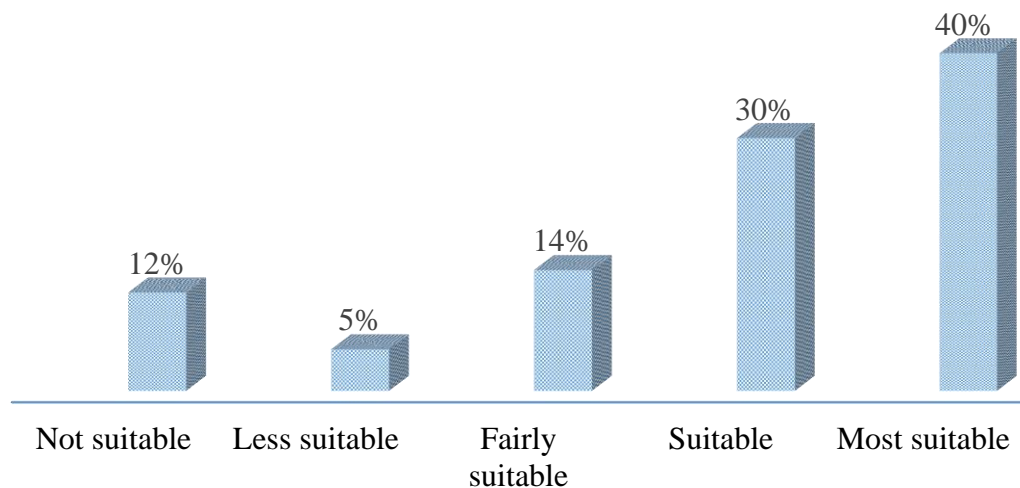


Figure 8. Suitability of Tools and Methods
 (Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

From the findings above, 40% of respondents were sure that the tools and methods used in the projects at SNV Ethiopia were most suitable, still 30% felt that the tools and approaches were suitable to use (Figure 8). Around 14% were fairly comfortable with the tools used, while those who felt that the tools and methods used were less suitable and not suitable at 5% and 12% respectively.

The tools and methods used at SNV was confirmed to be suitable by most of the respondents, which was an advantage for the success of M&E activities of the projects. In line with this, Kusek and Rist (2004) findings that concluded that M &E tools like log frames was user friendly to M&E officers working for projects in sub-Saharan Africa. Vogel (2012) in the summary explained the suitability of theory of change, if handled lightly as a flexible way to think through fundamental questions about programmes, could create better informed hypotheses of change, inspire innovations and improvements in programme strategies, and strengthen the potential of programmes to support the development outcomes they seek.

4.1.4.2. Use ICT and its Challenges

The extent of new technology applications in monitoring and evaluation system was as yet in its relative infancy. In the current study respondents rated use of information and

communication technology (ICT) enabled tools in M&E system at SNV. As shown in Figure 9 ICT enabled tools were “never/rarely” used by the majority of respondents. Open source data based was the most frequently used technique as reported by 32% of the respondents. Few respondents, 20% indicated that few projects were developing data entry systems using mobile phones and web based survey.

