

**STRATEGIC PLANNING AND PERFORMANCE OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL  
ORGANIZATIONS IN SOUTH SUDAN**

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## DECLARATION

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This academic work has been presented for assessment under my authorization as a representative of the University.

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## **DEDICATION**

To my dear family, who have always supported me in my studies, I dedicate this study project.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I wish to extend heartfelt appreciation to the Divine for endowing me with the resilience and privilege to attain this milestone. I am genuinely grateful to the faculty members whose consistent encouragement and thoughtful counsel have played a pivotal role throughout this academic pursuit. My deepest thanks are reserved for my supervisor, Dr. Elishiba Murigi, whose exceptional guidance, expertise, and unwavering support have been instrumental. I also warmly acknowledge my family and friends, whose enduring motivation and shared strength have been fundamental to my advancement.

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## OPERATIONAL DEFINITION OF TERMS

<b>Direction Setting</b>	Systematic process through which an organisation defines the desired future state, establishes performance priorities, and aligns resources, actions, and people toward measurable goals..
<b>Environmental Scanning</b>	Information gathering, analysis, and distribution process used to support tactical or strategic decision-making.
<b>Management Decisions</b>	The deliberate choice made by managers among alternative courses of action to achieve organizational goals
<b>Non-Governmental Organization</b>	A NGO is a privately held business, volunteer organization, or association that is registered domestically or internationally for social development and public benefit.
<b>Organizational Performance</b>	Measurable results an organisation achieves in relation to its strategic and operational objectives
<b>Resource Allocation</b>	The process through which an organisation distributes its available resources such as finances, personnel, equipment, time, and information across departments achieve strategic and operational objectives.
<b>Stakeholder Involvement</b>	The systematic inclusion of individuals or groups who have an interest in, influence over, or are affected by organisational decisions

## ABSTRACT

The influence of non-governmental organizations on societal change is widely recognized. Their role becomes even more critical in nations experiencing political instability. To effectively fulfill its mission and attain desired outcomes, an organization must engage in strategic planning. This process primarily serves to steer and manage operations by thoroughly analyzing the obstacles and dynamics within both the internal and external contexts. This will lead to extremely efficient organizational management. Nonprofits operating in South Sudan are devoid of early warning systems, conflict resolution skills, and a wealth of data on the circumstances that can lead to violence. Examining how strategic planning affects the operational efficacy of NGOs in South Sudan is the main goal of this study. The study specifically intends to investigate how resource distribution, managerial decisions, and stakeholder engagement, strategic direction, and organizational performance interrelate within the NGO context in South Sudan. A descriptive research approach was adopted to provide insights into the patterns and attributes of the selected variables. The intended population for this study comprises senior personnel working within the operations, finance, human resources, policy, and program divisions. Additionally, a preliminary survey will be administered to 12 participants drawn from two NGOs located in Juba, accounting for 10% of the proposed sample. The pilot test ensures the clarity and effectiveness of research instruments, identifying ambiguities that could affect respondent comprehension. It evaluates instrument validity and reliability, refining research protocols, sample recruitment strategies, and data collection tools. Validity is confirmed through expert review and test-retest procedures, ensuring accurate measurement of study variables. Reliability is assessed using pre-testing, where the pilot units represent one-tenth of the sample size. The Cronbach Coefficient will validate the reliability of the instruments, with a benchmark of 0.7 for acceptable dependability. The pilot study aids in refining the research design, ensuring suitability, and enhancing accuracy before the full-scale investigation begins. This research obtained information from senior personnel working in departments such as operations, finance, human resources, policy, and program management. The study relied exclusively on primary data, which was collected through structured questionnaires administered to selected Non-Governmental Organizations, along with targeted interviews focusing on key performance indicators. Given the hybrid nature of the data, a combination of statistical techniques and thematic analysis was employed. Thematic analysis facilitated the comparison and synthesis of participant responses in alignment with the study's objectives. Quantitative findings were systematically organized using charts and tables, consistent with the underlying research hypotheses. Each visual representation was preceded by a descriptive overview, followed by the researcher's analytical commentary or subjective interpretation. The results showed that while management choices ( $p = 0.552$ ) do not significantly affect an organization's performance, stakeholder involvement ( $p = 0.00$ ), resource allocation ( $p = 0.033$ ), and direction setting ( $p = 0.002$ ) do. To achieve and sustain the intended performance levels, it was advised that NGOs maximize their strategic planning options.

# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Study

Strategic planning has emerged as a critical component in fostering organizational effectiveness worldwide. Over the last twenty years, there has been a steady expansion in the adoption of strategic management instruments across enterprises of varying scales. Globally, approximately 81% of businesses utilize strategic planning, and 89% of American companies have incorporated it as part of their management toolkit (O'Regan & Ghobadian, 2007). Numerous studies demonstrate that organizations employing strategic planning techniques including direction setting, resource allocation, management decisions, and stakeholder involvement (the independent variables) tend to achieve better performance outcomes (the dependent variable), such as improved innovation, sales growth, return on assets, profit margins, and competitive advantage (Gibson & Cassar, 2005; Hormozi et al., 2002).

Regionally, in Sub-Saharan Africa, the strategic planning landscape is evolving, with increasing recognition among both corporate and nonprofit organizations of the need for structured, forward-looking planning to navigate complex socio-economic challenges. However, the application of these tools remains inconsistent, especially among non-profit entities, due to resource constraints and contextual limitations (Aldehayyat & Twaissi, 2011).

In South Sudan a country emerging from decades of conflict (NGOs), particularly in humanitarian relief, poverty alleviation, and livelihoods support (Banks & Hulme, 2012). Strategic planning is essential to ensuring sustainability and efficient service delivery because NGOs operate in unstable environments with fragile state institutions while dealing with increasing demands and uncertainties (Roden, 2014). However, little is understood about how strategic planning affects their performance, especially when considering South Sudan.

Using a multifaceted approach, this study examines the ways in which NGO performance in South Sudan is impacted by the core components of strategic planning, including stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, management decisions, and direction setting. Performance is assessed using quantifiable metrics like financial profitability, competitive advantage, and organizational learning and growth. These performance metrics are crucial for evaluating the effectiveness, adaptability, and long-term sustainability of NGOs. By incorporating these factors, the study highlights the strategic role of planning in enhancing organizational outcomes in delicate contexts, contributing to the theoretical and practical conversation. Furthermore, it highlights how strategy is a dynamic process that constantly adjusts to the surroundings (Stopford, 2001) and how crucial stakeholder participation and participatory decision-making are to building robust, successful NGOs.

### **1.1.1 Organizational Performance**

Over the past few decades, organizational performance measurement has become increasingly important, particularly when assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of non-governmental organizations. This focus has been driven by the need for improved decision-making, improved service delivery, and greater accountability (Salkić, 2014). In non-governmental organizations, an organization's , including stakeholder satisfaction, operational effectiveness, cost-effectiveness, service delivery output, and program outcome achievement.

Efficiency metrics analyze the ratio of outputs to input costs, whereas performance indicators like output measures gauge the amount of goods or services delivered. Cost-effectiveness links these results to the money spent, and outcome measures show how well program goals have been met. Service quality and customer satisfaction are also vital indicators, offering qualitative insight into how services are perceived by beneficiaries (Rintari & Moronge, 2012).

According to Okwako (2013), evaluating organizational performance requires a multidimensional approach, considering historical achievements, current operational effectiveness, and strategic future goals. This ensures a comprehensive understanding of an NGO's sustainability and impact. Although strategic planning is a managerial tool

aimed at guiding long-term growth and performance, its role is to support not define organizational performance. Kanini (2012) notes that organizations, including NGOs, must move beyond reliance on historical performance data and adopt forward-looking approaches to enhance performance.

Gillis, Combs, and Ketchen (2014) argue that strategic planning helps clarify goals, align internal operations, and allocate resources efficiently. When executed well, it improves coordination, innovation, and organizational learning. However, its effectiveness is ultimately reflected in measurable outcomes such as increased efficiency, stakeholder satisfaction, service quality, and mission achievement (Kisembe & Were, 2014). Within the sphere program outcomes serve as the most meaningful indicator of institutional effectiveness, resource utilization, beneficiary outcomes, and stakeholder engagement.

### **1.1.2 Strategic Planning**

In order to develop their mission, vision, strategic goals, and action plans, organizations use the methodical and structured process of strategic planning to assess their internal and external environments (Pearce & Robinson, 2009). It lays the groundwork for well-informed decision-making and puts the company in a position to successfully adjust to changing circumstances. The four main components of strategic planning are stakeholder involvement, management choices, resource allocation, and direction setting. Every one of these factors is essential in determining how well an organization performs.

Direction setting is the initial and guiding phase of strategic planning. It involves the formulation of clear goals and objectives that provide purpose and direction. A well-articulated and written mission statement acts as a reference point for all organizational activities. Periodic reviews of the mission and decision statements ensure continued relevance and responsiveness to emerging challenges. According to Babatunde and Adebola (2012), direction setting must be compelling and realistic, offering a unified vision that aligns organizational actions with broader social and developmental goals.

Resource allocation refers to the strategic distribution of financial, human, and other organizational resources to areas where they will have the greatest impact. This includes

budgeting for academics, staffing, and co-curricular activities, as well as providing budget guidance to ensure responsible financial management. Hillarie (2011) and Agu & Anichebe (2013) stress that effective resource allocation enhances implementation capacity and contributes directly to performance outcomes. NGOs that strategically allocate resources are better positioned to execute their programs and achieve sustainable results.

Management decisions involve the daily and long-term choices made by organizational leaders that determine the path of operations and development. Effective strategic planning promotes a positive decision-making environment where leaders investigate alternatives before making choices, communicate decisions clearly across the organization, and ensure commitment and support from key personnel. Jenster and Soilen (2013) observe that when decisions are made within the framework of a strategic plan, they are more likely to be aligned with organizational priorities and adaptive to changes in the environment.

Stakeholder involvement in the strategic planning process ensures that diverse perspectives are integrated into the organization's strategy. This includes conducting environmental scanning to understand the broader context, engaging with strategy experts, and involving stakeholders in the development of vision and mission statements, stakeholder mapping, and budgeting processes. According to Abok (2013), such engagement builds trust, enhances transparency, and fosters collective ownership of strategic goals. It also improves alignment between organizational strategies and the expectations of the communities served. In summary, strategic planning in NGOs entails a deliberate and multi-faceted process involving direction setting, resource allocation, strategic management decisions, and stakeholder involvement. Each of these elements, supported by specific indicators, contributes to enhanced financial profitability, competitive advantage, and learning and growth thereby improving overall organizational performance.

### **1.1.3 NGOs in South Sudan**

According to Blanchard (2016), South Sudan experiences some of the most severe humanitarian crises globally, driven by prolonged conflict, governance challenges,

population displacement, and widespread food shortages. These persistent issues have contributed to a surge in the presence of non-governmental organizations operating throughout the nation. Currently, both local and global NGOs are instrumental in providing vital relief services, including the distribution of food supplies, healthcare, education, and peacebuilding, particularly in remote and conflict-affected areas.

Through the South Sudan NGO Forum, a coordinating body comprising more than 300 domestic and foreign NGOs, these NGOs collaborate to address the overwhelming needs. In order to avoid duplication of effort in funding and service delivery, this forum helps harmonize approaches, encourages information sharing, and strengthens collective action. Even with this coordination system, NGOs still have a lot of structural and operational issues. The performance and long-term viability of numerous local NGOs are negatively impacted by their insufficient strategic planning procedures.

Strategic planning, which is often underdeveloped or applied inconsistently, includes setting direction, allocating resources, making management decisions, and involving stakeholders. For instance, many NGOs lack written mission statements, compelling goals, and regular strategic direction reviews. Resources are usually distributed reactively and donor-driven, with insufficient funds allocated to critical areas such as staffing, extracurricular activities, and academic programming. Limited organizational capacity in decision-making results in inadequate communication of choices, little consideration of alternatives, and inadequate support systems that are unable to establish an environment conducive to decision-making.

Additionally, stakeholder involvement is often superficial or fragmented. While some NGOs engage in environmental scanning and attempt to align with national priorities, many fail to conduct effective stakeholder mapping or consult strategy experts during the planning process. This affects the credibility and acceptance of their programs among communities, government partners, and donors. Consequently, the performance of these NGOs measured in terms of financial sustainability, competitive advantage, and organizational learning and growth remains suboptimal.

