



**INFLUENCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION PRACTICES ON SUSTAINABLE PROJECTS – A CASE STUDY OF THE NATIONAL AIDS CONTROL COUNCIL**

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**Njeri, J. W.,<sup>1\*</sup> & Omwenga, J. Q.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1\*</sup>Msc. Scholar, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D, Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kenya

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**ABSTRACT**

*This study adopted a descriptive study to collect data from all the 90 respondents sampled using structured questionnaires. Data collected was analyzed using Quantitative data analysis including descriptive and inferential statistics. Deductions were then made of the influence of M&E on project sustainability from the results of the study. The results indicated a strong correlation between all of the independent variables – M&E organisational factors, Human Capacity for M&E, Partnerships in M&E and Communication in M&E; and project sustainability. However, according to the findings, organisations have yet to develop adequate Human Capacity in M&E. The R Squared value for all the variables was 0.769 indicating that the study results explained 76.9% of the total variation in Project Sustainability which can be attributed to unit change in the four independent variables. The study recommended that organisations need to enhance their human capacity for M&E by improving their recruitment policies for M&E through research into the appropriate skills requirements by benchmarking on industrial leaders. It further recommends that organisations need to include more institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies who will provide much needed financial acumen to enhance their economic sustainability. Additionally, organisations should ensure that they establish critical linkages with other organisations in order to enhance their M&E functions and activities. Finally, the study recommended that communication in M&E should be linked to strategic objectives and must be based on high quality information.*

**Key words:** *Monitoring and Evaluation, Human Capacity, Partnerships, Sustainable Project*

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## INTRODUCTION

The Human Immuno-Deficiency Virus (HIV) and Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic in Kenya has evolved to become one of the most critical causes of mortality ever since the first case was diagnosed in 1984, and has exacted a huge toll on the economy at large and the health care system in particular (NACC, 2014). In fact, according to Kimani (2013), Kenya is ranked fourth in the world amongst countries with the highest HIV/AIDS prevalence rate (6.3%) while the number of people living with HIV/AIDS stands at 1.5 million, 80,000 people have died from AIDS related complications, and the rate of new HIV cases are about 118,000 per year. In response to the above the Government of Kenya declared the pandemic as a national disaster on 25<sup>th</sup> November 1999 and paved the way for the development of the national HIV/AIDS policy in December of the same year; which then precipitated a concerted establishment of strategies aimed at reducing the rate of infection and the resultant impact of the disease (Kimani, 2013). However, Turan, Bukusi, Onono, Holzemer, Miller & Cohen (2011) posit that the fight against HIV/AIDS in Kenya is exacerbated by stigma on women owing to anticipated break-ups in relationships (32%) and loss of friendships (45%); and the refusal amongst pregnant women in rural Kenya to undergo HIV testing.

Bennet, Singh, Ozawa, Tran & Kang (2011) aver that as a result of severe budgetary pressures on donor countries, funding for HIV/AIDS projects has been gradually dwindling in India which has necessitated a rethink on how best to plan and implement the transition of donor-funded programs to local ownership; thus, through Avahan (the India AIDS Initiative), a transition strategy called 'sustained HIV response through an effective transition' was born in 2007. The primary thrust of this initiative was to stagger the transition from donors to the Government of India (GOI) in three phases such that

10% would be transferred by April 2009, a further 20% by April 2011, and the remaining 70% by April 2012 all the while ensuring that there is drop off in the infection preventive measures. However, according to Tanwar, Rewari, Rao & Seguy (2016), the transition has been adversely affected by the sluggish transfer of funds from the GOI to HIV/AIDS intervention partners and this has negated the attempts to align the national efforts with those of the world in trying to end AIDS by 2030.

According to Koseki, Fagan, & Menon (2015), the rationale behind the sustainability of HIV/AIDS related projects in Uganda is based on the understanding that donor funding from international partners such as President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) is stagnating and, as such, it is critical to identify long-term, sustainable sources of domestic funding. This led to the establishment of the PEPFAR-led "Sustainable Financing Initiative" that sought to work with seven target countries (including Uganda) to mobilize non-donor, domestic resources and ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in the use of resources to facilitate the attainment of an AIDS-free future. In a different study, Chib, Wilkin & Hoefman (2013), found that health projects geared towards the reduction in prevention rates of HIV/AIDS would be better served by applying the Extended Technology-Community-Management (TCM) model that proposes these three principle characteristics of information and communication technologies to lead to sustainable and successful interventions, while ensuring that they minimize the impact of socio-cultural, informational, economic and individual vulnerabilities.

