

**STRATEGIC RESPONSES TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGES AT  
WORLD VISION KENYA**

**BY**

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## DECLARATION

I declare that this is my original work and has not been presented for any award in any university.

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This research proposal has been submitted for presentation with my approval as university supervisor.

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## **DEDICATION**

The academic journey became the reality through immense support from several people that I may not mention all of them, nonetheless, I am forever grateful. This work is ascribed to my family for pushing to the tenacity ring of academic excellence. Your prayers lifted my spirits as shaped me to keep the light glowing and lighting.

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## **ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS**

<b>NCIRD</b>	National Centre for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.
<b>KPMG</b>	Klynveld Peat Marwick Goerdeler
<b>NGOs</b>	Non - Governmental Organizations
<b>PEST</b>	Political, Economic, Social and Technological
<b>UNCTAD</b>	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunity and Threats
<b>GDP</b>	Gross Domestic Product
<b>UNESCO</b>	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
<b>EU</b>	European Union

## ABSTRACT

The strategy improves the business capability and ignite innovation. Additionally, it is an engine for the business growth and financial sustainability. The covid-19 Challenges have caused immense havoc to the continuity of business. The pain inflicted on the driving and well-performing business has been so severe. Covid-19 Challenges spanned from physical to emotional related problems. This research sought to bridge conceptual gap by analyzing strategic responses, contextual gap by focusing in a case study of World Vision Kenya and the methodological gap by utilizing qualitative and content analysis against previous studies that have used quantitative, descriptive and inferential statistics. The main objective of the study was to determine the strategic responses to Covid-19 challenges at World Vision Kenya. This study is based on resource dependence, agency theory and goal setting theories. A study was qualitative in nature and was based on a case study. The reason why it is a case study is because it was based on the context of World Vision Kenya as an organization. The research was based on primary data as obtained from the top management staff of World Vision Kenya. The researcher used an interview guide as a roadmap for the study and in-depth sourcing of information. The top management, four of them, have greater information regarding the strategies of the organization. . In a nutshell, the research can analyze the patterns in ideas, concepts and themes. It is useful in understanding individual, revealing the contexts of communication and reveal the flow of information. Data was then run through data interpretation process. This study maximized content analysis to blueprint the existing relationship of certain concepts to the researcher. It enables systematic and objective identification of special traits in the messages. Furthermore, the outcome posited that all the directors interviewed had bachelor's degree. Additionally, all of them had master's degree in addition to wide-array of certification ranging from strategies, finance, management, leadership, governance and disaster management among others. The respondents articulated the strategic responses that enabled the firm to remain buoyant despite the Covid-19 pandemic. The unprecedented changes called for pivotal yet longevity goals that promoted the operation and directed the Non-Governmental Organization to the right direction. This assessment prioritized strategic responses, transformational strategic responses, operational strategic responses and financial strategic responses. This study wrapped-up on the strategic responses to covid-19 pandemic challenges by stating that the World Vision emerged victorious and successful within short time compared with other organization. The study advocates for significant money reserved for any trends and changes in normalcy. This money is useful in curbing immediate predicaments that faces the organization. It assist the continuity of the business and increase it capability



# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Background of the study

Organizations operate based on their strategic plans but when the environment in which they exist is disturbed, it totally changes the way they function and hence need to reinvent themselves in order to adapt to the environment for their existence. The strategy improves the business capability and ignites innovation. Additionally, it is an engine for the business growth and financial sustainability (Bachvarova & Zafirova, 2017). According to Bruni, Tirabeni, Pittino, and Miele (2020), markets exist in a dynamic environment which must be adapted to. When the first case of COVID-19 was reported in Wuhan China, it did not seem to be a global threat until when it spread beyond the borders of China. Organizations faced a mixture of operational challenges which had to be addressed through varied strategic responses. Embracing the use of information technology is one of the responses which can be employed in strategic response. Before the coming of the pandemic, staff of various organizations used to report to the offices every working day. This had to change at some point whereby people could work remotely and still deliver. Those who had rented offices faced a challenge of settling rental bills for unutilized spaces hence the need to make strategic decisions to manage this situation

The theories underpinning the study include resource dependency theory, agency theory and goal setting theory. Wibowo and Hayati (2019), coined on resource dependency theory driving the performance based on the availability of resources to spearhead the objectives. Anggoro and Yulianto (2019), showed that agency theory mandates the

management to enhance serving delivery through separation of duties. The management must strive to maximize shareholders' value. According to Rabetino, Kohtamäki, and Federico (2021), stewardship theory states the importance of management by taking good care of resources bestowed on them. The three theories are relevant in the strategic management.