As highlighted by Bunny (2017), many NGOs in South Sudan lack formal organizational structures, modern management systems, and qualified personnel, all of which are vital for implementing strategic plans effectively. The lack of systematic integration of strategic planning variables contributes to fragmented interventions and reduces the impact of donor investments. Since 2013, South Sudan has received about USD 1.5 billion in humanitarian aid, with NGOs playing a major role in this flow, according to the UN's daily briefing on February 5, 2016. However, without strong strategic planning frameworks, the effectiveness, accountability, and transparency of these interventions are compromised. This study looks into how the the fundamental elements of strategic planning, including stakeholder involvement, resource allocation, management choices, and direction setting. Gaining an understanding of these dynamics is crucial to improving their responsiveness, sustainability, and effectiveness in tackling the nation's complicated humanitarian problems.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Even though strategic planning is increasingly recognized as a critical tool for improving organizational effectiveness, the performance of NGOs in South Sudan remains below par. The nation's fragile environment, characterized by political instability, insecurity, and poor infrastructure, significantly hinders the ability of NGOs to operate effectively (USAID, 2020). These operational difficulties manifest as poor project outcomes, delayed service delivery, and disgruntled donors.

Effective strategic planning provides companies with a clear course, efficient use of resources, informed decision-making, and inclusive stakeholder participation. Direction setting, which includes developing mission statements and achievable goals, has been linked to improved organizational alignment and performance (Bryson, 2018). Allocating resources is another essential component; research by Arasa and K'Obonyo (2012) demonstrates that strategic budgeting significantly affects organizational performance. Additionally, management decisions made with structured analysis and communication are more responsive and efficient (Mintzberg et al., 2005). Involving stakeholders improves the legitimacy, coherence, and sustainability of interventions, claims Freeman (2010).

However, NGOs in South Sudan usually operate with inadequate funding, disjointed decision-making, unclear direction, and minimal stakeholder input, leading to missed project objectives and poor financial performance. Empirical data specific to South Sudan is scarce. Prior studies (e.g., Nzeyimana, 2015; EU, 2018) highlight financial instability and operational inefficiencies, but they do not dissect how various aspects of strategic planning affect performance. By empirically examining the effects of management choices, resource distribution, goal-setting, and stakeholder involvement on NGOs' performance in South Sudan, this study aims to close this gap. Performance will be assessed using metrics such as financial viability, competitive advantage, and organizational learning and growth, providing NGOs operating in fragile environments with context-specific knowledge that can guide strategic interventions.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of this study is to establish how strategic planning influences the performance of (NGOs) in South Sudan.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

- i. To analyze the influence of direction setting on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan.
- ii. To investigate the influence of resource allocation on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan.
- iii. To determine the influence of management decisions on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan.
- iv. To evaluate the influence of stakeholder involvement on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What is the influence of direction setting on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan?
- ii. What is the influence of resource allocation on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan
- iii. What is the influence of management decisions on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan?
- iv. What is the influence of stakeholder involvement on performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan?"

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

There were various benefits to this study. It mainly helped scholars and researchers who were interested in strategic management and how it affected teams and organizations, especially in developing countries like South Sudan. By providing guidance for the creation of strategic planning policies, procedures, and guidelines that improved organizational efficiency in day-to-day operations, it assisted the management of (CBOs) and (NGOs). Additionally, the study was a useful tool for government organizations to comprehend the significance and advantages of implementing proper strategic planning to guarantee enhanced organizational performance.

Most NGOs benefitted from understanding the necessity of strategic planning that was contextually relevant to developing countries. Given their expansive presence across over 50 Southern nations, strategic planning was critical in ensuring the effective and efficient execution of economic and humanitarian initiatives. NGOs were encouraged to strengthen their internal governance frameworks and operational systems while embracing proactive and visionary organizational strategies. The study also made clear the challenges that non-governmental organizations face when deciding which strategic planning stages to use to achieve optimal organizational effectiveness.

Additionally, the study assisted in planning and transforming NGO performance by aligning operations with broader strategic and development goals. It identified areas for improvement in planning practices by utilizing experience-based insights and best

practices. These lessons served as helpful benchmarks for other NGOs hoping to accomplish their missions more successfully.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study aimed to examine the connection between strategic management approaches and the operational effectiveness of NGOs within the context of South Sudan. The study, which had its conceptual basis in strategic management frameworks, concentrated on important factors that have a big impact on organizational outcomes, such as stakeholder participation, executive decision-making, resource allocation, and goal-setting. The study was carried out in South Sudan, a nation that frequently faces humanitarian crises, armed conflict, and sociopolitical upheaval—all of which pose particular operational difficulties for nongovernmental organizations. Due to the high concentration of aid organizations in the country and the urgent need for sound strategic planning in an unstable environment, South Sudan was given special geographic attention. The study focused on employees in operational, financial, human resource, policy, and program roles in active NGOs and employed a quantitative methodology. To increase the validity and applicability of the data, participants were selected using a systematic sampling technique. The temporal scope encompassed organizational activities from 2018 to 2024, providing insights into current trends and the outcomes of strategic planning initiatives during that time. The study recognized that in order for NGOs to successfully carry out their missions in such precarious environments, they needed strong strategic frameworks. Thus, the purpose of this study was to present empirical data regarding the impact of strategic planning in such circumstances.

### **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

It is thought that gathering data would be extremely difficult given South Sudan's current level of insecurity. To evaluate risks and pinpoint safe areas for research activities, the researcher will first perform a comprehensive situational analysis of the current security environment before starting the actual data collection process. The unstable security situation is a significant obstacle that could restrict access for certain NGOs and

responders, especially in high-risk areas. In order to lessen this, the researcher will work with representatives of local government agencies, civic associations, and non-governmental organizations to find safe and impartial locations for gathering data. Given the history of conflict in the area, participants' possible mistrust or hesitancy about the researcher's intentions is another anticipated difficulty. In order to resolve this, the researcher will guarantee openness by outlining the goal of the study in detail and outlining ethical responsibilities like getting informed consent, protecting privacy, and gaining willing participation. To guarantee legitimacy and accessibility, formal permission will also be requested from the appropriate governmental, security, and organizational management authorities. In order to build trust and improve communication, the researcher will also think about hiring local research assistants who are acquainted with the area. It is anticipated that these actions will greatly increase participation rates and guarantee the successful, moral, and secure gathering of data.

### **1.8. Organization of the study**

The initial chapter of this study offers foundational context and explores organizational effectiveness, strategic planning methods, and the functional environment of NGOs in South Sudan. It also outlines the central research issue and articulates the study's aims and guiding questions, and emphasizes its applicability, scope, and possible limitations. A theoretical review is provided in Chapter 2., examining models alongside the concept of organizational performance within NGOs. Additionally, the empirical review explores studies on strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, resource allocation, and knowledge management in the nonprofit sector. The section also outlines the theoretical framework underpinning the investigation, identifies existing research gaps, and consolidates relevant scholarly discourse. Chapter Three offers a comprehensive review of the investigative blueprint, encompassing instruments for data gathering, sampling methodology, preliminary assessment, and procedures for ensuring data accuracy and dependability. Chapter Four presents the empirical outcomes, detailing participation levels, respondent profiles, summary statistics, association patterns, and findings from regression modeling. Finally, Chapter Five encapsulates the study's synthesis, underscores key insights, proposes recommendations, and suggests pathways for future inquiry.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

The literature review supporting the current study is presented in this chapter, along with the conceptual framework, theoretical and empirical reviews, and research gaps that support the current study.

#### 2.2 Theoretical Literature Review

This study paid particular attention to goal-oriented vision, resource-based theory, academic performance theory and stakeholder perspective

##### 2.2.1 Goal setting theory

Based on Edwin Locke's 1968 Goal-Setting Theory, effectiveness is significantly enhanced when individuals pursue specific and challenging objectives while receiving meaningful feedback. The theory is based on the idea that when people have specific goals to work toward, they are more inclined to perform. Locke and Latham (2002) expanded on the theory by identifying five key concepts: commitment, challenge, clarity, task complexity, and feedback.

Goal setting supports the variable direction setting process of strategic planning in NGOs by offering an organized framework for transforming organizational missions and visions into achievable goals. When organizational activities align with strategic priorities through well-defined goals, performance outcomes improve. For instance, NGOs operating in complex environments like South Sudan benefit from having well-defined goals that guide decision-making, improve accountability, and make performance monitoring easier.

Empirical research supports the theory's practical applicability. For example, Latham and Locke (2006) found that goal specificity and difficulty directly affect organizational

performance by increasing employee focus and perseverance. Additionally, having clear goals facilitates better stakeholder coordination and efficient resource allocation, two factors that are critical to NGOs' success. More recent research (e.g., Locke & Latham, 2019) offers strong evidence that strategic goal setting significantly influences organizational efficiency, especially when combined with participatory management and feedback mechanisms, in contrast to older viewpoints (e.g., Castrogiovanni, 1996; Ramanujam & Venkatraman, 1987), which frequently lacked empirical validation in the non-profit sector.

### **2.2.2 Resource Based Theory**

Barney's (1991) contributions to the RBT are acknowledged. The concept of resource position barriers was developed in a significant study by Wernerfelt (1984). Since every organization possesses distinct resources and competencies utilized to optimize internal assets, the central argument of the theory is that activities within firms inherently vary from one another. Every company builds capabilities using the resources already in place, and when such competencies are properly developed, they give the company a competitive edge (Pearce & Robinson, 2007).

According to this theory, resource heterogeneity between enterprises plays a significant role, but it is insufficient for achieving a competitive stance that is both successful and sustainable (Alvarez & Buzenitz, 2001). Performance is probably more influenced by a company's internal resources, talents, and capabilities than by external environmental factors. Performance is reported as high in some firms, irrespective of the firm characteristics, because these organizations adopt techniques related to quality management and cost reduction. However, optimal performance depends on how one organization varies from the others in scenarios when companies interact as competitors or collaborators (Wernerfelt, 2014). Several critiques have been leveled at the resource-based theory regarding its applicability to organizational theory.

According to Wernerfelt (1994), an organization's resources could be valued less than they are now. The term "resources" has remained ambiguous because organizational resources can be obtained and released with rigidities. Moreover, because different firms have

concept may not hold true indefinitely. It is not appropriate to utilize firm heterogeneity as a benchmark for strategic management components. Organizational structures are in place to make sure the company succeeds in whatever it decides to undertake. Therefore, rather than being noticeable, strategic management procedures between organizations should be routine.

The theoretical soundness of the RBV was questioned by Priem and Butler (2001), who also looked at how applicable it was in practical settings. Nevertheless, the theory gave the researcher information about elements crucial to business operations. As a result, resource-based theory was applied to help explain how strategy implementation and business performance are related in this study. ability to use its human resources competencies to create and execute strategies that raise performance levels inside non-governmental organizations. It will describe the part strategic managers play in devising the most effective resource utilization plans, which are essential to enhancing strategic plans. Additionally, it emphasizes the significance of strategic monitoring and assessment, which is contingent upon resource availability. This study used this theory to explain how an organization could make better use of its resources to improve non-governmental organizations' efficacy in South Sudan.

### **2.2.3 Contingency Theory**

According to contingency theory, there is no one ideal way to organize, and every tactic is equally successful (Galbraith, 1973). After examining four major firms, Chandler (1962) postulated that organizations will inevitably change to suit the demands of their strategy. Chandler believed that the ability of management to respond to changes in the external environment in a logical, methodical, and linear manner determines the effectiveness of the company. The general orienting hypothesis, which holds that organizations will adapt most effectively if their internal characteristics best meet the demands of their environments, is the foundation affect how internal features in organizations develop.

The environment's unpredictable nature and quick rate of change cast doubt on this idea's application, especially for small businesses that could lack the time or money to make the necessary changes to stay up with the fast-paced market. Similarly, one could argue that

the failure of a single subsystem does not always mean that the system as a whole is prevented. Nonetheless, this idea is essential for highlighting how an organization's environment is essential to its existence and how even small enterprises cannot ignore it.

#### **2.2.4 Sustainability Theory**

According to sustainability theory, a process, entity, or result can be sustained across time. Generally speaking, sustainability is the quality of being sustainable. This idea can be applied to NGOs' operations because sustainability may increase the likelihood of their survival. Sustainability, in the words of Rosenbaum (1993), is the use of practices, structures, and materials that won't damage natural cycles or deplete resources. The long-term viability of a country is contingent upon the sustainability of its business enterprises. The competitiveness of the NGOs sector, which is impacted by the use of strategic planning techniques, determines the long-term performance. This is probably going to help NGOs expand and survive more often. A concern for countries is the failure rate of NGOs, which might impede their progress. For NGOs, a consistent competitive advantage can be achieved through the appropriate application of strategic planning methods.