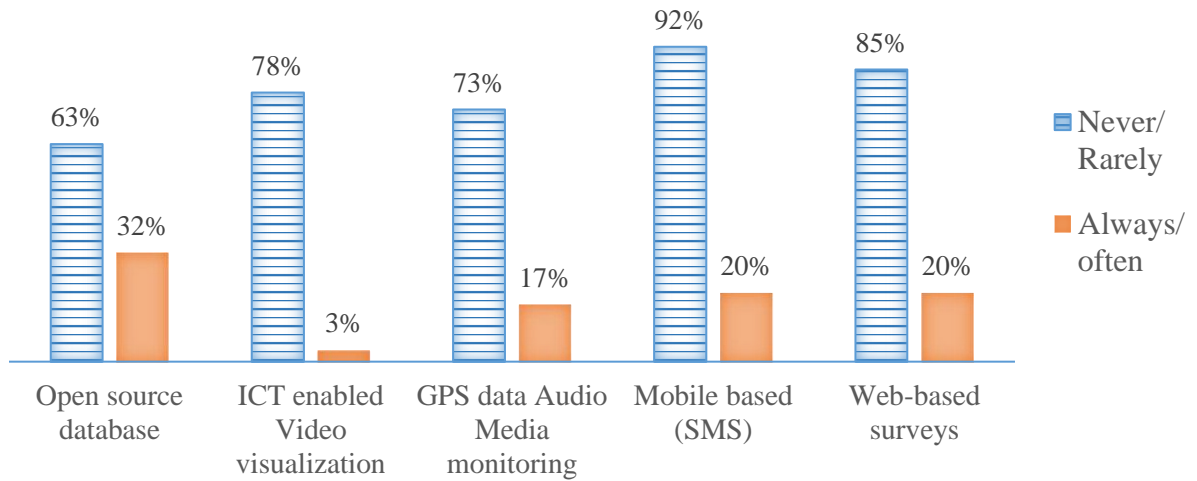


Figure 9. Use of ICT Enabled Tools in M&E System at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

Lack of skilled personnel was a major challenge for a majority of respondents, 57% in using ICT enabled tools in projects M&E system at SNV (Figure 10). Other including accessing data, accessing finance source and getting meaningful information from analysis were identified as key factors that impeded greater adoption of technology by 49%, 45% and 30% of the respondents respectively.

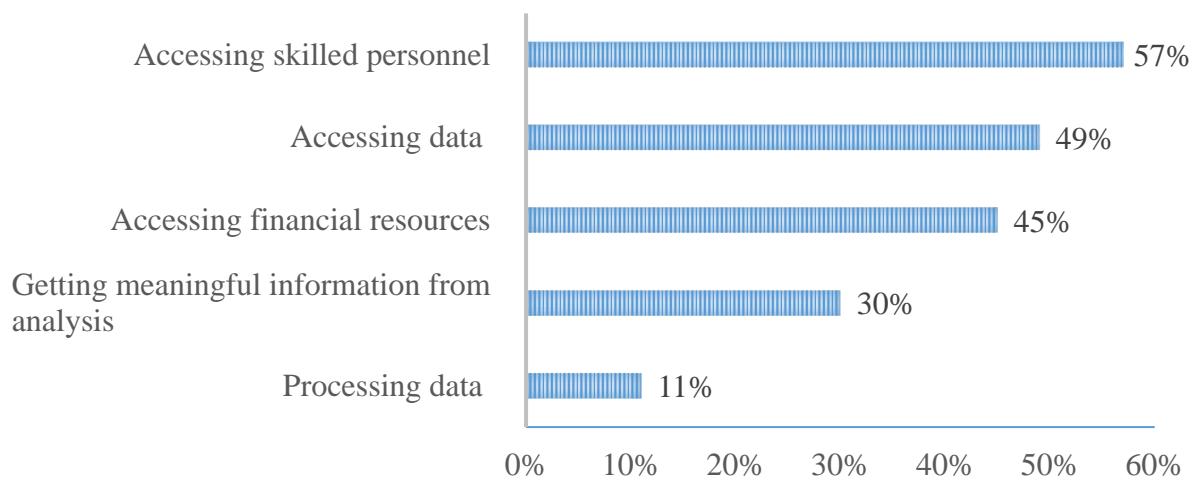


Figure 10. Challenges in Introducing ICT Enabled Tools in M&E System at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

SNV appeared to be limited in their use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled tools due to challenges accessing data lack of skilled personnel in using technologies. Though in the PME manual of SNV, it was clearly indicated that SNV wanted to encourage projects to use electronic data collection tools, instead of business as usual. To facilitate that, SNV entered into a strategic partnership with Akvo in 2015 aimed at innovating and spreading the use of mobile applications in a range of SNV products and programs, as well as some technology and software development (SNV-PME, 2016). The use of new technology in M&E appeared to lag behind other sectors of development which have more readily adopted new technologies including mobile-based solutions, crowd-sourcing, and location-based reporting applications (KPMG, 2014).

4.1.5. Management Influence

Different ways of management influence were shown in figure 11. From the findings, 92% of respondents affirmed that the management was very much interested in using M&E feedbacks in decision making processes. Besides 70% and 63% of respondents confirmed that it was happy to allocate finance and human resources respectively, for purposes of conducting the M&E, meaning their influence was felt in the resource allocation phase, while 62% agreed that management influenced M&E through the implementation phase.