In Kenya, most organizations, and in particular Non-Governmental Organizations were faced with a new operational challenges (Jones, Manze, Ngo, Lamberson, & Freudenberg, 2021). Most of them depend on foreign donations which stopped flowing since the sources were the mostly affected regions, (Zhan, 2020). As result, most organizations started struggling to meet their operating costs and did not know exactly how to address the emerging issues which came with the pandemic. Kiruthu, Omala, Muna, Kungu, and Babamaragana (2021), analyzed the effect of Covid-19 pandemic on the school going children. The study indicated that Covid-19 increase sufferings, deaths and caused many challenges to institutions. Research on the strategic policies have received minimal attention and this is the motivation of this study. The research aims at addressing predicaments associated with Covid-19 through tactical plans and strategic policies implemented.

### **1.1.1 Concept of Strategy**

Strategy is the tactic, policy, objective, concept, road map, program which organizations use to achieve their objectives. A strategy is crafted for a specified period of time after which another one is developed. According to David (2019), strategy means analyzing critically the present situation and therefore changing it whenever necessary. Alongside

this is finding out what readily available resources are or what they should be. Strategy can also be defined as the determinant of goals which long term in nature of a firm and drafting courses of action and resource allocation to undertake these goal. It is paramount for organizations to understand the times they are operating in and detect any change to the normal operating environment. Drastic measures have to be taken to respond to such changes (Njuguna, Muchara, & Namada, 2019).

According to Oluwamayowa O Iredele, Tankiso, and Adelowotan (2020), strategies gears the organization towards unforeseeable future. Moreover, they acts as roadmap toward operational efficiency. Hoder, Bonaventura, Prukner, Gordillo-Vázquez, and Šimek (2020), emphasized the importance of longevity plans to enable the organization to sail through economic turmoil. Strategy deals with innovations and new methods of doing business. The organization aligns their missions, vision and mission statement to enhance the formulation of policies that enhance business to stay afloat in difficult moments. The strategies builds the foundation while acting as the cornerstone leading companies against the challenges to ensure it remain competitive and effective (Walia, 2021).

The strategies have played crucial role in the global market. The corporate governance stipulates the policies that enable business to remain competitive in the market. Moreover, it demonstrates a comprehensive steps that business follows to reach its goals. Dwivedi et al. (2020), illustrated the importance of well-functional strategy to promote business realization of the objectives. Septiana, Mulyani, Kurniadi, and Arifin (2020), emphasized on strategic intent stating the integral role in overarching goal of a strategy is to minimize the strength of competitors and maximize the strength of the organization. It is concerned

with two things, where we are and where we want to be. If well designed and followed, a strategy drives an organization through turbulent environment as a driving force for survival of such an organization (Mbogo, Wario, & Mike, 2019). According to Ackermann and Eden (2020), a strategy is a set of coherent actions designed to give an organization momentum to survive in an industry. It is designed to last for some period and in the process of its implementation, it need to be monitored. Gios (2021), perceives strategy execution as a step - by–step process. There is a need to monitor the strategy and take any corrective measures before it is too late.

### **1.1.2 Covid-19 Challenges**

The covid-19 Challenges have caused immense havoc to the continuity of business. The pain inflicted on the driving and well-performing business has been so severe. Covid-19 Challenges spanned from physical to emotional related problems. Covid-19 challenges cause greatest challenges to businesses such as transportation industries, hotels and motels, educational facilities, manufacturing industries, airlines and even service industries among many others. COVID-19 Pandemic challenges are the constraints which are associated with the global outbreak of a disease for instance, quarantines, social distancing measures, curfews, lock downs among others. The world has had a history of challenging occurrences in various seasons which had devastating impact on people lives, livelihoods and economies (Nkatha, 2021).