According to a study conducted by Karanja, Yeudall, Mbugua, Njenga, Prain, Cole, Webb, Sellen, Gore & Levy (2010) in Nakuru County, the HIV/AIDS epidemic has had a debilitating effect on the urban poor robbing them of the financial and physical capacity to engage effectively in agricultural activities, thereby leading to food insecurity and an ultimate

vulnerability to economic shocks. Thus, an agricultural sustainability project called the Community Based Research and Development Centre on Urban Agriculture and Waste Management in Nakuru under the sponsorship of the Kenya Green Towns Partnership Association, capacity building initiatives were undertaken on a number of urban farmers in order to boost their livelihoods and ensure urban food security (Karanja et al., 2010). Ndegwa (2015) contributes to this discourse by adding that the sustainability of HIV/AIDS projects such as the Kenya Medical Research Institute (KEMRI) project is invariably dependent on the availability of reliable funding resources; management skills by project team management; the focusing on the empowerment of individuals for effective and efficient performance; effective information management to facilitate the provision of accountability reports and robust communications; and stakeholder participation.

The National AIDS Control Council (NACC) was established in September 1999 as a State Corporation through Legal Notice No. 170 of 1999. At inception NACC was domiciled in the Office of the President, under the Special Programs ministry by 2013 (NACC, 2014). Following the re-organization of government in 2013 through Executive Order No. 2/2013, NACC was placed under the Ministry of Health (MOH). As a semi-autonomous agency (SAGA) under the MOH, NACC is vested with the overall responsibility of coordinating the multi-sectoral national HIV and AIDS response (NACC, 2014).

### **Statement of the Problem**

Whilst the importance of monitoring and evaluation is given, many organisations face many constraints in carrying out this critical function. According to Karuiki (2014), the first constraint is getting the knowledge, skills and competence required for those aspiring to carry out this function. This is particularly apparent in public projects owing to limited understanding on account of the lack of effective development of an

M&E system. Another critical challenge, is the absence of adequate legal and regulatory framework for M&E in a number of countries (Mthethwa and Jili, 2017). This normally manifests itself in the form of inadequate demands by the law for organisations to effectively carry out and report M&E. Some organisations feel that this is an unnecessary expense and may get away with mere cosmetic efforts rather than more robust M&E initiatives. Further, the implementation of M&E calls for proper and more consistent linkage between the M&E results to policy planning and budgetary processes so as to ensure more sustainable benefits from investment in M&E (Mthethwa and Jili, 2017). This is a complex undertaking which may be beyond the capability of many organisations. However, there is an increasing need for transparency and accountability by various stakeholders which demands that the organisation incorporates effective M&E policies.

Projects are generally short term in nature and, as such, are not well aligned with the attainment of sustainability which is a long-term pursuit; thus, the integration of sustainability ideals into project management has tended to be a difficult endeavour for many project managers (Agarwal and Semenova, 2015). Indeed, whilst sustainability has gained increasing acceptance as a tool for understanding the social, economic and environmental implications associated with the way projects and their support systems are designed, constructed, operated, maintained and eliminated, the lack of a common structure and language for analysing sustainability leads to the lack of useful and applicable methods of integrating sustainability to projects (Martens and de Carvalho, 2014). Further, Njuguna (2016) maintains that very few donor-funded projects achieve their objectives despite millions injected into their implementation owing to a lack of commitment to M&E; additionally, NGOs are typically unable to hire the services of skilled M&E professionals and ICT staff who have adequate understanding of M&E systems

to enable them develop appropriate tools. This leads to the inability of attaining project sustainability.