Some respondents, 57% said that management influenced M&E systems in the planning phase as well as determining M&E place in the organizational structure. Those who felt that management influenced M & E systems in the design and modification phases followed on at 42% and 40% respectively.

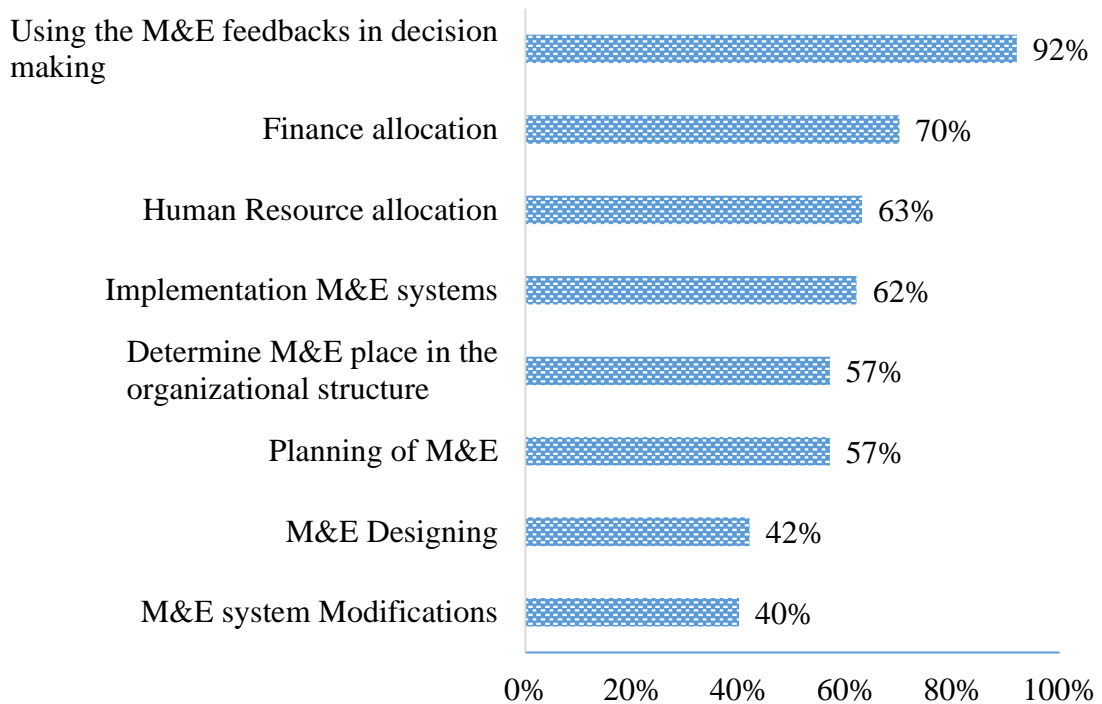


Figure 11. Ways of Management Influences on M&E System at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The researcher sought to find out the use of M&E results in improvements in current and future programs. The respondents were asked to rate their feelings in a 1 – 5 scale from “Never” to “Always”. The findings were listed below in Figure 12. From the result, about 38% of the respondents felt that SNV management was always committed to use the results of M&E for improvements of current and future projects implemented by the organization. Some, 25% still agreed that the management often used the results for project improvement, while 33% rated their feelings as sometimes.

The Management team of the project is the backbone of the project itself (World Bank, 2011). To ensure the success of the M&E systems, the management needs to support it.

The current study revealed that, at SNV monitoring and evaluation were effective tools for enriching the quality of interventions through their role in decision making and learning as affirmed by the majority of the respondents. This result was further investigated that the management was using the feedback for learning often. Learning from M&E results not only helps improve results from existing programmes and projects, but also enhances the capacity of the organization and individuals to make better decisions in the future and improves the formulation of future programmes and projects (UNDP, 2009). Besides the management was happy to allocate resources for the purpose of conducting M&E in projects at SNV. These finding was in congruent with Njama (2015) findings that leadership influenced M & E systems and their outcomes through the allocation of resources in the beginning of every development project.