Covid-19 challenges are critical in the study. They provide greater and in-depth knowledge concerning covid-19 containment measures. Despite the mass failure of business, there were innovation associated with medical sector among other business. The

business dealing with covid-19 protective gears registered supernormal profit global. The business dealing with food delivery also increased their sales in Kenya (Altuntas & Gok, 2021).

World Bank (2020), stated that covid-19 created global crisis. The pandemic caused obstruction to business operation, halted the productivity, economic collapse and caused economic integration problems. Furthermore, the foreign exchange declines and the developing countries resorted to borrowing to safeguard the suffering population.

### **1.1.3 Strategic Responses to Covid-19 Challenges**

Kipngeno (2021), opined that strategic policies are critical responses to the challenges facing the organization. Covid-19 challenges caused rampant job losses, closure of businesses, loss of global business and contracts. According to Mirza and Ahsan (2020), strategic responses are the measures and steps organizations take to align themselves to the environment they exist in. These actions are meant to guarantee the future existence of the organizations. They include SWOT analysis, innovation and technology, training and development. According to Badr El-Deen and Ali (2021), strategic responses are decisions and actions that formulate an implementation plan of an organization triggered by change in either internal and external environment. These implementation plans are expected to guide the organization and aid it in achieving its set objectives.

According to Kimiti (2020), on cost leadership, differentiation and focus are key elements of managing changes in environment. Some of the strategic responses include cost management, SWOT analysis, staff training and development. These act as important tools which enable an organization to remain afloat in a competing environment.

Wenzel, Stanske, and Lieberman (2020), asserts that this pandemic is happening at a fragile time when political and economic circumstances are unstable. Most governments are highly indebted yet they are expected to buy vaccines, fund the government hospitals hosting COVID-19 patients, and oversee economic growth amidst lockdowns among other critical challenges. Due to the restriction in movement, most organization have resulted to staff working from home hence bringing it the aspect of use of technology. According to Molina-Montes et al. (2021), not many firms had invested in technology hence a challenge to undertake their operations. According to Egger et al. (2021), organizations which depend on donor funding from abroad were also affected since the donors were also badly hit by the pandemic hence not able to send funds to these organizations.

#### **1.1.4 World Vision Kenya**

World Vision Kenya is an extension of World Vision International which was founded by an American, Bob pierce, more than 70 years back. During the time America was at war with Vietnam, Bob Pierce came across abandoned children in Vietnam where he was so moved by their condition. The five dollars he had in his pocket was not sufficient to aid in alleviating the suffering children and other people were facing and hence more people were to be involved. His philosophy was, “Let my heart be broken with the things that break the heart of God,” From his noble idea, he started mobilizing well-wishers and out of that initiative World Vision was born. World Vision Kenya is a Christian Non-Governmental Organization with its coverage stretching to 38 counties of Kenya. It started its operations in Kenya in the year 1975 and intervenes on relief, advocacy and community development projects with children and vulnerable groups as their point of

focus. World Vision Kenya partners with the government, sponsors, donors, Christian foundations and other various stakeholders in an effort to help the most vulnerable children fight poverty, diseases acquire better education and enjoy life in all its fullness. World Vision also drives transformative development agendas in areas of child protection, food security, water, sanitation and hygiene, economic empowerment among other initiatives. The organization practices inclusivity and diversity in its operations since it employs staff regardless of their gender, religion, race or ethnicity.