Effective M&E requires holistic participation of all critical partners during the project implementation which demands significant resources in the management of stakeholders which may not be possible for many cash-strapped organisations; it also calls for more training of the staff on how to incorporate M&E partnership ideals into project implementation (Phiri, 2015). This is echoed by Waithera & Wanyoike (2015) who explain that stakeholder participation in the design and execution of M&E is a crucial component of effective project implementation, particularly if both external professionals and community partners are involved. Given the expense involved in setting up such partnerships, most organisations find it difficult to implement them which negates their M&E initiatives and hamper project sustainability.

The increasing complexity of the development context for the past few decades continues to pose challenges in M&E especially communication since there is a disconnect between the reporting priorities of different stakeholders where results-based (accountability) approaches and emergent learning-based (improvement and effectiveness) approaches are preferred to more robust participatory, systems and complexity based approaches which tend to provide deeper communication of project implementation (Lenni & Tacchi, 2015). Project managers must bear in mind the reporting requirements of all stakeholders so as to provide appropriate communication of M&E interventions in order to establish a foundation for the attainment of sustainability.

This study delved into monitoring and evaluation in Kenya so as to provide a local context for many studies that have been carried out in other countries, especially in Europe and America. This provided a more realistic perspective of the appropriateness of

M&E as well as offer practical prescriptions for organisations seeking to achieve sustainable implementation of M&E practices. Additionally, the study incorporated more recent works in the subject of M&E so as to establish a more current representation of the situation. It addressed gaps in research including the scarcity of localised research on the link between M&E practices and project sustainability; and the skewed concentration of research on corporate sustainability rather than other contexts such as NGOs and individuals.

### **Study Objective**

The general objective of this study was to determine the influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on a sustainable project – A case study of the NACC. The specific objectives were:-

- To determine the influence of monitoring and evaluation organisational factors on a sustainable project.
- To establish the influence of human capacity for monitoring and evaluation on a sustainable project.
- To determine the influence of partnerships in monitoring and evaluation systems on a sustainable project.
- To determine the influence of communication in monitoring and evaluation on a sustainable project.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Review**

#### **Critical Natural Capital Theory of Sustainability**

According to the proponents of this theory, natural resources are only used as instruments in the world and the main goal of sustainability in the present and future is human well-being; and, as such, critical or necessary natural resources need to be sustained in order to ascertain the production and reproduction of human beings (Loukola and Kyllönen, 2005). Critical Natural Capital (CNC) is defined as that set of

environmental resources that performs important environmental functions for which there is no alternative in terms of manufactured, human or other natural capital currently in existence. The concept of CNC requires the following considerations to be addressed: the role and significance of different natural capital systems for supporting sustainable economic activity need to be identified; the relevant spatial and temporal scales for measuring natural capital systems; and the socio and cultural factors converting any natural capital components to critical status (Noël and O'Conner, 1998).

### **Theory of Neoclassical Sustainability**

This theory supposes that growth or development is dependent on an increase in production and, therefore, disposable income in higher levels of consumption so as to resolve the problem of poverty (Dragulanescu and Dragulanescu, 2013). Its main assumption is that free markets' capacity for self-regulation is limitless, and through the incorporation of technological advances there is an endless capacity of substitutions between various forms of capital that mitigate the constraints arising from the possible scarcity of resources and allow for sustainable growth since the level of consumption does not decrease with time (Dragulanescu and Dragulanescu, 2013).

The theory is consistent with all the independent variables since the preoccupation with capital is critical to the development of organisational factors, human capacity, partnerships, and communication channels. Additionally, capital is directly tied with the establishment of economic sustainability and, as such, the theory agrees with the dependent variable.

### **Marx's Theory of Ecological Sustainability**

According to Karl Marx, conventional capitalism in the nineteenth century was responsible for the wanton destruction of soil and other ecological problems and, as a response, ecological sustainability was necessary to attempt to provide a foundation for freely associating producers to meet the future needs of

humanity (Foster, 1997). The basic premise of the theory was that permanent communal ownership of land was a minimum requirement for the existence and reproduction of the chain of human generations; and, additionally, only through the ecological demands of man to return to the land what he has taken from it that the natural sustainability of human productivity can be achieved (Foster, 1997).

This theory is directly related to the environmental construct of project sustainability (the dependent variable) since it is focused on ecological sustainability. However, it doesn't correlate with any of the four independent variables in its suppositions.