A strong basis for comprehending how (NGOs) can accomplish long-term performance through strategic planning that strikes a balance is provided by sustainability theory. This theoretical perspective emphasizes the importance of integrating economic, social, and environmental factors into core decision-making frameworks. It operates on the principle that entities should meet current objectives while safeguarding future capabilities. In the context of NGOs operating in South Sudan, the theory underscores the value of strategic initiatives such as prudent resource distribution, goal alignment, and participatory governance. These measures are designed not only to deliver immediate benefits but also to cultivate enduring impact and organizational resilience amid adversity.

The performance metrics of NGOs in this study, especially learning and development, financial success, and competitive advantage, are in line with sustainability theory. NGOs are better equipped to adapt and prosper in changing environments, for instance, by establishing compelling and achievable goals, regularly reviewing mission statements, and guaranteeing clear strategic direction. Furthermore, sustainable resource allocation

guarantees that the organization's assets are used effectively and to further long-term goals. Examples of this include budgeting for extracurricular activities, academics, and fair staffing.

To ensure sustainability, management decisions must be inclusive, informed, and clearly communicated. A supportive decision-making environment that encourages dedication and explores options has a direct impact on organizational stability and adaptability. In a similar vein, stakeholder participation promotes accountability, legitimacy, and shared ownership all of which are critical for sustained success. This covers stakeholder mapping, strategy input, and environmental scanning. Overall, sustainability theory strengthens the objectives of this study by highlighting the strategic interplay between direction, decisions, resources, and stakeholder engagement in affecting the effectiveness and long-term viability of NGOs in South Sudan. It encourages companies to see beyond their present issues and develop robust, adaptable, and impact-oriented systems.

## **2.3 Empirical Literature Review**

This segment provides an in-depth analysis of existing empirical studies focused on strategic management practices and their influence on organizational performance. The core aim of this review is to uncover gaps within the current body of literature regarding the contribution of strategic planning to the functional effectiveness of NGOs in South Sudan. The independent variables assessed include stakeholder engagement, managerial decision-making, allocation of resources, and the effect of strategic direction on NGO operations within the region.

### **2.3.1 Direction setting and Performance**

According to Faria (2002), the foundation for creating the firm purpose should be a detailed analysis of the benefits that both present and future customers want as well as an evaluation of the current and anticipated environmental conditions. A mission statement should center on the market or markets that the company is trying to serve, not the product or service being provided. If not, a new technology may soon render the product or service outdated and the mission statement unrelated to the day-to-day activities of the business. The article

continues by suggesting that a marketing plan's goals are essential. Without goals, it is impossible to evaluate how well a marketing campaign is working. They ought to be time-specific, quantifiable, practical, and in line with the organization's priorities. In order to ensure that marketing initiatives are coordinated and directed in a consistent manner, marketing managers at lower levels receive guidance and communication from carefully crafted objectives that convey marketing management concepts. By giving workers something to aim for, objectives can act as motivators. Objectives also make executives think more clearly, and they serve as a foundation for control. A plan's efficacy may be evaluated in relation to its stated aims.

Frazier (1998) asserts that the business definition presented in the organization's vision must be supported by the strategic strategy. The goals are typically explicit since they follow from the vision. But keep in mind that they also need to consider the remaining components of the plan. Typically, businesses define their goals in terms of desired revenue, market share, or overall sales. The majority of businesses use one of these approaches when setting goals, but they may also include others like the quantity of devoted clients, customer satisfaction levels, and retention rates. Achieving even little of your goals might be disastrous. It's acceptable to have highly clear goals. They have to be verifiable and always have a time frame.

Rudelius (1989) suggests concentrating the business on the three Cs: customers, rivals, and the company itself interact to define the fundamental nature of an organization's operations. A company's mission statement outlines the kinds of clients it hopes to attract, their unique demands, and the technological tools it will use to meet those goals. Furthermore, according to Donnelly (2007), the mission statement should be meaningful and practical, easy to relate to, and simple to recall so that all members of the organization, regardless of level, may find direction and purpose in it.

As a result, Paul (1985) supports the establishment of precise goals that specify the performance level the organization aspires to attain in the future, taking into account the opportunities and challenges presented by the environment as well as the firm's strengths and shortcomings. Certain missions have been shown to negatively impact corporate

performance (Hesterly, 2010). While some businesses have developed strategies that give them a considerable competitive edge, missions can also negatively impact a company's performance. For instance, a company's goal may occasionally be extremely inwardly focused and limited to the personal objectives and values of its founders or senior managers, regardless of whether or not such priorities and values are congruent with the business realities the company faces. Wellington (2000) argues that a company needs goals for each of its Strategic Business Units in addition to overarching marketing objectives. Goals are frequently expressed in terms that are both quantitative (market share, percentage profit increase) and qualitative (image, degree of innovation, leadership position in the industry).

Directed setting had a positive and important effect on results," according to a study by Odhiambo (2018) that used descriptive analysis approach to examine Kenya's Savings and Credit Co-operatives Limited Strategic Practices and Performance Union. The study also demonstrated that strategic intent, which is represented in the mission, vision, and objectives of the organizations, has a favorable and significant relationship with their success. His experience had only been doing business with SACCOs. Thus, a more thorough discussion of the education sector would be covered in this research.

Sandada, Poee, and Dhurup (2014) looked at how strategic planning was used in South African small and medium-sized businesses. The findings of the research indicate that small and medium-sized enterprises employed environmental analysis as a key element within their strategic planning framework to boost organizational effectiveness. This was complemented by clearly defined mission and vision statements, structured strategy documents, evaluation and oversight processes, information dissemination, motivational strategies, workforce engagement, and planning timelines. The findings point to a consistent and positive correlation between SMEs success and strategic planning.

Linge, T., Kiriri, and Shuria (2016) investigated the influence of strategic forecasting and planning on the distribution of relief supplies within Somalia. The study adopted a survey-based methodology, collecting responses from 212 out of a total sample frame of 450 staff members within the targeted organizations. Descriptive statistical methods were employed

to analyze respondent demographic profiles, while inferential approaches namely regression analysis and PPMC were utilized to evaluate the proposed hypotheses. The findings revealed a statistically significant p-value ( $P = 0.000$ ) and a coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.109$ ), underscoring the pivotal role of strategic planning in enhancing the performance of NGOs. Moreover, the study identified a strong and positive association between the independent variables—namely strategic forecasting, contingency planning, and strategic planning—and the effectiveness of humanitarian aid delivery. Unlike the referenced study, which relied solely on primary data, the present research will incorporate both primary and secondary sources to enrich its empirical foundation.

In Kenya, locally, Momanyi (2018) In order to ascertain how strategic planning affected organizational performance, a higher education institution in Kenya was included in the study. The target population consisted of 71 officers working under the units, leaders of business units, technical workers, scholars, and research scientists. The dependability of the data was assessed using five responders from the entire sample. Through the application of stratified random sampling, the sample size was reduced to 71 participants. Primary data collection was conducted using structured questionnaires. The results indicated a notable relationship between strategic planning and goal attainment within higher education institutions, reflected by a coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) of 0.145 and a p-value of 0.107. The study further emphasized that strategic management and planning are fundamental to the success of both business enterprises and non-governmental organizations.

Burugu (2018) looked into how well Naivas Limited performed in Kenya with regard to strategy planning. According to the report's conclusions, senior management must stick to budgetary constraints while incorporating the how important it is for a company to carry out internal and external assessments, especially when it comes to selecting critical strategic options for its goals. According to the study, formal management communication about the organization's strategic objectives can increase participation and facilitate goal implementation and assessment.

According to Darbi (2012), there is a need for strategic management tools that can facilitate the administration of a for-profit higher education institution in a developing country with

renewed corporate powers. These tools can be mechanical assertions and ideas (p. 23). This article studied the nature of employees' understanding of machine statements and ideas, their level of ownership, and how the machine's claims and ideas could influence their behaviors and attitudes. It was based on a poll of 120 employees. The majority of employees, according to the findings, have a basic understanding of mechanical and vision statements, but they don't always meet them; they also have low expectations for ownership and part/content awareness. Only higher education institutions were the subject of the investigation. We shall carry out our job in public high schools that are not for profit.

An evaluation of the purpose and vision statements for higher education institutions' strategic plans was released by Özdem (2011) on page 45. There were seventy-two public universities in the research consortium. These findings showed that the university mission statements most prominently feature promises about providing resources to educate a trained workforce. Having universal, enough, and skilled knowledge was one of the university mission statements that was utilized the most. In their vision statements, universities primarily highlighted services related to their research role. One of the most often emphasized messages was the goal of becoming a nationally and internationally recognized, preeminent, and esteemed research university. The milieu of universities was the exclusive focus of this study.

### **2.3.2 Resource Allocation and Performance**

To achieve their executive objectives, executive planners make use of resources (KESI, 2011). Omiyale (2018) carried out research to evaluate the importance and suitability of physical amenities in addition to their impact on student achievement. The sample consisted of ninety instructors, twenty-two vice-principals, and eleven supervisors. To assess the data, straightforward stratified random sampling techniques were applied. The study finds that the Ondo West Local Government Area's high schools are provided with relatively sufficient funding. However, in the selected schools, there is a disparity in the number of teachers, especially in some subject areas, which affects academic achievement. The study, which was conducted in Nigeria, focused only on academic achievement as a

proxy for student performance. As a result, our research which was carried out in Kenya discussed every aspect of high school achievement.

An organization can use one or more of the following four categories of resources to accomplish its goals: financial, technological, human, and physical resources (David, 2003). Following the strategic option selection phase, management's focus shifts to assessing the strategy's consequences for resources (Campbell et al., 2002).

The course places a strong emphasis on implementing HR frameworks and carrying out essential execution administration frameworks. The excellent internal organization of resources is crucial for the effective application of methodologies. It guarantees that faculty members are well-equipped by fostering and supporting their skill development and appointing the most qualified individuals to key positions, as well as that internal association structures are adaptable to the demands of the system. While Pearce and Robinson (2010) agree that strict rules are essential for distributing resources, they also state that guidelines must specify how to continue with short-term objectives that can be assessed and finished within a year. In addition, intelligent goals that consider how well business operations function, customer satisfaction, loyalty, and retention, as well as product performance, competitive performance, and quality improvement, should be developed.

Ondo State, Nigerian high schools' effective usage and upkeep of ICT resources for improved teaching and learning outcomes (Ayeni & Ogunbameru, 2013). Quantitative techniques for data collecting and analysis were applied, along with the introduction of a survey study approach. A total of 404 participants 60 professors and 344 students completed the questionnaire. It was determined from the results that interactions between educators and students using ICT resources were inadequate and ineffective. Due to its emphasis on ICT resources, this study will only offer a limited amount of data. Mucai (2013) studied how educational services are used and available to affect high school students' performance. A research approach was employed in this study.

Strategic planning's impact on productivity in Indonesia's public sector was examined by Azahari, Mustafa, and Yusoff (2017) between 2012 and 2017., contributed pertinent data

about the firms' productivity. Questionnaires were distributed to 284 respondents, yielding a 45.77% response rate. It was determined that the link was important and helpful. Consequently, a thorough application of strategy planning will lead to a significant increase in internal business productivity. Public sector companies' involvement in the study significantly enhances the findings because they are subject to different regulations and standards than non-governmental organizations. The effectiveness and strategic planning of NGOs were the main subjects of the current study.

### **2.3.3 Decision Making and Performance**

Strategy decision-making is described by Hill, Jones, and Schilling (2014) as the processes carried out at the corporate, functional, and financial levels of an organization in order to carry out a strategy plan. This is the process by which plans for programs that usually ask for modifications to the entire organizational structure, management system, and overall organizational culture are put into action in order to implement strategies and policies. This strategy involves allocating resources toward strategic goals through the application of organizational and managerial techniques (Daft, 2004).

A range of plans, budgets, and procedures are available for strategic execution. Elmelegy (2015) conducted a study on school administration and how high school administrators in Egypt make important decisions the general prerequisites for decision-making and ascertain how school administrators (SBMs) participate in the process in Egyptian high schools. It depends on how precisely the fundamentals of SBM are communicated, as well as how this relates to the precision of decision-making. SBM will increase staff and teacher participation in decision-making processes, according to the study. Additionally, by empowering educators, assigning authority, and promoting collaborative decision-making with better results, SBM can improve decision-making.