## **1.2 Research Problem**

The firms formulate the strategic responses to ease their operation. Strategic responses enhance business continuity in economic turbulence time. The long-term policies delineate system of ideologies and the continuity of operation to accomplished desirable outcomes. The ability to curb challenges by the organization blueprints the capability of board and the senior management. Their Covid-19 strategic responses were the engine towards organizational curbing of challenges. Strategic response informs the organizational capabilities to manage challenges in the organization (Bich & Lian, 2021). Ozili (2020), recommended for the strategic responses to global recession associated with Covid-19 Pandemic. Tangthong (2020), elaborates on the techniques such as retrenchment and innovation to evade business failure during Covid-19 pandemic. From the empirical knowledge gaps and conceptual loopholes, there is wide gap to be bridged between the strategic responses and performance. It is worthwhile to note that strategies responses and the performance of an organization are intertwined.

Non-Government Organization have existed to provide holistic assistance to the vulnerable and the disadvantage. World Vision has been critical in supporting the disadvantage while at the same crucial in the economic development. The ability of non-government organization to drive indicate political socio-economic stability. Harrichand, Thomas, Mwendwa, and DiLella (2021), indicated that financial sustainability of these organization is informed by donations, strategic plans and ability to excellence against bottlenecks and predicaments. Furthermore, the environment in which organizations exist, is so dynamic and must be keenly monitored and corrective measures taken on any deviation which does not act in favor of the organization. Therefore, Covid-19 pandemic presented an avenue for more policy formulation. Silvestri, Forcina, Introna, Santolamazza, and Cesarotti (2020), asserts that a leading firm yesterday can become irrelevant today due to sudden change in the turbulent environment it operates in.

According to Goniewicz et al. (2020), globally, European countries came up with some proposed measures to contain the pandemic. These include among others, coordinating travel measures, in and out of the member countries, providing vaccines to the member states, supporting EU Health systems by reinforcing health programs, protecting jobs, helping EU countries fund their COVID-19 responses and partnerships to support their partners around the globe. A study done by Chiu, Chiu, Ho, and Zu (2020), revealed that the United States had put up measures to curb the pandemic among them including treating the pandemic as a serious national security threat, review of the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention unit which would lead to managerial and budgetary reforms. The study did not articulate the specific strategic response measures the United States would use to manage the pandemic.

A study done in Kenya on the impact of Covid-19 had on philanthropic work indicated interruptions in organizations budgets. According to Kakachia, Legucka, and Lebanidze (2021), most organization funds were diverted towards mitigating the pandemic adverse effects like procurement of masks, hand sanitizers and their dispensing equipment, personal Protective Equipment's including hand gloves. Procurement of these items was either utilized by the organizations or donated to institutions. Other funds went to support the community on Covid-19 mitigation measures including, organizing awareness training and sensitization forums. Funding of these initiatives came from cash intended for funding earlier budgeted program works.

Kipngeno (2021), analyzed strategic policies and the organizational performance in banking sector. Harrichand et al. (2021), explored financial sustainability of NGOs. Nkatha (2021), assessed Covid-19 Tax relief measures among SMES. Nyaegah (2020), analyzed the stakeholders' readiness to curb covid-19 in education sector. World Bank (2020), analyzed the centers for disease control and the skyrocketing prices. The study was done to curb mortality and the morbidity rate. Kiruthu et al. (2021), analyzed the effect of covid-19 on well-being among children in slums. Gachugu (2019), opined the paramount role of diversity board in curbing the contemporary issues in firms. From the research studies majority of the studies have concentrated in the banking sectors, global challenges and used different methods of analysis. Furthermore, the research recorded mixed and inconclusive outcomes. This research sought to bridge conceptual gap by analyzing strategic responses, contextual gap by focusing in a case study of World Vision

Kenya and the methodological gap by utilizing qualitative and content analysis against previous studies that have used quantitative, descriptive and inferential statistics. The study focuses specifically to answer the research question; what are the strategic responses to COVID-19 challenges in World Vision Kenya?

### **1.3 Research Objective**

The main objective of the study was to determine the strategic responses to COVID-19 challenges at World Vision Kenya.

### **1.4 Value of Study**

The study shall be of use by World Vision Kenya management in their decision making and policies formulation since it shall act as point of reference. It shall also be beneficial in putting the strategy of the organization under check in case of any deviation. The body which regulates NGOs, the NGO board shall also be kept abreast of what is happening in the organization and the measures it is taking in order to remain compliant to its regulations. The study shall be of great value in the organization effectiveness and performance of World Vision Kenya which can also be emulated or add value to other NGOs in the same sector who are experiencing the same challenges.