### **Stakeholder Theory of Sustainability**

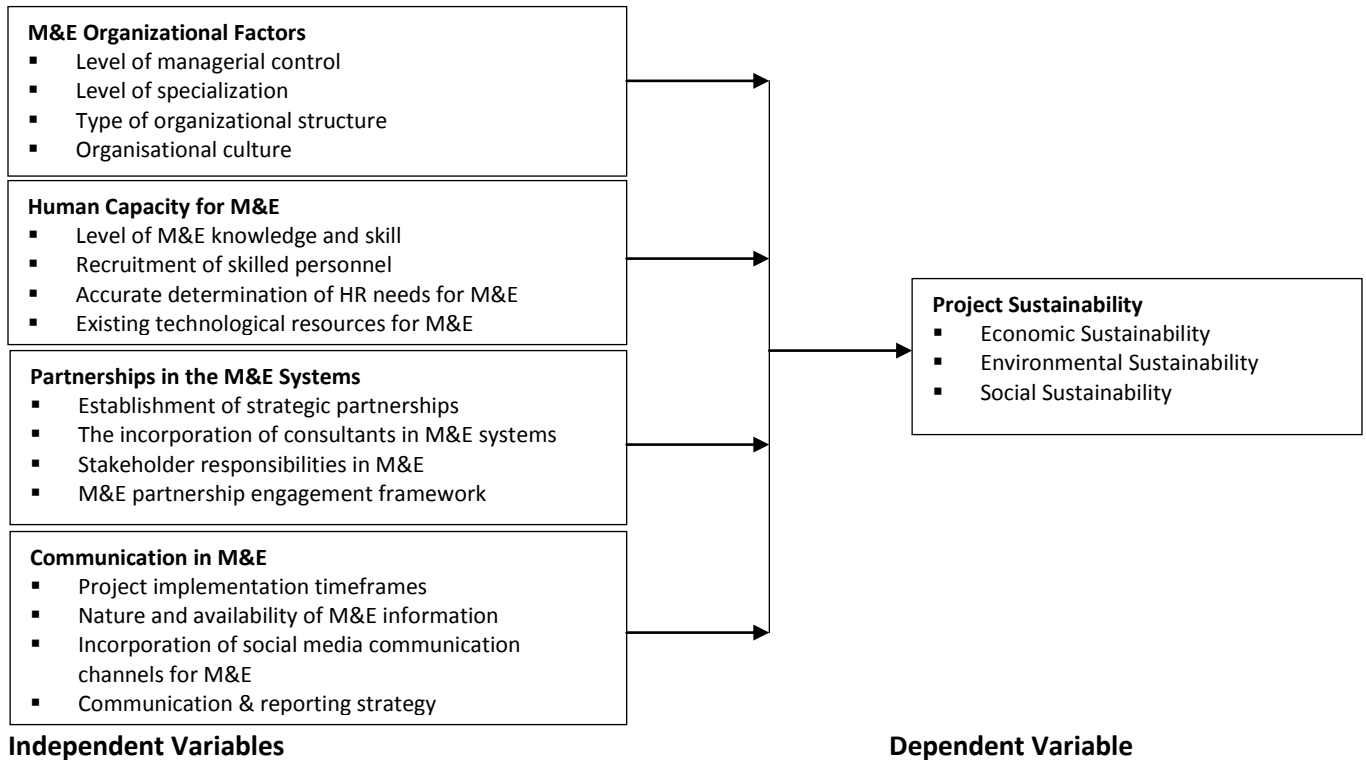
The proponents of Stakeholder theory such as Freeman (1984) maintain that there are multiple groups of that have a stake in the operation of a firm, all of whom deserve consideration by the management during decision making (Barter, 2011). In meeting the needs of different stakeholders, management find that they must make trade-offs between the objective of profit maximization and corporate social responsibility. Hörisch, Freeman & Schaltegger (2014) posit that this understanding of management is inadequate to ensure sustainability and as such proposed that the two concepts of stakeholder theory and sustainability can be married through the focus on the incorporation of the interests of different stakeholders in the fulfilment of corporate sustainability interdependencies with the societal environment. Additionally, through the integration of ethical responsibility into daily business, sustainability management and stakeholder theory ensure a formalised acceptance of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as the focus for improved performance.