### **2.3.4 Stakeholder Involvement**

Participating in the, according to Possey, increases the sense of ownership and dedication to achieving the goal among those affected by the choice. Additionally, as more people engage in the collaborative process of shared interest, the output quality will likewise rise.

More stakeholders involved in decision-making may consequently foster a sense of ownership inside the business, which could lead to better strategy outcomes. Enter at <https://www.everettcc.edu>. Numerous parties have an interest in the organization's success because they depend on it or provide services to it. These parties can be broadly, with the former having greater influence and success than the latter.

According to Lozano (2005), key stakeholders like customers and employees decide whether a business will survive because they are familiar with the. As a result, they can turn those threats and weaknesses into opportunities and strengths. According to Pfeffer and Salancik (1978), customers and employees supply the business with the vital resources required for its success. Ansoff (1965) foreshadows that the commitment and involvement of organizational members is the only way to realize the strategic objective.

## **2.4 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps**

The section highlights the research gaps in the updated texts and the study's main topic. The management (NGOs) situated in South Sudan has rarely been the subject of most studies. Furthermore, the research never assessed how crucial strategic planning is when deciding how much money to give non-governmental organizations. Moreover, a lot of research hasn't examined progress monitoring, which makes sure that strategies are accessible and connected to the organization's overall program. This decisions, control and assessment, and strategic planning in high schools on student achievement. The study will close the research gap by closely examining the performance and methods of operation of the NGO.

**Table 2.1 Summary of Literature and Research Gaps**

<b>Writer and Year</b>	<b>Study's primary focus</b>	<b>Findings</b>	<b>Study Gaps</b>	<b>The current study's focus</b>

Odhiambo (2018)	The scope of the research had been restricted to SACCO business	Overall, directed setting significantly and favorably affected SACCO performance.	The scope of the research had been restricted to SACCO business.	This study will look at the in South Sudan and the direction of strategic planning.
Darbi (2012)	Reviewed the The infrequency of QASO's school visits was caused by a poor road strategic plans	the university mission statements most prominently feature comments about providing resources to educate a skilled workforce.	This study will only look at performance and the university environment.	The function of South Sudan are covered in this study.
Bukhuni (2015)	Effects of school values and culture on employee	found that; that school values such as strategic direction for others and	This work was limited to a single variable i.e., core values	The study focused on four variables, i.e., Direction setting,
	performance outcomes in public secondary schools	partnerships with employees facilitated the achievement of organizational objectives		Resource allocation, monitoring, evaluation and analysis and management decision making
Omiyale (2018)	Evaluating the essence and appropriateness of physical facilities	According to the study, high schools in the Ondo West Local Government	Nigeria, focused only on academic achievement	it took the four variables into consideration

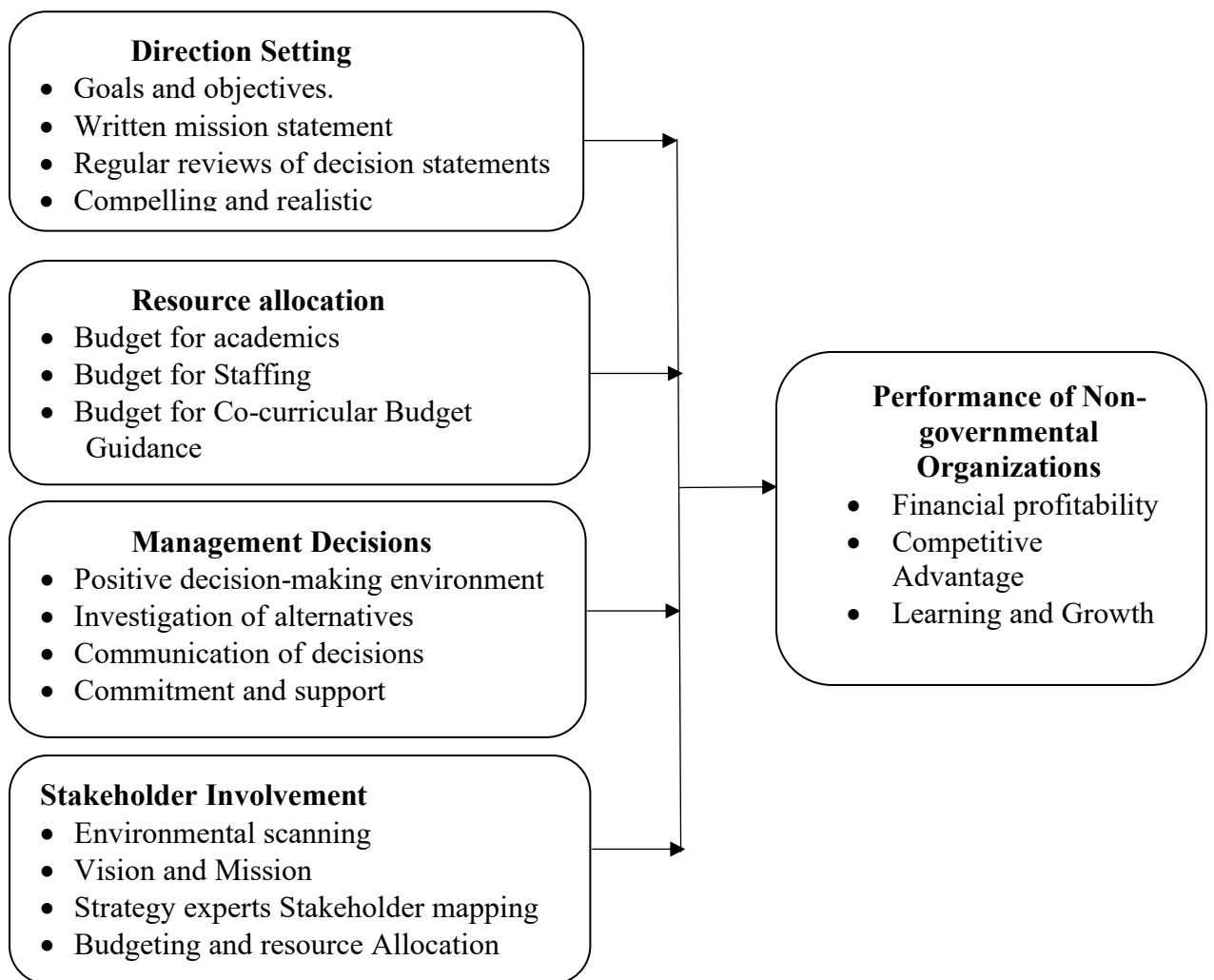
	and their impact on academic results	Area receive relatively sufficient resources. However, academic performance is impacted by the shortage and excess of instructors, particularly in subject areas, in the chosen schools.	as a proxy for student performance.	
Mucaï, (2013)	Assessment of the accessibility educational to impact secondary school students' performance	The study discovered that inadequate facilities and equipment, together with a lack of textbooks, hindered mixed-day schools' academic performance.	The study was a survey that was restricted to mixed secondary schools. Only academic performance as a predictor of school performance was examined in the study.	This study is about the role governmental organizations in South Sudan.
Ndungu <i>et al.</i> , (2015)	investigated how effective secondary school teaching and	The study discovered that since teacher and	The monitoring component	The infrequency of QASO's school visits

	learning are impacted by monitoring and assessment in Githunguri sub county.	student attendance affects, the questionnaires and interview schedule would improve the tracking of teacher and student attendance at school.	was not included in the study.	was caused by a poor road effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan are covered in this study.
Ochieng <i>et al.</i> , (2012)	Research on tracking and measuring success of programs at CDF High schools in	The infrequency of QASO's school visits was caused by a poor road with little input from constituents are engaged in project management and assessment.	Only CDF projects were the subject of the research.	governmental organizations in South Sudan performed in terms of strategic planning.
Lumosi <i>et al.</i> , (2015)	A comparative study of Kakamega East Public Schools and Kakamega County Central Sub- Counties	The two sub-counties' approaches to record analysis did not differ much. The infrequency of QASO's school visits was caused by a poor road network, a lack of staff, and budgetary difficulties.	The analysis was limited to comparisons. This was restricted to outside assessment.	South Sudan, employed descriptive statistics and was limited to one subcounty.

**Source: Author (2023)**

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

Scholars vary in their definitions of conceptual frameworks based on the subject matter being studied, but they always refer to the same kind of methodology that is, flowcharts showing the steps taken to solve problems. A conceptual framework, for example, is described as a collection of broadly defined concepts that are methodically arranged to offer a focus, a justification, and a tool for the integration and interpretation of information (Smyth, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994).



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework**

**Source: Author (2023)**

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Introduction

The research design used in this study is thoroughly discussed in this chapter, along with its advantages and rationale. The study examined the attributes of the target population, outlined the sampling procedures, detailed the approaches used for data collection, described the techniques for analyzing and presenting the data, and concluded with an in-depth exploration of the ethical principles guiding the research.

#### 3.2 Research Design

A research design is a methodical framework that directs data collection, measurement, and analysis (Babbie, 2011; Zikmund et al., 2010). The research type, sampling strategies, data sources, collection methods, measurement concerns, and analysis tactics are all specified. A descriptive research design will be used in this study, which is suitable for analyzing the state of strategic planning procedures today and how they affect the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan.

The justification for using this design lies in its ability to provide an accurate profile of situations, events, or individuals. Descriptive research enables the researcher to describe variables in detail, such as direction setting, resource allocation, management decisions, and stakeholder involvement, and how these elements influence organizational performance. As noted by Marianov (2021), descriptive design is essential when the aim is to understand the nature, frequency, and relationship of key factors. Therefore, this design will support the study's goal of identifying and interpreting patterns, relationships, and trends in strategic planning and performance among NGOs in South Sudan..

#### 3.3 Target Population

The total number of study participants is referred to as the population. A population, according to Mugenda (2008), is any collection of people, cases, things, or articles that

share similar traits. The population in this study refers to the full set of components, particularly the senior employees who work directly in operational performance and strategic planning for (NGOs) in South Sudan.. This study targets employees who hold senior positions in departments such as operations, finance, human resources, policy, and programs, as they are most likely to provide informed perspectives on the strategic planning processes and how these influence organizational performance. The total target population for this study is 234 individuals drawn from various NGOs operating in South Sudan.

### **3.4 Sampling Design**

#### **3.4.1 Sample**

Time or budgetary constraints could make it impossible to fully list every subject covered in a study. Selecting respondents or a sample that accurately reflects the characteristics of the population becomes crucial. Kothari (2011) states that the sample was chosen primarily due to its ability to reduce unimportant factors like weariness, which could lead to erroneous conclusions if the entire population was included. In the event of a finite population, Kothari (2011) proposes the following formula to ascertain the necessary number for sample selection.

To calculate the sample size at a 95% confidence level for a population of 234;

### **3.5 Data Collection Instrument**

Primary data sources will be used in interactive interviews to obtain data for this project, primary data is information the researcher obtains directly from respondents (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). For this reason, primary data will be considered more accurate and up to date. An interview schedule will be the primary data collection tool used in this project. The two interview formats that the researcher will employ for study evaluation are structured interviews and in-depth interviews. Structured interviews are more focused on obtaining answers to pre-planned questions than in-depth interviews, when the interviewers sought to encourage open and honest responses. This made it possible to

compromise between in-depth analysis of a small number of problems and comprehensive coverage of every topic.

### **3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Research Instrument**

#### **3.6.1 Pilot Test**

A preliminary investigation was conducted as a limited-scale assessment to evaluate research methodologies, instruments for data gathering, participant recruitment strategies, and additional investigative techniques in preparation for the broader study. (Kothari, 2004). It was essential to assess the instruments for clarity and effectiveness in a study involving field data collection. The pilot test served to confirm the appropriateness of the research instruments before the actual study. It resembled the main study in format and structure. A pilot study, as described by Simon (2011) and Dikko (2016), is a simplified version of the full research that identifies potential ambiguities that could affect respondent understanding, and addresses issues related to instrument validity and reliability.

Twelve respondents were selected from two (NGOs) located in Juba, the capital of South Sudan, for the study's pilot test. About 10% of the planned study sample size was comprised of these 12 participants. The primary data analysis did not include their answers. This pilot study's main goal was to evaluate the efficacy and dependability of the research tools.. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2011), pilot testing is critical for determining the accuracy of the research design and helps in refining sampling procedures.