The research is critical for reinforcing the theories. The research states the underpropping theories as well as its relevance to the study. Furthermore, the research does a critique of the theories to help clarify on the prevailing gaps. The research analyzes empirically and critically the presumptions of the theories. The theories build the foundation of knowledge for the better insight and in-depth understanding.

The theories are important to the scholars and policy makers. Scholars will utilize by making reference in their studies and increasing their knowledge. The policy makers will use in making far-reaching and long term policies to curb future challenges. Moreover, it increases the university reference materials and the reputation. It will also contribute to institutions management practice on dealing with crisis in addition to advocating on the need to embrace policies in strategic management.

## **CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter reviews the relevant literature of works done by other scholars and theoretical foundation on strategic responses to COVID-19 pandemic challenges in various organizations. This shall lead to exposing the gap this study seeks to address. This chapter will cover theoretical foundation, types of strategic responses, empirical review and knowledge gaps.

### **2.2 Theoretical Foundation**

This study is based on resource dependence, agency theory and goal setting theories. A theory can be defined as a set of generally acceptable beliefs or principles that guides and explain certain analysis(Bombala, 2021). A theoretical framework therefore contextualizes a theory and supports it in a research study. Review of a theory helps in bringing out major components, elements and variables to support a study. COVID-19 Pandemic has shaken institutions including the category of Non-Governmental organizations where World Vision Kenya is classified. Strategic decisions are fundamental in such situations whose outcome defines the future of the organization.

#### **2.2.1 Resource Dependence Theory**

Resource Dependence Theory views corporations or firms as an open system which depends on contingencies in the surrounding environment (Gachugu, 2019). In order to understand how organizations behave, one must understand the context of that behavior. Resource dependence theory looks at the influence of external factors on the

organizational traits and behavior. The theory is based on the principle that firms and organizations should engage in transactions with other establishments in their environments so as to acquire resources. In as much as those transactions might be of value to the organization, they may also result to dependencies that are not realistic.

The weakness of the theory include the assumption that organization is performing excellently. The indication from the COVID-19 pandemic postulated that innovative firms can perform very well against firms with a lot of resources. Furthermore, the ability to develop strategic response in time enhanced the elimination of predicaments. The companies that invented new ways of working including Zoom and Skype faced minimal challenges compared to large companies that took longer time to formulate their own strategies. In a nutshell, performance can be engineered by policies, strategic responses, innovation and discoveries.

The theory is relevant since the organizational resources in the organization are always scarce against unlimited wants. The outcome is inequality which generate power differences, authority and difficulty to further access of resources among organizations and firms. To avoid such kind of dependencies, organizations through their managers need to develop strategies and internal structures which put them on a bargaining position regarding resource related interactions. These strategies are aimed at scaling down the environmental uncertainties and dependencies. Some of the actions include taking a political action. Others could be increasing of organization's production scales,

diversifications of product lines, developing and nurturing links to other organizations (D'Amato & Falivena, 2020).

### **2.2.2. Agency Theory**

Agency theory focuses primarily on the relationships between agents and principals (Anggoro & Yulianto, 2019). Agents are normally the managements and employees of organizations while the principals are shareholders which are basically the owners of the businesses. Agents are supposed to work towards maximizing shareholders wealth and normally come into conflict with shareholders if they work towards benefiting themselves. Most arguments about the agency theory center dwells on maximizing shareholders wealth which in most cases is viewed to be in the long-term (Hitt, Holmes Jr, & Arregle, 2021).

The shortcoming of the theory is the need for the segregation of duties. Barney (2018), points out that treating the shareholders as the only claimants of the firm's proceeds does not coincide with Resource Based Theory of resource sharing. This in a way contradicts with agency theory where other scholars argue that shareholders must work in a complementary manner to those creating their wealth. All these arguments open up a gap to more research on how managers can build cordial relationships between all the claimants of the profit of firm's proceeds in this era of COVID-19 pandemic. Monitoring and auditing increase balance-checking business continuity, although, they increase agency cost. The greater the agency cost, the lesser the shareholders' wealth. The presence of these departments can be a bottleneck to the processing and approval of funds

allocated to pandemic. The delay in strategic responses cause major problems and harms to lives, businesses and economy.