The most discernible correlation is between this theory and the independent variable three (partnerships in M&E) since partners are one type of stakeholder. The theory is consistent with the

dependent variable when it explains the trade-offs between the objective of profit maximization (this correlates with economic sustainability) and

corporate social responsibility (this correlates with social sustainability).

**Conceptual Framework**



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

Source: Author (2019)

**Empirical Review**

This study proposes to explore past studies on the various organisational factors that impact on the sustainability of projects including the level of managerial control; the level of specialization; the type of organisational structure; and the organisational culture. Nightingale, Madden, Curnow, Collett, Procter & Rowe (2012), posit that some organisations apply the use of Statistical Process Control (SPC) techniques to monitor and evaluate the performance of production processes in projects by ensuring that after validation, the processes remain under statistical control so as to lower the failure rate for each parameter. Effective M&E implementation calls for the development of a detailed M&E plan

which includes the data collection plan – who is responsible for collection of specific data; ensuring quality control at every stage; how often the data will be collected; format of the data; what resources will be required at each stage; who will perform the analysis; and the dissemination plan (World Health Organisation (WHO), 2014). In another study, Idoro (2012) affirms that the control of projects entails three critical functions including the rescheduling of activities; reallocating resources; and changing project objectives with the level of control regulated by the frequency of these activities.

According to Dos Santos, Svensson & Padin (2014), the sustainable implementation of M&E demands for the employment of best business practices which is

assured by the establishment of a number of critical performance indicators including training and skills development that encompasses activities such as registering employees on apprenticeships; applying a well-articulated learning academy framework to ensure better management and delivery of employee skills; introducing more stringent individual performance management systems; and having appropriate skills targets to meet. Scott, Wooster, Few, Thomson & Tarazona (2016) acknowledge the importance of skills in M&E and emphasize the importance of building up disaster risk management skills so to improve the ability of project managers to better understand the impact of interventions, particularly in low-income countries that are more vulnerable to disasters and are resource constrained. Mthethwa (2016) echoes this view by pointing out that many public sector projects are constrained by a deficiency in knowledge, skills and competence required to carry out effective M&E functions given that the management of such concerns fail to adequately appreciate the importance of M&E.

Another means through which project managers can establish M&E competitive advantages is through the formation of strategic partnerships. Such partnerships ensure effective development assistance by humanitarian actors to intended beneficiary communities, ensure efficiency of the same assistance, and coordination limits the transaction costs, increase the available knowledge base on risk factors and risk management strategies (UNDP, 2009). Nonetheless, given that partnerships are a consensus-based process, all those with a stake in the outcomes must be involved in the setting and delivering of objectives in order for them to be effective; and this involves the establishment of partner conveners, partner evaluators, partner representatives, managers of partners, and directors of partners (Marriott and Goyder, 2009).

Communication in M&E starts off with the project's implementation time frames. Myers, Woods &

Odugbemi (2011) posit that communication in M&E is achieved through the establishment of a participatory communication appraisal mechanism that stipulates communication strategies such as visualization techniques, interviews and group work with the proposed project time frames being communicated in the planning phase on the aftermath of setting the budget. Implementing partners are expected to use reporting formats designed by donor agencies that are usually strictly adhered to and include implementation time frames; they are defined in terms of technical areas with related links to donor reporting web pages (IFRC, 2011).

M&E has been gaining increasing significance in determining the performance of projects and, as such, their ultimate sustainability. This is echoed by Waithera and Wanyoike (2015) when they state that the sustainability criteria of economic, social and environmental are crucial in the definition of M&E indicators, tracking economic and social trends, and keeping tabs on progress towards project goals. Essentially, the initiatives undertaken by M&E in enhancing transparency and accountability engender greater confidence by donors in organisations which boosts the possibility of attaining funding sources and ensures better economic sustainability for their projects (Waithera and Wanyoike, 2015). However, as explained by Umugwaneza and Kule (2016), the additional costs involved in institutionalizing M&E create economic sustainability challenges since the vast majority of organisations in developing countries face funding constraints particularly due to the ever shrinking donor funding pool. These findings mirror those of Koehn and Uitto (2014) when they affirm the economic sustainability difficulties occasioned by the extreme demands placed by comprehensive evaluations in development projects especially the high costs of detailed quantitative analyses of data given the need to establish correlations across wide longitudinal studies in order to establish the integrity of the evaluations.