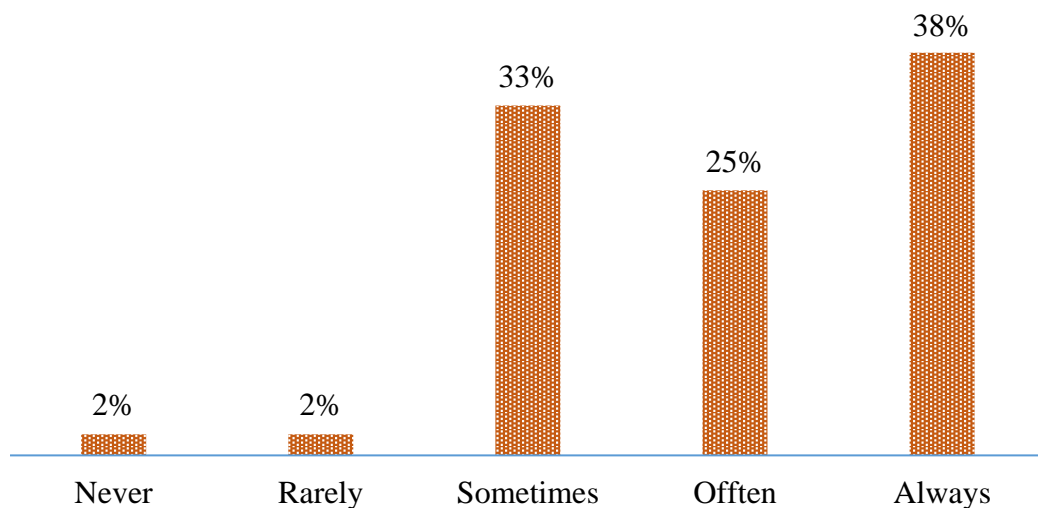


Figure 12. Use of M&E Result in Improvements in current and Future programs at SNV (Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The study showed that management influence cannot be overlooked when assessing M&E systems, more than half of the respondents, at 64% recognized that management influenced M&E systems at SNV at large and very large extent while 18% of the respondents agreed moderately (Table 5). Very few population felt that the management influence was little extent, at 17% while a less significant number, 12% of respondents were convinced that the management did not influence M&E systems.

Table 5. Extent of Management Influence on M&E Systems at SNV

Extent of management influence	Frequency	Percent
Very large extent	17	28
Large extent	21	36
Some extent	11	18
Little extent	4	6
Not at all	7	12

(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

From the findings, it was observed that the overall management influence on M&E system at SNV was positively effective as indicated by 48% of the respondents, while 17% felt as very effective (Figure 13). However, there was a segment of 20% of the respondents, who maintained that the management had influence on M&E system at SNV, although this was seen as ineffective. Few respondent, at 15% were not sure about the effectiveness of the management influence.

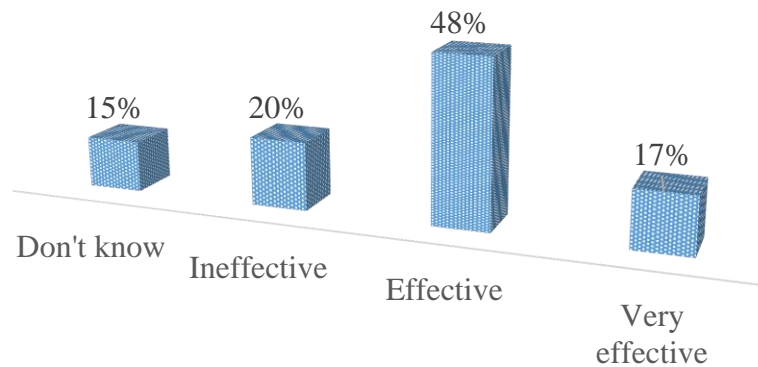


Figure 13. Effectiveness of Overall Management Influence on M&E Systems at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The findings proved that management influence could not be ignored when assessing M&E systems at large extent and more than half of the respondents believed that overall management influence was effective. Only a lesser population were certain that the management influence did not influence M&E systems and also few thought it was

ineffective. Similarly, UNDP (2009) affirmed the large extent to which management influenced M&E systems in development programmes of less developed countries.

4.1.6. Training of Employee

From the findings, about 57% of the respondents reported that they did not take any training on monitoring and evaluation. Those groups assumed lack of training and experience in monitoring and evaluation would limit performance of M&E in the projects (Figure 14). However, it was observed that 20% of the respondents were professional by training and 13% acquired their M&E skill through induction. Those who acquired their skill though especial training were trailed at 5%, while 5% confirmed to have gained their M & E skills by continuous practice of M&E activities hence gaining their skills through work experience.