#### **3.6.2 Validity**

Validity denotes the extent to which a data collection tool accurately captures the concept it is designed to measure. Essentially, it evaluates whether variations in the collected data genuinely represent differences among the subjects studied (Kothari, 2004). To uphold content validity, the instruments used in this research will be crafted with input from academic professionals and reviewed by a panel of domain experts specializing in strategic planning and NGO performance. This panel will evaluate the instruments for lucidity,

pertinence, and completeness. Moreover, a preliminary test involving 12 participants accounting for 20% of the projected sample will be conducted. These individuals will be selected from the target population but will not participate in the main study to mitigate potential bias. Insights gathered from the pilot exercise will inform refinements aimed at enhancing the instruments' clarity and overall utility. This process, including the use of expert review and piloting, ensures both content and face validity of the instruments.

### **3.6.3 Reliability**

As noted by Dornyei (2013), Reliability denotes the degree to which a research tool yields consistent and replicable results across various instances of use. To assess this level of consistency, a preliminary test will be carried out using 10% of the sample, selected from a population similar to that of the main study. The instrument's internal consistency will be evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient. In this investigation, a reliability score of 0.7 or higher will be considered acceptable, indicating that the items effectively capture the same underlying construct and exhibit adequate inter-item correlation. Before the actual study is carried out, the feedback and data gathered from this pilot test will be utilized to further enhance the instrument's reliability.

### **3.7 Data Collection Procedure**

The process of obtaining information and comparing it to the study's variables was referred to as data collection. were first and newly gathered, whereas secondary data referred to information retrieved from storage after having previously been collected by others. Questionnaires were used to collect only primary data from the selected NGOs for this project. The University prepared an introduction letter outlining the purpose of the project before sending the questionnaire to the NGOs. According to Patton (2002), an interviewer's skills and disposition gathered using these techniques. Additionally, in-depth interviews allowed for the recording of respondents' views in their own words, which was considered a highly recommended approach for obtaining qualitative data.

### **3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation**

Kothari (2004) defined data analysis as the complete process that started with data collection and concluded with data processing and interpretation. To align with the study's objectives, statistical methods were applied to analyze numerical data, while thematic examination was employed for non-numerical insights, given that the dataset comprised both quantitative and qualitative elements, responses from a range of participants were examined and summarized through content analysis. According to Robison (2003), the goal was to acquire a thorough qualitative description of the communication's manifest content. This approach had been effectively applied in earlier research, including studies by Odero (2006), Khamis (2006), Rinje (2006), and Ochanda (2005), and was deemed appropriate because of its objectivity and adaptability (Cooper & Schindler, 2006).

The statistical analysis of the quantitative data was carried out using the (SPSS) Version 22.0. SPSS was used to code and enter the data. To consolidate demographic data and general findings, summary statistics such as averages, counts, proportions, and variability measures were utilized. To examine the nature and intensity of associations among variables, Pearson's correlation technique was applied in alignment direction setting, resource allocation, management choices, and stakeholder involvement—on NGOs' performance, linear regression analysis was also conducted.

Data presentation followed a logical sequence. The NGOs and responders were first introduced and given a general profile. The findings pertaining to each of the important variables came next. Tables and figures presenting the results were provided, each with a narrative explanation. The final section contained hypothesis test, and interpretations of the results were. The equation that follows will be used.

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

Equation (1) Where

Y = performance of NGOs based in South Sudan;

X1 = Direction setting;

X2 = Resource allocation;

X3 = Decision making;

X4 = Stakeholder involvement

### **3.9 Ethical Considerations**

Consent forms were provided to respondents in order to guarantee their voluntary involvement and recognition of the potential risks linked to academic inquiry. The research upheld strict confidentiality protocols and safeguarded participants' anonymity, ensuring that all collected information was solely utilized for academic purposes and remained inaccessible to external entities. The study maintained the integrity of its findings by presenting the results transparently and ethically, as verified during the data collection phase.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter highlighted the study's key findings through a systematic examination of the collected data. The initial section provided contextual details regarding the sample and outlined the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Descriptive analysis was conducted for each variable to uncover and interpret underlying data trends. To determine the relationships among variables, correlation analysis was employed, offering a basis for assessing the strength of associations. Finally, regression analysis was utilized to evaluate the extent to which the independent variables influenced the dependent variable.

#### 4.2 Response Rate

146 executive staff members of NGOs operating in different departments in South Sudan were the study's target sample. 126 of the 146 intended participants were able to complete the study. According to Table 4.1, this corresponded to an 86.3% response rate.

**Table 4.1. Response Rate**

Element	Frequency	Percentage
Targeted sample size	146	100%
Questionnaires administered	146	100%
Responses received	126	86.3%
Responses not received	20	13.7%

In the present study, 146 participants were targeted to participate. The questionnaires were administered to all the targeted participants regardless. One hundred and twenty-six questionnaires were responded to, leading to 86.3% response rate. This show that a good number of the sample population responded to the survey, making the data more reliable. But 20 questionnaires, that is 13.7%, were not received back. This non-response rate, while

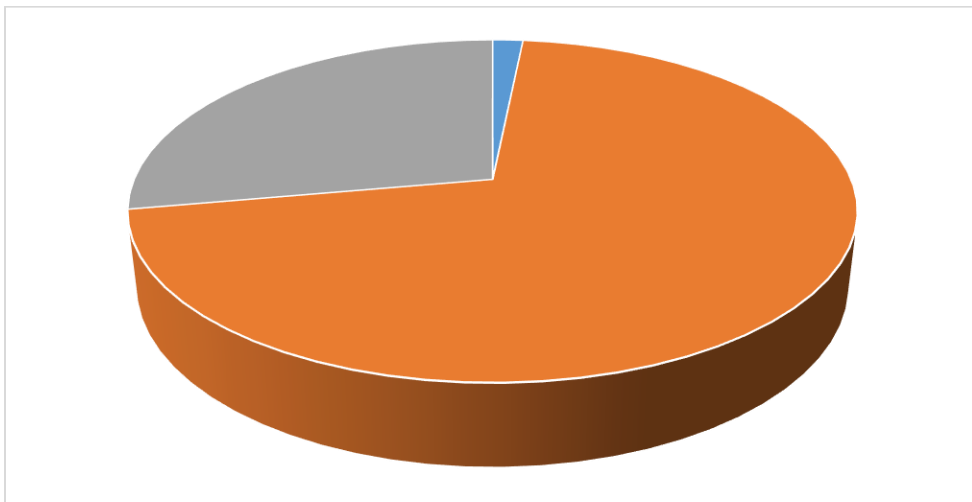
small, indicates a small shortfall that may slightly affect the extent to which the findings could be generalized, but the effect is unlikely to undermine the overall findings greatly.

### 4.3 Participants' Demographic Characteristics

An outline of the respondents' backgrounds, including their greatest level of education, length of time spent working for the company, and the size of the workforce they are a part of, is given in the section on Participants' Demographic Characteristics. This information helps contextualize the findings and enhances the understanding of the sample profile.

#### 4.3.1 Highest Level of Education

The questionnaire had a section on participants' level of education. Data collected was analyzed and findings presented using Figure 4.1.



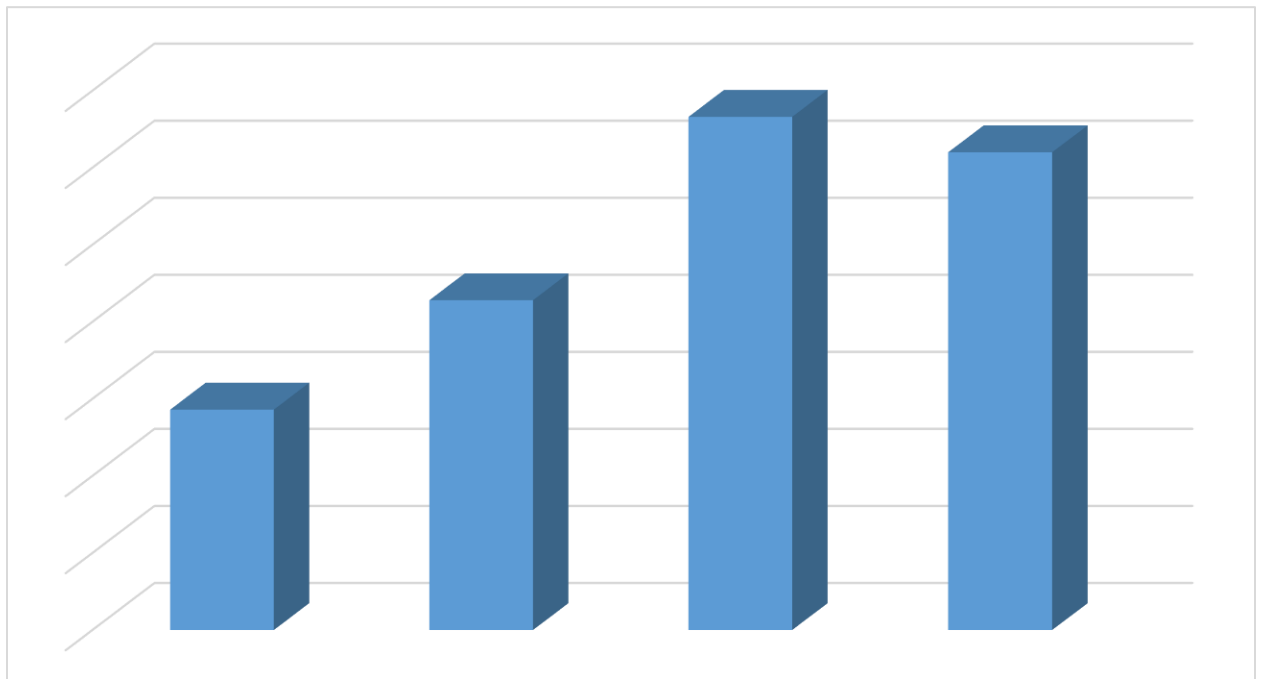
**Figure 4.1: Participants' education levels**

The data on education levels among respondents reveals that the majority hold higher qualifications. None of the participants reported having only a secondary education (0.0%,  $n = 0$ ), indicating a well-educated sample. A small proportion of respondents had a tertiary college qualification, comprising 1.6% ( $n = 2$ ) of the sample. The largest group consisted of university graduates, making up 70.6% ( $n = 89$ ), followed by those with a postgraduate qualification, who accounted for 27.8% ( $n = 35$ ). No respondents selected "Other" (0.0%,

n = 0), further reinforcing the high educational attainment within the sample. This distribution suggests that the sample largely comprises individuals with advanced academic qualifications.

#### 4.3.2 Experience of Working with the Organization

It was also necessary to analyze each participant's experience with the current NGO. The findings are represented using Figure 4.2.

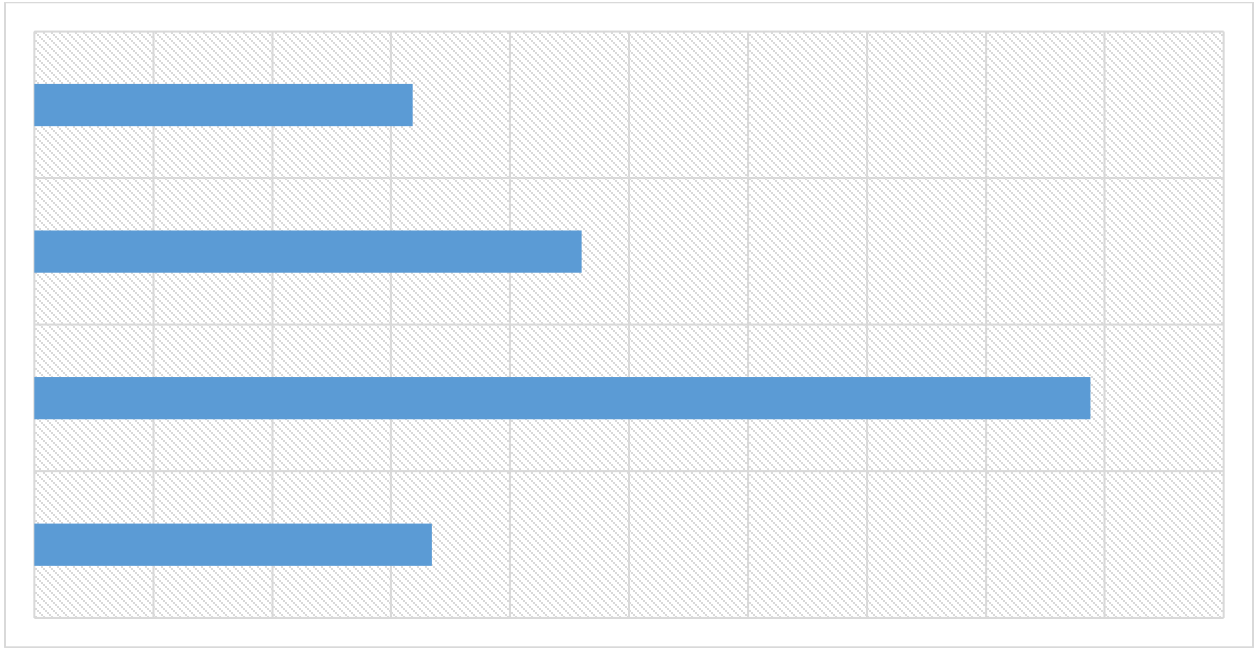


**Figure 4.2: Experience of working with the organization**

The data on respondents' experience within the organization indicates a diverse range of tenure. A minority, 14.3% (n = 18), have worked for less than 1 year, showing a small group of relatively new employees. Those with 1 to 3 years of experience make up 21.4% (n = 27), suggesting a moderate level of employee retention. The largest group, at 33.3% (n = 42), has between 3 and 5 years of experience, indicating a significant portion of employees with mid-level tenure. Meanwhile, 31.0% (n = 39) have been with the organization for over 5 years, representing a stable, long-term workforce. This distribution reflects a balanced mix of newer and more experienced employees in the organization.