**METHODOLOGY**

This study applied a descriptive research design since it was concerned with describing the characteristics of individuals as well as groups at the NACC clearly including what would be measured, the measurement methods, as well as a clear definition of the target population. The data was collected from a target population of 157 individuals working within the NACC Nairobi offices. The study collected primary data through controlled observation and structured personal interviews of respondents to predetermined questions so as to have greater control of the responses. The analysis used a multiple regression model to capture the variables of the study as follows:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y = The project’s dependent variable (project sustainability)

X<sub>1</sub> = the first independent variable (M&E organisational factors)

X<sub>2</sub> = the second independent variable (Human Capacity for M&E)

X<sub>3</sub> = the third independent variable (Partnerships in M&E)

X<sub>4</sub> = the fourth independent variable (Communication in M&E)

e = the error term

β<sub>0</sub> = the constant term

β<sub>1-4</sub> = the Beta coefficient

According to the formula, Y is determined by changes in X<sub>1</sub>, X<sub>2</sub>, X<sub>3</sub> and X<sub>4</sub>. Beta coefficient is the extent to which a unit change in any of the Xs influences Y. The constant refers to the value of Y when X is zero.

**RESULTS**

**Monitoring and Evaluation Organisational Factors**

The distribution of responses to M&E organisational factors were shown in table 1.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Monitoring and Evaluation Organisational Factors**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
NACC has put in place a process by which managers are able to assure that resources are obtained and used effectively and efficiently in the accomplishment of organisational objectives.	90	3.6556	.96175
The level of specialization at the organisation has influenced the sustainability of projects	90	3.1778	1.14732
The organisational structure at NACC facilitates the attainment of project sustainability	90	3.2222	1.17825
The organisational culture at NACC helps in the attainment of project sustainability	90	3.6778	1.08956

**Human Capacity for Monitoring and Evaluation**

Table 2 displayed the distribution of the responses to the questions on the influence of human capacity for M&E on project sustainability.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Human Capacity for M&E**

Influence of Human Capacity for M&E on project sustainability	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
The organisation has an acceptable level of M&E knowledge and skill among its staff	10.0%	15.6%	17.8%	43.3%	13.3%
NACC has recruited adequate skilled personnel in M&E	26.7%	28.9%	28.9%	15.5%	0.0%
NACC has established an accurate method of determining the human resource needs for M&E	21.1%	16.7%	28.9%	21.1%	12.2%
The existing technological resources for M&E are adequate	31.1%	35.6%	22.2%	8.9%	2.2%

**Partnerships in Monitoring and Evaluation**

Table 3 illustrated the distribution of responses to the questions on the influence of partnerships in M&E on project sustainability.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Partnerships in Monitoring and Evaluation**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
NACC has established strategic partnerships that have aided in the efforts of attaining project sustainability	90	3.5222	.96253
The organisation has put in place M&E consultants who have helped in improving project sustainability	90	3.3889	1.12873
NACC has been able to develop an accurate mechanism for determining stakeholder responsibilities in M&E	90	3.4778	1.00814
The M&E partnership engagement framework at NACC has aided in improving project sustainability	90	3.4778	1.00814

**Communication in Monitoring and Evaluation**

Table 4 illustrated the distribution of responses to questions on the influence of M&E communication on project sustainability.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Communication in Monitoring and Evaluation**

Influence of M&E Communication on project sustainability	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5

NACC has put in place appropriate periods during which project implementation occurs and this has improved the organisation's push for project sustainability	0.0%	0.0%	13.3%	50.0%	36.7%
The nature and availability of M&E information has influenced NACC's push for project sustainability	0.0%	0.0%	16.7%	60.0%	23.3%
The incorporation of social media communication channels has improved the organisation's efforts of attaining project sustainability	6.7%	25.5%	20.0%	40.0%	7.8%
NACC has put in place appropriate communication and reporting strategies	4.5%	11.1%	28.9%	41.1%	14.4%

## Project Sustainability

Table 5 showed the distribution of responses to questions about project sustainability.

**Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Project Sustainability**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
The organisation has put in place measures that compensate and reward an investor's capital through financial performance, business ethics, cost management, and innovation management	90	3.2889	1.03038
The organisation has put in place procedures that help the condition of balance, resilience, interconnectedness that allows human society to satisfy its needs without compromising the regenerative capacity of its supporting environment	90	3.4222	1.08076
NACC has put in place mechanisms that help societies to sustain and reproduce themselves	90	3.5000	1.08359

## Correlation

Hall (2015) defines the Pearson's Correlation Coefficient ( $r^2$ ) as the ratio of the covariance of two variables representing a set of numerical data, and normalized to the square root of the variances. Table 6 illustrated the Pearson Correlation Matrix. According to the table, all the independent variables had positive correlations with the dependent variable. There is a strong positive correlation of  $r = 0.808$  between Human Capacity and Project Sustainability. There is also a strong positive correlation of  $r = 0.716$  between M&E partnership and Project Sustainability. There is a moderately positive correlation of  $r = 0.607$  between M&E Communication and Project Sustainability. Finally, there is a moderately positive correlation of  $r = 0.585$

between Organisational Factors and Project Sustainability.

Further, the level of significance for the correlation between Organisational Factors and Project Sustainability of 0.022 is less than 0.05 indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship; the level of significance for the correlation between Human Capacity and Project Sustainability of 0.019 is less than 0.05 indicating a statistically significant relationship; the level of significance for the correlation between M&E partnership and Project Sustainability of 0.032 is less than 0.05 also indicating a statistically significant relationship; and the level of significance for the correlation between M&E Communication and Project Sustainability of 0.041 is less than 0.05 indicating a statistically significant

relationship. This indicates that there is a statistically significant relationship between all the independent variables and the Project Sustainability. This finding is supported by Dahiru (2008) who determined that given intervals of 95%, p-values of less than 0.05

indicate that observed differences between groups are unlikely to be due to chance and, as such, are statistically significant. This reflects the relevance of the p-value as an acceptable test of statistical significance.

**Table 6: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

		Pearson Correlation Matrix				
		Org. Factors	Human Cap.	M&E part.	M&E Comm.	Project Sust.
<b>Org. Factors</b>	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
<b>Human Cap.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.921	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.026				
<b>M&amp;E part.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.836**	.720*	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.038			
<b>M&amp;E Comm.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.826*	.768**	.507**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032	.006	.003		
<b>Project Sust.</b>	Pearson Correlation	.585	.808*	.716*	.607	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.019	.032	.041	

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Key: Org. Factors – Organisational Factors; Human Cap. – Human Capacity; M&E Part – M&E Partnership; M&E Comm. – M&E Communication; Project Sust. – Project Sustainability

### Regression

Table 7 illustrated the regression analysis for the study variables. The following was surmised from the table: The R Square value for all the variables was 0.769 indicating that the results explained 76.9% of the variation in Project Sustainability whenever there

was a one unit change in the four independent variables. This is consistent with Hamilton, Ghert & Simpson (2015) who found that in order for R square values to be significant they should be higher than 0.7.

**Table 7: Regression Statistics**

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.847 <sup>a</sup>	.769	.705	.64093

a. Predictors: (Constant), Human Capacity, M&E Communication, M&E Partnership, Organisational Factors

**Table 8: ANOVA Statistics**

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	9.585	4	2.396	7.100	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	30.373	90	.337		
	Total	39.958	94			

a. Dependent Variable: Project Sustainability

b. Predictors: (Constant), Political Factors, Stakeholder Participation, Cost Management , Non-profit Orientation

**Table 9: Beta Coefficients**

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.062	.796		1.333	.000
	Organisational Factors	.111	.178	.084	.621	.036
	Human Capacity	.218	.153	.155	1.418	.160
	Partnerships in M&E	.107	.125	.102	.854	.016
	Communication in M&E	.167	.180	.104	.926	.017

a. Dependent Variable: Project Sustainability

## CONCLUSIONS

The results indicate that three of the independent variables: M&E organisational factors, Partnerships in M&E, and Communication in M&E all had positive endorsements from the participants, thus, these factors have played an important role in ensuring sustainability of projects at NACC. However, in Human Capacity for M&E, it is clear that the organisation has not gotten on top of human resource component of M&E.