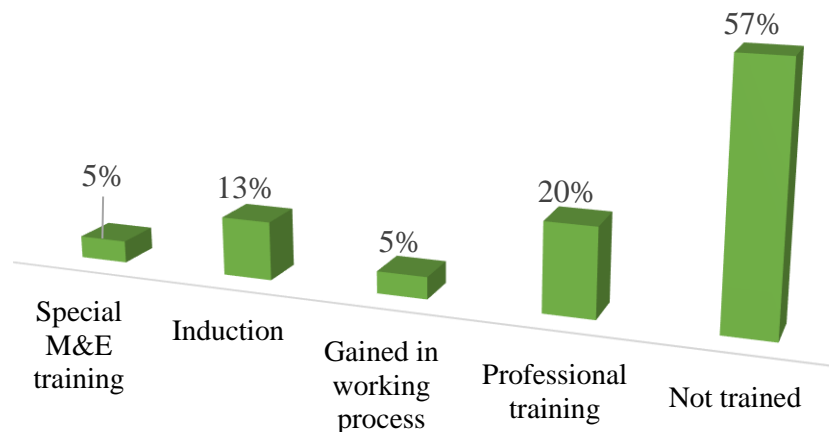


Figure 14. Training of Employee on M&E at SNV
(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

At SNV according to most of the respondents, they did not take any training on monitoring and evaluation and assumed lack of training and experience would limit performance of M&E in the projects. A study on government projects in Kenya indicated that lack of proper training on M&E and inappropriate tools inhibit proper monitoring and evaluation. The study found that untrained staff had a challenge in implementation of M&E thus poor results whereas trained and knowledgeable teams or stakeholders were key in ensuring

quality M&E and implementation of all projects (Yusuf *et al*, 2017). Capacity building and Training programmes should be enhanced so as to impart skills and knowledge on M&E activities and how to apply its tools or practices. This fact resembled to Tadesse *et al*. (2013) who put more insist on the provision of trainings and refresher training in order to scale up the capacity of water committee to manage the water schemes properly in order to sustain for a long time.

4.1.7. Challenges of M&E Activities

The study sought to identify the possible challenges that the respondents had felt the organization has faced so far in relation to its M&E activities. The findings were shown in Table 6 below. The main challenge as indicated by the 72% of the respondents was limited dedicated staff for monitoring and evaluation activities at SNV followed by lack of training of employees on M&E as reported by 51% of the respondents. Those who felt that the tools and methods used in M&E system were 12%, while 8% had worries of limited stakeholder involvement in projects M&E activities at SNV.

Table 6. Challenges of M&E System at SNV

Difficulties experienced	Frequency	Percent of Cases
Tools and Methods used	7	12%
Lack of Training of employees on M&E	31	51%
Limited stakeholders involvement	5	8%
Limited staffs	43	72%

(Source: Own Survey, April 2019)

The findings revealed that there were challenges to some extent facing the M&E at SNV Ethiopia, lack of training of employees on M&E, limited dedicated staff for M&E activities, the tools and methods used and limited stakeholder involvement in projects M&E activities. The challenges facing the implementation of M&E from the research finding were somehow similar to other findings including the study by Nyakundi (2014) which revealed the several challenges including, the presence of small level of

stakeholder's involvement or participation in the implementation of M&E of projects, the inadequate allocation of budget for M&E, lack of trained M&E staffs and shortage of M&E resources and facilities, absence of technical skills on M&E and poor prepared project reports.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presented a summary, conclusion and recommendations of the study in terms of the data which have been collected and analysed with regard to the research questions and objectives.

5.1. Summary of Key Findings

The purposes of the study were to explore whether the Monitoring and evaluation tools used at SNV Ethiopia were suitable, establish the influence of management on Performance of Monitoring and evaluation systems, determine the relationship between training of employees on Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation and identify gaps in the existing monitoring and evaluation system at SNV Ethiopia.