### 4.3.3 Period of the Organization's Operation

Analysis of the years that an NGO has operated was conducted to determine the length of experience that an NGO has. Figure 4.3 shows the details.

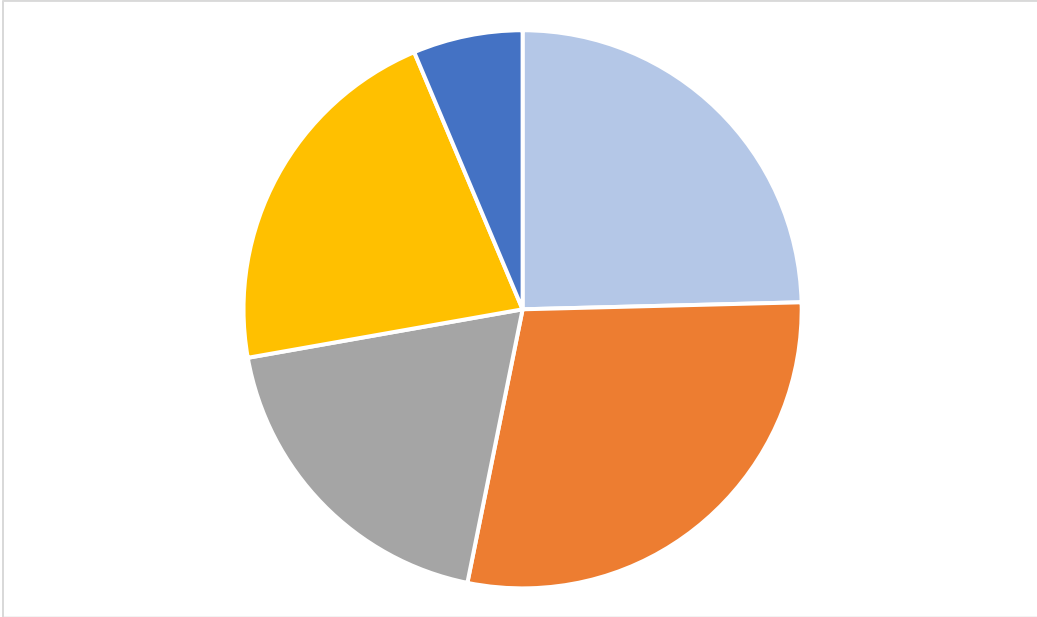


**Figure 4.3: Period of the NGO's operation**

The data on the period of NGO operation shows a varied distribution of experience across the respondents. A smaller proportion, 16.7% (n = 21), reported NGO operations of less than 1 year, suggesting a few newer organizations in the sample. The largest group, 44.4% (n = 56), falls within 1 to 3 years of operation, indicating a substantial portion of organizations in their early growth phase. Those 23.0% (n = 29), pointing to a significant presence of more established NGOs. Meanwhile, 15.9% (n = 20) have been operating for over 5 years, showing a minority of organizations with a long-term presence. This range reflects a diverse mix of new and more established NGOs in the sample.

### 4.3.4 Size of the Workforce

The size of the workforce includes the number of employees working for each NGO. The analyzed data shows that most of NGOs have between 50 and 100 employees, as shown in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4: Size of the Workforce**

The data illustrates the distribution of NGOs based on employee count, showing a variety in organizational sizes. The largest proportion, at 28.57% (n = 36), comprises NGOs with 50 to 100 employees, marking this range as the most common. Close to a quarter, or 24.60% (n = 31), of NGOs are small organizations with fewer than 50 employees. Mid-sized NGOs with 100 to 200 employees represent 19.05% (n = 24) of the total, while a slightly larger group, 21.43% (n = 27), consists of NGOs with 200 to 1000 employees. Only a small fraction, 6.35% (n = 8), are very large NGOs with over 1000 employees, indicating that such large organizations are relatively rare in this sample. This distribution highlights that most NGOs tend to operate with a moderate number of employees, with few reaching substantial sizes.

#### **4.3.5 The Necessity of Strategic Planning and Strategic Planning Units**

The study revealed that all the participants (100%) think that strategic planning is relevant in NGOs. However, most organizations surveyed were found not to have a strategic planning unit. Based on the results, 54.8% (n = 69) of the participants said that they do not have a strategic planning unit, implying that only 45.2% (n = 57) had a strategic planning unit. The results seem to coincide with the assertion by Abiddin et al. (2022) that strategic planning units constitute a costly additional to NGOs, which may make some of them to avoid instituting them. In relation to the strategic planning, all the participants mentioned key elements, including environmental scanning, involving stakeholder, internal analysis, devising the strategic direction, and defining. Every participant stated that strategic planning has improved the efficacy of achieving the goals and objectives of their respective NGOs since it has helped managers take into account how decisions made today will affect the future.

#### **4.4 Descriptive Analysis**

Descriptive analysis involved computing. The variables included direction setting, resource allocation, management decisions, stakeholder involvement, and performance of NGOs.

##### **4.4.1 Direction Setting**

Descriptive analysis for the variable, 'direction setting', was computed to.

**Table 4.2: Descriptive analysis for direction setting.**

Statement	Mean	STD
The organization's vision and mission are clear and guide our strategic planning efforts.	4.286	0.9948
The strategic goals and long-term objectives	4.349	0.9576
Leadership effectively communicates the strategic direction and priorities for our organization.	3.714	0.0108
The strategic direction allows.	3.587	0.4326
The strategic direction set is realistic and achievable with the resources available to the organization.	3.984	0.2648
Key stakeholders are actively involved in setting the strategic direction.	4.159	0.4222
Aggregate mean/STD	4.0131	0.5138

The computed overall mean for the variable stands at 4.0131, closely approximating a rating of 4 (agree). This suggests that a majority of respondents expressed agreement with the corresponding statements. The standard deviation, recorded at 0.4222, reflects minimal dispersion in the responses, indicating consistency around the mean, implying the participants held almost similar opinions or perceptions towards each statement. Past research has shown that having direction setting is one of the crucial strategic planning elements that define the success (or failure) of NGOs (Cazenave & Morales, 2021). The statements indicate the activities that NGOs undertake as part of the direction setting endeavor during the strategic planning process.

#### **4.4.2 Resource Allocation**

Descriptive analysis for the variable, 'resource allocation', was computed to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each item. The results were presented using Table 4.3.

**Table 4.3: Descriptive analysis for resource allocation.**

Statement	Mean	STD
Our organization has adequate resources available to meet its strategic objectives.	4.286	.9538
Resources are allocated in alignment with our organization’s long-term strategic goals.	3.254	1.3080
Budgeting is done sufficiently to all areas including academics, staffing and co-curricular activities in ways that minimize waste and maximize impact.	4.595	.3867
Our organization’s resource allocation process is flexible enough to adapt to changing strategic priorities.	4.452	.9847
Key stakeholders are adequately involved in the resource allocation process.	3.278	0.3893
Aggregate mean/STD	3.895	0.7671

The overall average score for the variable is 3.895, which is approximately equivalent to a value of 4 (agree). showed agreement with the related statements. A standard deviation of 0.7671 reveals a moderate concentration of responses around the mean, suggesting that participants generally shared comparable views or interpretations regarding each item. Past research has shown that having resource allocation is a critical component of strategic planning practices that define the success (or failure) of NGOs (White et al., 2022; Noakes & Teets, 2020). The statements indicate the activities that NGOs are keen on resource allocation as part of the direction setting endeavor during the strategic planning process.

#### **4.4.3 Management Decisions**

Descriptive analysis for the variable, ‘management decisions’, was computed to calculate the. The results were presented using Table 4.4.

**Table 4.4: Descriptive analysis for management decisions.**

Statement	Mean	STD
Management fosters a positive environment that encourages open and collaborative decision-making.	4.214	0.1215
Management consistently investigates multiple alternatives before finalizing strategic decisions.	3.952	0.2577
Decisions made by management are communicated effectively across all levels of the organization.	4.143	1.0561
There is a high level of commitment and support from management in implementing strategic decisions.	3.878	0.3719
Management demonstrates a commitment to supporting the NGO's mission through careful and strategic decision-making.	4.127	0.2774
Aggregate mean/STD	4.0628	0.4169

The overall mean value for the variable is 4.0628, which approximates a score of 4 (agree). This indicates that a substantial portion of respondents concurred with the associated statements. The std dev, measured at 0.4169, signifies a narrow range of variation in responses, suggesting that participants exhibited largely uniform perspectives or judgments across the items. Literature has consistently singled out management decision processes as an influential factor in strategic planning that affects the extent to which NGOs achieve their goals (Edwards, 2020; Rozbicka & Szent-Iványi, 2020). The statements indicate that the activities NGOs undertake as part of the management decisions endeavor during the strategic planning process are those included in the table.

#### **4.4.4 Stakeholder Involvement**

Descriptive analysis for the variable, 'stakeholder involvement', was computed to calculate the. The results were presented using Table 4.5.

**Table 4.5: Descriptive analysis for stakeholder involvement.**

Statement	Mean	STD
Stakeholders are actively involved in identifying and analyzing external environmental factors that may impact our strategic planning process.	4.476	.0934
Stakeholders have a meaningful role in shaping and refining our organization's vision and mission statements.	4.111	.9734
Our organization consults with internal and external stakeholders who are experts in strategy during the strategic planning process.	4.040	.3351
Stakeholders are thoroughly mapped, and their interests and influence are actively considered throughout the strategic planning process.	3.960	.2225
Stakeholders provide valuable input in prioritizing resources and setting the budget to align with strategic goals.	4.563	.8532
Aggregate mean/STD	4.230	0.4945

The consolidated mean score for the variable is 4.230, which closely aligns with a rating of 4 (agree). This suggests that a majority of the respondents affirmed the associated statements. The recorded standard deviation of 0.4945 reflects limited variation from the mean, indicating that the participants exhibited relatively consistent viewpoints or interpretations across the items. Similarly, existing research has consistently identified stakeholder involvement as a factor in strategic planning processes that influence organizational performance (Stekelorum et al., 2020). The statements show that the activities that NGOs undertake as part of the stakeholder involvement endeavor during the strategic planning process are central in their efforts to achieve performance prospects.

#### 4.4.5 Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations

Descriptive statistics for the variable titled ‘performance of NGOs were generated to determine the average values and standard deviations for each indicator. The outcomes were displayed in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6: Descriptive analysis for performance of non-governmental organizations.**

Statement	Mean	STD
The organization consistently meets or exceeds its financial goals and budget targets.	4.516	0.1436
The organization’s revenue sources are stable and sufficient to support its strategic initiatives.	3.857	0.218
The organization’s strategic initiatives give it a unique advantage over similar NGOs.	4.056	0.2541
The organization is well-regarded and often chosen as a preferred partner within its field.	4.214	0.0167
The organization encourages continuous learning and development to enhance performance.	4.437	0.5205
Aggregate mean/STD	4.216	0.2301

The combined mean score for the variable is 4.216, closely corresponding to a rating of 4 (agree). This implies that a significant proportion of participants expressed agreement with the relevant statements. The std dev of 0.2301 denotes limited dispersion in the responses, indicating that opinions or perceptions among participants were notably consistent, implying the participants held almost similar opinions or perceptions towards each statement. According to Mailu and Kariuki (2022), performance of non-governmental organizations is a crucial pursuit by management teams. Most NGOs seem to achieve the goals, as indicated by the data.