The most critical indicators of M&E organisational factors are organisational culture and the process of ensuring availability of resources. This shows that in order for organisations to ensure sustainability they must have the right culture and a process of ensuring availability of resources. However, given that the other two indicators of organisational structure and the level of specialization also received positive

endorsements, they are also crucial to the establishment of project sustainability.

Three of the indicators of Human Capacity for M&E – technical resources of M&E, adequately skilled personnel, and mechanisms for recruiting personnel, all received negative feedback from the respondents; while the remaining indicator of adequate skills and knowledge in M&E only received moderately positive endorsement. This reflects an inadequacy of human capacity in M&E at NACC and points to the urgent need for addressing the shortfall in order to improve the sustainability of projects.

All the indicators of partnerships in M&E - strategic partnerships in M&E, an accurate mechanism for determining stakeholder responsibilities in M&E, M&E partnership engagement framework, and M&E consultants - received positive feedback from the respondents regarding their impact on project

sustainability. This is a clear illustration of the importance of the establishment of partnerships in M&E towards the attainment of project sustainability.

All the indicators of communication in M&E - appropriate periods during which project implementation occurs, the nature and availability of M&E information, appropriate communication and reporting strategies, and social media communication - are crucial for the determination of project sustainability. However, the applicability of social media has yet to be fully exploited by organisations so this represents an opportunity.

Finally, all the indicators of project sustainability – environmental sustainability, economic sustainability and social sustainability – received positive endorsements from the participants. This shows that the organisation has prioritized all the relevant aspects of project sustainability. Nonetheless, the comparatively lower score for economic sustainability is reflective of the fact that the organisation needs to do more to improve the ability of their interventions to boost economic aspects of sustainability for shareholders and investors.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

A number of recommendations were made from the above conclusions. Firstly, human capacity for M&E is deficient in many organisations which had hampered their ability to achieve project sustainability. Thus, organisations need to enhance their human capacity for M&E by improving their recruitment policies for M&E through research into the appropriate skills requirements by benchmarking on industrial leaders. Additionally, these organisations can use recruitment agencies to find out training opportunities in M&E and use this to enhance the abilities of their staff.

Secondly, economic sustainability is lagging behind the other aspects of project sustainability, as such, the organisations need to include more institutional investors such as pension funds and insurance companies who will provide much needed financial

acumen that will come in handy in formulating policies which will not only improve project sustainability but also provide adequate returns for shareholders simultaneously.

Thirdly, given the demonstrated importance of M&E organisational factors to the achievement of project sustainability, organisations must endeavor to either maintain or improve on all the aspects of organisational factors in order for them to continue leveraging them as sustainability continues to become an increasingly difficult outcome for projects, particularly in not-for-profit organisations such as NACC.

Fourthly, organisations should ensure that they establish critical linkages with other organisations in order to enhance their M&E functions and activities since this study has clearly demonstrated the importance of partnerships in M&E. Additionally, organisations should incorporate participatory approaches to M&E which will enhance the sense of ownership of community members and other stakeholders and ease the partnership building initiatives.

Lastly, the study emphasized the importance of communication in M&E towards the attainment of project sustainability. Consequently, organisations should prioritise the improvement of communication channels in M&E by ensuring their communications are aligned with their strategic goals and that all the relevant personnel are aware of their roles in the communication effort. Further, the quality of the information must be verified appropriately in order for the communication to yield the intended results.

## **Areas of Further Research**

The study determined that more research needs to conduct on the linkage between M&E and project sustainability since the vast majority of work on M&E has been situated on other dependent variables. Additionally, the subject of M&E has attracted more institutional researchers than individual ones which

illustrated a gap that needs to be addressed through the encouragement of more individual and independent researchers to get scholarships to address this subject. Finally, more scholarships should

be provided for local researchers to conduct research on this subject to as to improve the depth of the existing body of knowledge on the subject.

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