The main reason of conducting M&E at SNV Ethiopia were to meet donors demand and improvement of project implementation as reported by 75% and 60% of the respondents respectively. All projects at SNV followed M&E guideline. According to 48 % and 40% of the respondents projects used donor and SNV's monitoring and evaluation guidelines respectively. There were other reason including ensuring lessons learnt from existing projects and impact measurement followed by attracting additional funding. SNV Ethiopia used a range of tools and methods to conduct M&E in its projects. In the order of popularity, they ranged from reporting tools, planning and reporting schedule, theory of change, performance indicators and results chains, beneficiaries' feedbacks, proxy indicators, logical frameworks, cost benefit and M&E matrix. Further, the study diagnosed the suitability of the tools and methods. They were found to be most suitable and suitable to use as per 40% and 30% of respondents, respectively. The extent of new technology applications in monitoring and evaluation system was as yet in its relative infancy due to lack of skilled personnel and accessing data.

In regards to management influence on M&E systems, the result revealed that management used the feedbacks of M&E for learning more often. They were happy to allocate resources for M & E assessments. From the majority endorsement of the large extent of management

influence in M&E activities. The study stated the fact that management's role in determining what can be achieved in implementation, strengthening and sustainability of M&E systems was prospective. The study also found that the management's level of commitment determined the great extent to which the effectiveness of M&E systems would go.

The study found that about 57% of the respondents did not take any training on monitoring and evaluation. They assumed lack of training and experience in monitoring and evaluation would limit performance of M&E in the projects.

The findings revealed that there were challenges to some extent facing the M&E at SNV Ethiopia, lack of training of employees on M&E, limited dedicated staff for M&E activities, the tools and methods used and limited stakeholder involvement in projects M&E activities.

5.2. Conclusion

Based on research findings of this study conclusions were drawn. At SNV Ethiopia M&E was conducted not only to comply with donors' requirement but also as a management tool to improve the performance of the current as well as future project implementations. So, project managers would have clearer basis for better decision-making and also SNV can build greater transparency and accountability regarding the management of financial resources provided by donor agencies. The tools and methods applied in M&E system were also reported to be suitable, which proved the good performance of M&E system in the organization in one hand. On the other hand, only a small number of employees were well versed with M&E tools and methods. Hence, some respondent also failed to explain about tools and methods used in their projects.

Management influence on M & E systems was high in use of M&E results and resource allocation. A good management would put up with a good M&E system. A good monitoring and Evaluation system can also inform managers on what policies or programs have been more or less successful in terms of their outcomes and what level of resources

they might merit. So, it was worth mention that SNV Ethiopia was in the right track to establish a good M&E systems as a result of a good management influence.

The results showed that training of project staffs on M&E skills was almost negligible. Though, trained and knowledgeable teams might be key in ensuring quality M&E and implementation of all projects on keys issues like quality feedback and information on program planning and design. The study found that untrained staff had a challenge in implementation of M&E. Thus absence of regular trainings and capacity building programmes given to SNV project staffs so as to have adequate skills might limit the performance of monitoring and evaluation in the projects.

The study identified major challenges in implementing the M&E system at SNV. The main factors that the organization should give priority in order to improve its performance of M&E system included lack of training of employees on M&E, limited M&E dedicated staff for each project as well as at the organization, limited use of ICT enabled tools and methods and limited stakeholder involvement in projects M&E activities.

5.3. Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusion, recommendations were made by the researcher to take the performance of the M&E system a step forward. SNV Ethiopia should invest in upgrading the M&E system by introducing information communication technologies (ICT) enabled tools and methods. SNV could strengthen use of Akvo Flow as it was indicated in its PME manual. Akvo Flow was recommended to be effective but not functioning currently.

There should be an explicit interest of top managers in designing of M&E systems of projects. The top management and project managers should build legitimacy or assist prioritization of M&E with core activities.

The M&E unit should be supported by human and financial resources to conduct strategic and corporate evaluations. The role of M&E administrator is necessary in order to align

and harmonize the M&E system of each project then ensure that M&E activities are well executed and results communicated to form part in decision making and future planning.

SNV looked the M&E practice as a collective responsibility in the organization hence, managers and advisors involved in the development work perform the M&E activities. Therefore, it should be part of the organizations policy to train project managers and other project staffs for the M&E functions aimed at creating better understanding of the practice. This would encourage them to use the tools often and correctly to coach sustainability of the intention of the projects implemented.