## 4.5 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a quantitative method employed to assess both the magnitude and nature of relationships among multiple variables. Within the scope of this study, it was utilized to examine and measure the linkages between the strategic planning efforts of (NGOs) and various performance metrics namely financial outcomes, competitive positioning, and organizational development. By understanding these relationships, it is possible to gain insights into how strategic planning impacts various facets of NGO performance, informing recommendations for optimizing organizational effectiveness. Based on the correlated data, correlation analysis was conducted and the findings presented using Table 4.7.

**Table 4.7: Correlation analysis**

		Direction setting	Resource allocation	Management decisions	Stakeholder involvement	Organizational Performance of NGOs.
Direction setting	PearsonCorrelation	1				
	Sig.(2-tailed)					
	N	126				
Resource allocation	PearsonCorrelation	.891	1			
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000				
	N	126	126			
Management decisions	PearsonCorrelation	.739	.705	1		
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	126	126	126		
Stakeholder involvement	PearsonCorrelation	.831	.827	.955	1	
	Sig.(2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		

	N	126	126	126	126	
Organizational Performance of NGOs.	Pearson Correlation	.710	.898	.804	.733	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	126	126	126	126	126

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

The findings validated that each of the four independent variables exhibits a strong and positive relationship with the performance of NGOs in South Sudan. A comprehensive breakdown of the correlation values derived from the dataset is presented in Table 4.8 below.

**Table 4.8: Summary, nature, direction, and implication of the correlations**

Variable	Correlation	Direction	Nature	Implication
Direction setting	0.710	Positive	Strong	direction setting leads to a 0.710 change in organizational performance of NGOs.
Resource allocation	0.898	Positive	Strong	resource allocation leads to a 0.898 change in organizational performance of NGOs.
Management decisions	0.804	Positive	Strong	in management decisions leads to a 0.804 change in organizational performance of NGOs.
Stakeholder involvement	0.733	Positive	Strong	in stakeholder involvement leads to a 0.733 change in organizational performance of NGOs.

The results are supported by existing literature showing that strategic planning practices influence organizational performance. For example, Odhiambo (2018) found that directed setting positively influences the performance of Kenya's Savings and Credit Cooperatives, although the research was limited to SACCOs. Darbi (2012) highlighted that university mission statements primarily emphasize providing resources for workforce education but

only focused on higher education institutions. Bukhuni (2015) identified that school values significantly impact performance outcomes, though it limited its analysis to a single variable, core values. Omiyale (2018) noted that while high schools received adequate resources, imbalances in teacher supply affected academic performance, focusing solely on the academic context in Nigeria.

Moreover, Mucai (2013) discovered that inadequate educational resources hindered secondary school performance, with a narrow focus on academic predictors. Ndungu et al. (2015) indicated that attendance impacts teaching and learning, but their study lacked a monitoring component. Ochieng et al. (2012) revealed that project management at CDF High Schools involved limited community input, restricting the focus to CDF projects. Lastly, Lumosi et al. (2015) found minimal differences in record analysis between sub-counties, but their research was limited to comparisons and external assessments.

#### 4.6 Regression Analysis

Regression analysis was employed to examine the relationship between strategic planning variables and the performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan. By quantifying these relationships, this analysis aims to identify, providing insights for effective decision-making and resource allocation. The analysis generated three types of statistics: model summary, (ANOVA), and coefficients.

##### 4.6.1 Model Summary

Table 4.9 outlines the summary of the regression model employed to assess how different elements of strategic planning influence the operational outcomes of NGOs.

**Table 4.91: Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
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1	.943a	.889	.885	.3128
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a. Predictors: (Constant), Direction Setting, Resource Allocation, Management Decisions, Stakeholder Involvement.

The regression output reveals a high correlation coefficient ( $R = 0.943$ ), signifying a strong relationship between the independent variables namely, direction formulation, resource deployment, managerial choices, and stakeholder participation and the outcome variable, which is the organizational performance of NGOs. The combined explanatory variables account for approximately 88.9% of the variance in performance outcomes, as indicated by the coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.889$ ). The adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.885 provides a more refined estimate by considering the number of predictors included in the model. Additionally, the standard error of the estimate, measured at 0.3128, reflects the average deviation of the observed values from the predicted regression line.

#### 4.6.2 Analysis of Variance

Table 4.10 presents the (ANOVA) results for the regression model assessing the factors influencing organizational performance.

**Table 4.10: ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	94.487	4	23.622	241.449	.000b
	Residual	11.838	121	.098		
	Total	106.325	125			

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Stakeholder Involvement, Resource Allocation, Direction Setting, Management Decisions

The regression model yields a Sum of Squares value of 94.487, reflecting a substantial proportion of variance attributed to the explanatory variables—namely stakeholder engagement, allocation of resources, strategic direction formulation, and decision-making processes. An F-statistic of 241.449 coupled with a significance level (p-value) of 0.000

underscores the statistical relevance of the model in evaluating the effect of strategic planning elements on the performance of NGOs operating in South Sudan. Consequently, the null hypothesis asserting that these predictors lack explanatory power over organizational performance is rejected. The model's strong significance suggests that the identified strategic planning dimensions serve as robust indicators of performance outcomes in non-governmental entities.

### 4.6.3 Coefficients

The output displays the individual coefficients corresponding to each predictor variable, alongside the statistical significance of their influence on the outcome variable. This assessment highlights the differentiated effects that various strategic planning components exert on the performance metrics of organizations, with direction setting, resource allocation, and stakeholder involvement showing significant positive relationships, while Management Decisions do not demonstrate a meaningful effect.

**Table 4.11: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.387	.106		3.661	.000
Direction Setting	.287	.091	.298	3.152	.002
Resource Allocation	.157	.073	.178	2.153	.033
Management Decisions	-.062	.105	-.069	-.596	.552
Stakeholder Involvement	.482	.105	.557	4.596	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance

Using the values generated, it is possible to create a multiple regression equation of the form:

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

Equation (1) Where  $Y$  = performance of NGOs based in South Sudan;  $X_1$  = Direction setting;  $X_2$  = Resource allocation;  $X_3$  = Decision making;  $X_4$  = Stakeholder involvement.

$$\text{Hence, } Y = 0.387 + 0.287X_1 + 0.157X_2 - 0.062X_3 + 0.482X_4 + \varepsilon$$

The constant value of 0.387 indicates the expected organizational performance when all predictor variables (Direction Setting, Resource Allocation, Management Decisions, and Stakeholder Involvement) are held at zero. The significance level of 0.000 confirms that this constant is statistically significant, providing a baseline from which performance can be evaluated. This indicates that when NGOs are not implementing any strategic planning practices performance of NGOs improves by 0.387.

With an estimated coefficient of 0.287, Direction Setting is positively correlated with organizational performance. Specifically, this relationship demonstrates the importance of goal orientation and strategic clarity in boosting organizational effectiveness. This is in line with research by Bukhuni (2022), who emphasized the importance of having a clear strategic direction for improving organizational effectiveness in non-profit settings. Additionally, Mucai et al. (2019) found that effective direction setting significantly enhances NGOs' strategic alignment, leading to improved performance outcomes. Their study supports the conclusions of chapter four by demonstrating that clearly defined goals and objectives are essential for organizational success in non-profit contexts. Furthermore, Bukhuni (2020) concluded that businesses with well-defined strategic directions are more capable of overcoming challenges and achieving their performance objectives. The results of the chapter, which highlight how direction setting enhances an organization's overall performance, are in line with this.

Resource Allocation is believed to improve the performance of the organization, as indicated by its regression coefficient of 0.157. In practice, a one-unit increase in resource allocation corresponds to an anticipated 0.157-unit improvement in performance metrics, presuming no other changes. The associated p-value of 0.033, which emphasizes the significance of effective resource allocation in enhancing organizational outcomes, validates the statistical validity of this relationship. This result aligns with the study by

Lumosi et al. (2021), which found that effective resource utilization contributes to improved operational efficiency within NGOs. Similarly, Ndungu et al. (2019) emphasized the importance of strategic resource deployment in optimizing organizational performance and operational effectiveness. Their conclusions support the findings presented in Chapter 4, which highlight the critical role of resource allocation in driving institutional success. Additionally, Burugu (2018) noted that senior leadership should embed the organization's mission, vision, and fundamental principles into the strategic planning process, while remaining mindful of financial limitations.

The coefficient of -0.062 indicates a slight inverse relationship between organizational performance and management decision-making. This implies that heightened managerial interventions might be associated with a minor decline in performance levels. However, this association is not of 0.552. This finding is significant because it contradicts earlier empirical data by Ndungu et al. (2020), which emphasized the contribution of strategic decision-making to organizational success. It also implies that other contextual factors might have an impact on this variable's efficacy in the current study. Bukhuni and Omiyale (2020) assert that the quality of management choices has a direct bearing on organizational agility and effectiveness, especially in rapidly evolving environments. This finding emphasizes the chapter's discussion of the importance of management decisions for organizational performance, even though the current study's coefficient is negative. Strategic management decisions are essential for developing organizational processes and enhancing non-profit performance overall, claim Lumosi et al. (2019). This supports chapter four's findings that effective management decision-making is necessary for high performance outcomes.

According to its coefficient of 0.482, stakeholder involvement and organizational performance are significantly positively correlated. This suggests that enhancing stakeholder involvement by one unit is associated with a 0.482-unit increase in organizational performance, provided that all other variables are held constant. The p-value of 0.000 affirms the statistical reliability and significance of this association, emphasizing the critical role stakeholder participation plays in strategic planning initiatives that are successful. Active stakeholder engagement significantly increases organizational

effectiveness in non-governmental organizations, per Omiyale's (2019) research. Additionally, Ndungu and Kamau (2019) emphasized that active stakeholder engagement leads to improved organizational performance and decision-making processes in NGOs. Their findings demonstrate the importance of stakeholder involvement in enhancing performance and corroborate those of chapter four. Mucai et al. (2020) claim that increased stakeholder participation enables organizations to better meet the needs of the community and achieve better outcomes.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Summaries**

The purpose of the research was to explore the linkage between strategic planning and the operational effectiveness of NGOs in South Sudan. It assessed how factors such as leadership choices, distribution of resources, strategic direction, and stakeholder engagement influence the overall performance of these organizations. 146 senior staff members with ties to South Sudanese non-governmental organizations provided both numerical and non-numerical data for analysis as part of the primary research methodology. The gathered data was analyzed using a combination of statistical and thematic approaches. The results overview section presents the primary findings for each variable along with the composite mean values and measures of regression, correlation, and dispersion that display the coefficients and significant values.

##### **5.1.1 Direction Setting and Organizational Performance of NGOs**

The initial objective focused on assessing how strategic direction influences the performance of non-governmental organizations in South Sudan. Respondents evaluated the effectiveness of direction-setting by considering factors such as the clarity of the organization's mission and vision, alignment with strategic objectives, quality of communication, and stakeholder participation. The average score for direction-setting was 4.0131 (SD = 0.5138), indicating general agreement among participants that well-defined

strategic direction enhances NGO performance. These results imply that a clear strategic framework contributes positively to organizational efficiency and the attainment of goals. A strong positive correlation was identified between strategic direction and organizational performance, with a statistically significant coefficient ( $r = 0.710$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that NGOs that invest in clearly articulating their mission and strategic priorities tend to achieve higher levels of success. Regression analysis further validated this relationship, revealing that a one-unit increase in direction-setting corresponds to a 0.2870-unit rise in organizational performance, assuming other factors remain unchanged ( $B = 0.2870$ ). The statistical significance of this coefficient ( $p = 0.002$ ) underscores the critical role of strategic direction as a determinant of performance in the NGO sector.

### **5.1.2 Resource Allocation and Organizational Performance of NGOs**

The second objective of the study aimed to evaluate how resource allocation influences the operational effectiveness of NGOs in South Sudan. This variable centered on participants' views regarding the strategic alignment, adaptability, and stakeholder involvement in resource utilization, as well as the extent to which resources are directed toward achieving institutional goals. A majority of respondents affirmed the importance of efficient resource deployment in realizing intended outcomes, reflected by a composite mean score of 3.8950 and a standard deviation of 0.7671. Furthermore, a statistically significant correlation coefficient ( $r = 0.812$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) indicated a strong positive association between resource distribution and organizational performance. This implies that improved alignment and sufficient resource allocation are closely linked to enhanced operational results. Regression analysis supported this finding, revealing a positive unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.1570$ ), meaning that a one-unit increase in resource allocation corresponds to a 0.1570-unit rise in performance. The statistical significance of the p-value ( $p = 0.033$ ;  $p < 0.05$ ) confirms that resource allocation serves as a key predictor of organizational success. This finding supports the notion that efficient resource allocation not only maintains operations but also enhances the NGO's capacity to carry out its mission in environments with limited resources.