The theory is relevant in advocating for the maximization of shareholders wealth. Due to the challenges brought about by the pandemic, managers' commitment towards fulfilling the desires of the principal of maximizing their wealth has become at stake. This is because the firms face shortage of resources, their future is threatened and even the agents' job security is not guaranteed. Additionally, most managers lack skills to manage eventualities like the ones posed by the pandemic hence fail to make strategic decisions aimed at maximizing shareholders' wealth. Although maximizing of shareholders wealth has been the key focus, several studies have also been done focusing on the other parties like the employees and customers welfare. This is because they are the primary participants in creating the wealth to be enjoyed by the shareholders.

### **2.2.3 Goal Setting Theory**

The theory coined the fundamental principle of life incorporating the goal-orientation (Ryan & Deci, 2019). The goals are very important plans that drives the business forward. The ability of business to formulate goals are reflected on the professional and competent management. The goals can be translated to objectives, policies, tactical plans and strategic responses. The firms stipulate goals and arrange the human capital to aid the achievement of objectives based on logical and systematic goals.

The drawbacks on the goal setting theory is presumption that achievement of objective is achievable through standardized plans. However, there is possibility of sticking to narrow

vision without assessing wide-spectrum. The pursuit of outdated goals and objective may write-off the business. Moreover, strict adherence to goals can slow down the response to emerging crisis such as COVID-19 pandemic. Goal is a benchmark that enhance accomplishment of strategic plans. The objective must be consolidated periodically in the fast-paced business economy to enhance transformation. Furthermore, the rapid response mechanism and funds must be allocated to provide scalable improvement and goal-oriented strategies.

The theory is very important in enhancing the accomplishment of the objectives. The strategic responses translates to roadmap useful in achievement of goals. The goals are designed to reduce operational cost while enhancing efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. The strategic responses spearheaded to minimize COVID-19 predicaments were critical in ensuring continuity of business, saving lives and mitigating risks. The firms tailor the strategic responses according to goals or the prevailing problems.

### **2.3 Determinants of Strategic Responses**

Strategic responses are the actions firms and organizations take following either an internal or external threat so that they can adjust accordingly and cope with the situation for the sake of their survival (Lusambili et al., 2021). Some of these responses include SWOT analysis, technology and innovation, training and development. According to Hazaa, Almaqtari, and Al-Swidi (2021) SWOT analysis analyzes the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a business set up. These help in general environmental scanning and enable the management to take actions early enough to neutralize any probable threat likely to affect the business. COVID-19 Pandemic was and

still is an external threat which changed the way companies operate, hence there was a need for firms to quickly come up with strategic responses to enable them survive through the challenges posed by the pandemic.

### **2.3.1 Strategic Responses**

Strategic responses are critical in addressing pandemic. There are short term, tactical and strategic plans for mitigating against problems. Moreover, there are financial, transformational and operational strategies that are engine to progressive development despite pandemic turbulence. The fundamental mandate is consolidating goals of the firms to realize digital advancement especially during pandemic. Moreover, companies and organizations use PEST (Political, Economic, Social and Technological) analysis to help them understand the environment they are operating in and make adjustments in order to adapt and continue operating. These factors which are outside the organization can be used to detect any change which can affect performance of organizations (Ivanova, 2020) .

### **2.3.2 Transformational Strategic Responses**

Transformational strategic responses are long-term plans aimed at changing tactics in the operation to curb the prevailing challenges. In order to ensure survival, organizations can use their strengths in terms of the resources it has to combat the pandemic. There is also a need to evaluate its weaknesses and strengthen them. The opportunities which are available to the organization need to be exploited for its good while the threats need to be tackled immediately.