5.4. Limitation of the Study

The study was conducted at SNV Ethiopia that is undertaking many projects in three different sectors, namely Wash, Agriculture and Energy. The major limitation of the study was inadequate number of respondents from each projects, as all active projects were targeted for the study. The researcher targeted all appropriate respondents to minimize the error resulted from small number of sample size.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A. Questionnaire for M&E Expert and Technical Advisors

St. Mary's University
School of Post Graduate Study
Questionnaire on: Assessment of Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation
system's at SNV Ethiopia country office

SECTION I: Introduction

Dear Respondent,

This questionnaire is prepared to collect information on “**Assessment of Performance of Monitoring and Evaluation system's at SNV Ethiopia country office**”. The general objective of the research is to assess performance of monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV Ethiopia. The information collected through this questionnaire will be treated with confidentiality and used for academic purpose and might also be used for improving the M&E system at SNV.

Kindly take a moment to answer all the questions as accurately as possible. Should you have any concern or need clarity you may ask me through my email: rahel924@gmail.com or Cell phone: 0911162865.

SECTION II: General Information: Please put X in the bracket

- 1) Gender: 1. Male () 2. Female ()
- 2) Age: Below 30 years () 30–40 years () 41–50 years () Above 50 years ()
- 3) Give your Level of Education
 - a. Secondary () b. Certificate () c. Diploma () d. Degree () e. Masters and above ()
- 4) Which project you are working for? Please Specify.....
- 5) What is your current position in the project at SNV?
 - a. Monitoring & Evaluation Officer () b. Project manager () c. Technical Advisor ()
 - d. Field Officer () e. Others ()

Specify.....

- 6) Have you been involved in conducting monitoring and evaluation of any project at SNV?
Yes () No ()

If yes which one did you conduct? A. Monitoring () B. Evaluation ()
 C. Both () Which project? Please
 specify.....

SECTION III: Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) system at SNV Ethiopia

- 1) Is M&E part of the project you are working in? Yes () No ()
- 2) What are the main reasons why SNV conducts formal monitoring and evaluations? Indicate your feeling in each reasons by:

Reasons for doing M&E	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Project improvement					
To ensure lessons are learned from existing projects					
Accountability: To meet donor demands					
Portfolio performance management					
Impact Measurement					
Compliance (other than donor)					
Improve Value for Money					
Accountability to board/management					
To attract additional funding					

- 3) Who does monitoring and evaluation in your project?

SN	Type of assigned team	Monitoring	Evaluation
1	Dedicated staff at SNV		
2	Dedicated staff in your project		
3	Project Management		
4	Consortium Members		
5	Outsourced company		
6	Donor assigned contracts		
7	Others please specify.....		

- 4) Do you know that SNV has a Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) manual? Yes () No ()
- 5) Do you follow SNV PME manual when conducting M&E? Yes () No ()
- 6) If NO please tick appropriately which one mostly is used in your project?
 - i) Donor guide (funding your project) ()

- ii) Other Development partners (NGO) guide ()
- iii) International organization (World Bank, OECD, UN...) ()
- iv) Others () Please specify

7) Do you use the results of M&E to result in improvements in current and future programs? Please rate your feelings

- a) Always b) Often c) Sometimes d) Rarely e) Never

8) If NEVER or RARELY, What would you say are the main challenges in improving your project and systems using M&E results?

- i) _____
- ii) _____
- iii) _____
- iv) _____

SECTION IV: Tools and Methods used by M&E in your project at SNV Ethiopia

1) What are some of the tools and methods used in Monitoring and evaluation systems? Indicate suitability/applicability of each techniques:

Tools and Methods	Most suitable	Suitable	Fairly suitable	Less suitable	Not suitable
Logical frameworks					
Theory of change					
Results chains/impact analysis					
Reporting tools					
Planning tools					
Planning and reporting schedule					
M&E Matrix/ M&E plan/ Measurement plan					
Performance indicators					
Focus groups					
Beneficiary feedback					
Indirect/proxy indicators					
Cost benefit analysis					
Others you recommend:					

2) Indicate frequency of application of each techniques used in Monitoring and evaluation systems

Tools and Methods	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
Logical frameworks					
Reporting tools					
Planning tools					

Planning and reporting schedule					
M&E Matrix/ M&E plan/ Measurement plan					
Performance indicators					
Focus groups					
Theory of change					
Beneficiary feedback					
Indirect/proxy indicators					
Results chains/impact analysis					
Cost benefit analysis					
Others you recommend:					

3) Do you think there is any difficulty experienced in using the M&E Tools and Methods used by your project at SNV? Yes () No ()

4) If yes, what do you think is contributing to the difficulty?