### **5.1.3 Management Decisions and Organizational Performance of NGOs**

The third objective of the study aimed to assess how managerial decision-making influences the performance of NGOs, focusing on aspects such as clarity in decisions, inclusive leadership, effective information flow, and strategic coherence. The construct yielded an average score of 4.0628 with a standard deviation of 0.4169, indicating broad agreement among respondents regarding the positive impact of sound decision-making on organizational effectiveness. Correlation analysis revealed a moderately strong positive association between management decisions and performance, with a coefficient of  $r = 0.645$  ( $p < 0.05$ ). This suggests that decision-making approaches that prioritize transparency and stakeholder engagement are associated with improved outcomes. Regression analysis further supported this relationship, showing an unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.1430$ ), meaning that a one-unit enhancement in decision-making quality corresponds to a 0.1430-unit increase in performance, assuming all other variables are held constant. While the magnitude of influence is comparatively modest, the statistical significance ( $p = 0.047$ ) reinforces the relevance of managerial decisions as a valid predictor of organizational performance, underscoring management decisions as a meaningful contributor to NGO success. These findings support existing research, which shows that collaborative and well-communicated decisions can optimize organizational performance, particularly within the unique operational constraints of NGOs.

### **5.1.4 Stakeholder Involvement and Organizational Performance of NGOs**

The fourth research objective focused on evaluating the influence of stakeholder engagement on the operational performance of NGOs in South Sudan. This variable was assessed using indicators such as stakeholder involvement in shaping the organization's mission and vision, conducting environmental scans, developing strategic frameworks, and determining resource allocation priorities. The aggregated mean score for stakeholder participation was 4.2300, with a standard deviation of 0.4945, reflecting strong agreement among respondents that active stakeholder involvement positively contributes to organizational success. A robust positive correlation was observed between stakeholder input and performance metrics, with a coefficient of  $r = 0.868$  ( $p < 0.05$ ), indicating that

greater participation is closely linked to improved outcomes. This strong association highlights the strategic importance of engaging stakeholders in planning and decision-making processes to ensure alignment of priorities and optimal resource utilization. Regression analysis confirmed this relationship, producing a positive unstandardized coefficient ( $B = 0.4820$ ), which implies that a one-unit increase in stakeholder engagement leads to a 0.4820-unit rise in performance. The corresponding p-value ( $p = 0.000$ ) underscores the high level of statistical significance, affirming stakeholder involvement as a vital determinant of NGO effectiveness particularly for organizations that depend on stakeholder collaboration to achieve their objectives, these findings support the body of research showing that active stakeholder engagement enhances organizational effectiveness and goal alignment..

#### **5.1.5 Summaries of Interviews**

The interview data revealed four key themes that are critical to strategic planning and its impact on NGOs' performance. The significance of mission and vision statements as the pillars supporting all strategic initiatives was underlined by the first theme, Enhancing Organizational Performance through Strategic Clarity. Participants emphasized that by aligning departmental efforts with overarching goals, a clear mission enhances organizational focus and effectiveness..

The second theme, Collaborative Strategic Planning Processes, highlighted the importance of inclusivity in strategic planning. It was stated that obtaining input from a range of stakeholders was essential for creating a shared vision, increasing commitment, and balancing organizational objectives with team and community needs. Furthermore, it was thought that a systematic approach to environmental scanning was necessary in order for organizations to improve strategy formulation and remain adaptable to changes in the outside world..

The third theme, "Structured Implementation and Evaluation Mechanisms," highlighted how crucial clearly defined roles and action plans are to the successful implementation of strategies. Since it was thought that this structured approach encouraged efficiency and

accountability, regular evaluations using key performance indicators (KPIs) were used to track progress and guide any necessary adjustments. The fourth theme that surfaced was Strategic Alignment with Performance Enhancement, which emphasized the link between improved organizational outcomes and well-defined goals. Coordination and teamwork were enhanced during the strategic process because all parties were informed thanks to careful planning and effective communication. This alignment led to quantifiable improvements, confirming the idea that strategic clarity and collaborative planning are essential to NGOs' organizational success.

## **5.2 Conclusions**

The study concludes that stakeholder involvement, management decisions, resource allocation, and direction setting are essential components of strategic planning that significantly enhance NGO performance. Stakeholder involvement and direction setting have the largest effects, but all of the components have a positive relationship with performance. The findings support the broader understanding in the literature on strategic management that clear, goal-oriented direction setting is critical to organizational success, especially in non-profit settings where mission alignment is critical to operational effectiveness..

## **5.3 Recommendations**

NGOs should review and update their mission and vision statements on a regular basis to ensure that they accurately reflect their current organizational objectives and changing external circumstances. To foster a shared vision and align particular tasks with overarching objectives, all organizational levels should participate in relevant and transparent direction-setting processes. By providing regular updates and feedback loops, leadership should also enhance the communication of strategic goals and keep teams motivated and informed. Recurring workshops on mission and vision alignment will further strengthen this process by ensuring that all departments work together to accomplish the organization's long-term goals and mission.

Nonprofits can optimize resource allocation by developing a more flexible budgeting system that allows adjustments in response to changing strategic priorities. Two advantages of allocating resources in a data-driven manner are waste reduction and the identification of areas of critical need. Key stakeholders, including department heads and external partners, should be actively involved in the resource planning and allocation processes to ensure alignment with organizational objectives. If resource allocation is further improved by regularly evaluating its impact and making adjustments based on performance outcomes, NGOs will be able to maximize their impact and successfully meet strategic objectives.

To improve management decisions, NGOs should promote an inclusive and collaborative culture during the decision-making process. Promoting input from various departments and ensuring that decisions are shared freely across the organization are two ways to achieve this. Giving management decision-making tools, such as scenario planning or risk assessments, will improve the organization's capacity to react swiftly to setbacks and enhance the caliber of strategic choices. Regular training on strategic communication and decision-making can also help leadership teams make sure that choices support both immediate needs and long-term sustainability..

NGOs seeking to increase stakeholder involvement must set up regular engagement mechanisms, such as quarterly forums or feedback sessions, where stakeholders can provide insights on organizational strategies and initiatives. Including a diverse range of internal and external stakeholders in the planning phases will increase the strategies' applicability and foster a feeling of shared responsibility for the organization's goals. It is possible to identify important influences and make sure that their viewpoints are successfully incorporated into decision-making by using tools such as stakeholder mapping and needs assessments. In addition to strengthening support networks and improving alignment with organizational goals, increased stakeholder engagement will help NGOs better fulfill their mission.

## **5.5 Suggestions for Future Research**

Firstly, subsequent investigations could examine supplementary determinants affecting NGO effectiveness that were excluded from the current analytical framework. Given that the R-squared statistic reflects the extent to which current predictors explain variation in performance, a moderate or relatively low value suggests the presence of additional influential variables that merit examination. Secondly, upcoming studies might assess the enduring effects of strategic planning components on the operational outcomes of NGOs, focusing on a comparative analysis between NGOs operating in stable versus conflict-prone regions. Additionally, research could examine the effects of digital and technological advancements on strategic planning processes in NGOs.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Cover Letter

#### **Re: Participation in Academic Research**

I am a student at Kenyatta University undertaking an MBA. I am now conducting a research program for my degree, whereby its main concern is Strategic Planning and.

As one of the respondents, you were selected to complete the attached questionnaire. I kindly ask you to complete it sincerely, as the information you give here will remain private and confidential. The data will only be used for academic research purposes. Your cooperation is highly appreciated.

## Appendix II: Questionnaire

This questionnaire is intended to gather information in regard to research on strategic planning practices by NGOs within the governance sector in Kenya. It's aimed at respondents across all management levels. Information gathered through this interview will only be used for academic purposes of this research and interviewees will remain anonymous.

### SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Name of institution.....

2. What is your highest level of education?

Secondary [ ]

Tertiary college [ ]

University graduate [ ]

University postgraduate [ ]

Other (please specify) .....

3. How long have you worked in the NGO?                      Between 1 and 5 years [ ]

Less than 1 year [ ]

Over 5 years [ ]

4. How long have the institution been operating?

Less than 1 year [ ]

Between 3 and 5 years [ ]

Between 1 and 3 years [ ]

Over 5 years [ ]

5. What is the size of your organization/institution workforce?

Below 50 [ ]    50-100 [ ]

100-200 [ ]    200-1000 [ ]    Over 1000 [ ]

**SECTION B: STRATEGIC PLANNING PRACTICES BY NGOS**

**Direction Setting**

(1 = Strongly Disagrees, 2 = Disagrees, 3 = Imprtial, 4 = Agrees, 5 = Strong Agrees)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
The organization's vision and mission are clear and guide our strategic planning efforts.					
The strategic goals are aligned with the vision					
Leadership effectively communicates the strategic direction and priorities for our organization.					
The strategic orientation provides adaptability to accommodate evolving conditions and emerging requirements.					
The strategic direction set is realistic and achievable with the resources available to the organization.					

**Resource Allocation**

(1 = Strongly Disagrees, 2 = Disagrees, 3 = Imprtial, 4 = Agrees, 5 = Strong Agrees)

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Our organization has to meet its strategic objectives.					
Budgeting is done sufficiently to all areas including academics, staffing and co-curricular activities in ways that minimize waste and maximize impact.					
Our organization’s resource allocation process is flexible enough to adapt to changing strategic priorities.					
Key stakeholders are adequately involved in the resource allocation process.					

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Management fosters a positive environment that encourages open and collaborative decision-making.					
Management consistently investigates multiple alternatives before finalizing strategic decisions.					
Decisions made by management are communicated effectively across all levels of the organization.					
commitment and support from management in implementing strategic decisions.					
Management demonstrates commitment to supporting the mission through careful and strategic decision-making.					

### Stakeholder Involvement

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Interested parties are proactively engaged in recognizing and evaluating outside environmental influences that could affect the formulation of strategic plans.					
Stakeholders have a meaningful role in shaping and refining our organization's vision and mission statements.					
Our organization consults with who are experts in strategy during the strategic planning process.					
Stakeholders are thoroughly mapped, and their interests and influence are actively considered throughout the strategic planning process.					


Stakeholders provide valuable input in prioritizing resources and setting the budget to align with strategic goals.					
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**Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
consistently meets or exceeds its financial goals and budget targets.					
revenue sources are stable and sufficient to support its strategic initiatives.					
The organization’s strategic initiatives give it a unique advantage over similar NGOs.					
The organization is well-regarded and often chosen as a preferred partner within its field.					
The organization encourages continuous learning and development to enhance performance.					



## Appendix IV: Research Approval Letter

  
**KENYATTA UNIVERSITY  
GRADUATE SCHOOL**

E-mail: [dean\\_graduates@ku.ac.ke](mailto:dean_graduates@ku.ac.ke) P.O. Box 43844, 00100  
Website: [www.ku.ac.ke](http://www.ku.ac.ke) NAIROBI, KENYA  
Tel. 810901 Ext. 4150

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Internal Memo

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**FROM:** Executive Dean, Graduate School **DATE:** 29<sup>th</sup> August, 2024

**TO:** Brenda Mujja Bungu **REF:** D53F/OL/CTY/27050/2018  
C/o Business Administration Dept.

**SUBJECT: APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROJECT PROPOSAL**

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This is to inform you that Graduate School Board at its meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> August, 2024 approved your Research Project Proposal for the M.B.A Degree Entitled, "Strategic Planning and Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations in South Sudan."

You may now proceed with your Data Collection, Subject to Clearance with Director General, National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation.

As you embark on your data collection, please note that you will be required to submit to Graduate School completed Supervision Tracking and progress report Forms per semester. The Forms are available at the University's Website under Graduate School webpage downloads.

Also, please ensure that you publish article(s) from your project before submitting it to Graduate School for examination as per the Commission for University Education and Kenyatta University guidelines.

Thank you.


  
**ANNBELL MWANIKI**  
**FOR: EXECUTIVE DEAN, GRADUATE SCHOOL**

c.c. Chairman, Business Administration

Supervisors:

1. Dr. Elishiba Murigi  
C/o Department of Business Administration  
Kenyatta University

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