- i) The tools and Methods used ()
- ii) Influence of Management ()
- iii) Lack of Training of employees on M&E systems ()
- iv) Limited stakeholders involvement ()
- v) Limited staffs ()
- vi) Others () Please

Specify.....

5) Which information and communication technology (ICT) enabled tools do you use to collect, manage and analyse data for monitoring and evaluation purposes? Please rate the following technologies

ICT tools	Always	Often	Sometimes	Rarely	Never
ICT enabled Video visualization					
GPS data Audio Media monitoring					
Mobile based (e.g., SMS)					
Open source database					
Web-based surveys					
Others (specify)					

6) What would you say are the main challenges and problems in introducing those technologies into your M&E system?

- i. Accessing data ()
- ii. Getting meaningful information from the analysis ()
- iii. Processing data ()
- iv. Accessing skilled personnel ()

- v. Accessing financial resources ()

SECTION V: Influence of Management on M&E systems

- 1) In What ways does management influence Monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV?
 - i. M&E Designing-Change of objectives ()
 - ii. M&E system Modifications ()
 - iii. Planning of M&E ()
 - iv. Implementation M&E systems ()
 - v. Human Resource allocation ()
 - vi. Finance and other resource allocation ()
 - vii. Using the M&E feedbacks/results in decision making ()
 - viii. Determine M&E place in the organizational structure ()

- 2) Using a five point scale, tick appropriately to show the ways and extent in which management influences M&E systems performance at SNV

SN	Management Influence Ways	Very Large Extent	Large Extent	Some Extent	Little extent	Not at all
1	M&E Designing					
2	M&E Modifications					
3	Planning of M&E`					
4	Implementation M&E systems					
5	Resource allocation					
6						
7						
8						

- 3) How would you rate the overall management influence on M&E systems at SNV?

Very effective () Effective () Ineffective () Very ineffective () Don't know ()

- 4) Why do you think so?

.....

- 5) What would you say about the management influence in regard to acting on the M&E issues at SNV?

- ii) Very prompt ()
- iii) Prompt ()
- iv) Late ()
- v) Very late ()
- vi) Impromptu ()
- vii) Don't know ()

SECTION V: Training of Employees on M&E systems

1) Have you been trained on Monitoring and Evaluation in SNV?

Yes () No ()

2) If yes, how did you get trained?

- i) Special M&E training conducted ()
- ii) On job training ()
- iii) Induction ()
- iv) Personal initiative ()
- v) Gained in the process of working ()
- vi) Other (specify)_____

3) Do you feel your skills in M&E limit M&E performance?

Yes () No ()

Explain why you say so?

.....

.....

End

Thank you for your response

Appendix B. Interview Guides for Project Managers

Dear Respondent,

The purpose of this questionnaire is to request you to provide information about performance of monitoring and Evaluation at SNV Ethiopia. The information supplied will be treated with a lot of confidentiality and used for improving the M&E system at SNV and academic purpose.

Assessment of Monitoring and evaluation systems and Performance

Please answer the following questions where appropriate and fill in the spaces provided.

1) Describe how Monitoring and evaluation systems are executed at SNV?

.....

2) Describe some of the tools and methods used in Monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV and their importance? (*Logical frameworks, Theory of change, Results chains/impact analysis, Reporting tools, Performance indicators....*)

.....

3) Explain some of the ways in which SNV management influences Monitoring and evaluation systems?

.....

4) How do you determine the needs for assessment of Monitoring and evaluation systems at SNV?

.....

5) What is the criterion of selecting your employees for training on monitoring and evaluation at SNV?

.....

6) What is the importance of training employees on Monitoring and evaluation systems?

.....

7) What would be the qualifications for one to be M&E officer and considering the M&E officers what would you say about their competencies?

.....

8) What would you think be the challenges of M&E system at SNV?

.....

9) What would you recommend to be done to improve M&E systems at SNV?

.....