Training and development is another strategic response organizations have at their disposal in managing crisis. According to Nicola et al. (2020), some of the strategic responses most health sector institutions took to combat COVID-19 were developing incident management reporting, training of health workers, community health workers mobilization, creating a diagnostic network for laboratories among other responses. Training and development equips staff with tools, skills and tactics of managing a crisis ultimately contributing to the success and survival of the organization. According to Zuo and Miller Juvé (2021), staff development need to be aligned to the organization needs. Once done in that way, it helps staff to adapt to the changing structure of the business and increase productivity. Staff development also leads to reduction in staff turnover, ultimately leads the organization to remain competitive in the industry.

### **2.3.3 Operational Strategic Responses**

The operational strategic responses relates to the daily undertaking of the business. The business continuity of operation spearhead the advancement to suit the demands and needs for the employees, clients, management and the government. Use of technology one of strategic response tool that an organizations can use in order to ensure their survival and leverage in the industry. Due to social distancing brought about by COVID-19 pandemic, most organizations have embraced the technology of teleworking, or working from home. This calls for organizations to improve and greatly invest in technology apparatus to ensure continuity of their operations. In this era, most meetings are conducted virtually hence reducing costs associated with physical gathering meetings. Employment of technology and innovation improves the efficiency of firms and enhances

customer relationship. It ensures that business continues as usual even if there is no physical gatherings (Hoder et al., 2020).

### **2.3.4 Financial Strategic Responses**

Financial strategic responses are supreme in the adjustment, supporting growth and maintaining the customers. Organizations and firms have gone through varied challenging experiences during this season of COVID-19 pandemic (Ackermann & Eden, 2020). According to (Mustajab et al., 2020) some of the common measures most firms have adopted to manage the operations and remain afloat in this turbulent environment are lockdowns, restrictions of movements, quarantines, curfews, social distancing among others. Among these organizations are Non-Governmental Organizations which have been badly affected since they depend on donor funding. According to Obeng-Odoom (2020), the pandemic hit hard on where these funds come from hence making it even harder for the funds to continue streaming to the NGOs. Another challenge is the hampering of the mode of response and their programs have been affected. There have been massive layoffs and redundancies in the NGO sector. The funding systems of most of these NGOs do not easily allow innovative initiatives to be carried out as a measure to counter the pandemic since they are strongly bound to strict budgets.

According to Poddar (2020), COVID-19 pandemic has disrupted supply chains and set up of logistics for many companies. This is because the production has also been affected and affecting both demand and customer buying patterns. The oil market is also in crisis hence causing more uncertainties. Investors are hesitant to do investments and for the first time in the recent past, stock markets made serious loses in March 2020. Financing of

institutions has also been a big issue and those which were operating on debts have found themselves in murky waters of inability to pay back the debts. Some of the suggestions put forward by the Conger (2020), is management focus on employee safety, maintaining liquidity at float, protecting the value chains and seeking out the recent information both internally and externally regarding the pandemic. In the study of KPMG report, we do not see any precise strategic measures recommended to companies to contain the pandemic for their survival.

A study done by Bartik et al. (2020), in the United States of America and which focused on small businesses revealed that 43% of the businesses temporarily closed and employment had significantly fallen by 40%. The suggested remedies were cutting down of expenses, acquiring additional debts or declared bankruptcy. This also did not bring out the strategic measures which can be taken to ensure the businesses remain operational. According to Didier, Huneus, Larrain, and Schmukler (2021), some of the measures companies can take include varying their distribution channels, modifying their products and services, expanding benefits to retailers among other measures. None of these have explicitly demonstrated the exact strategic measures management of firms have adopted to survive the pandemic turbulence.

## **2.4 Empirical Review and Knowledge Gaps**

Gössling, Scott, and Hall (2020), did a study in Vietnam on tour operators' strategic responses to COVID-19 pandemic to their sector. The study highlighted the vulnerability the tourism sector found itself in when the pandemic struck. The pandemic brought crisis in Vietnam tourism industry and on the other hand it could be a turning point inform of a

restructure in its value chain towards sustainable direction. The study found out that in Vietnam, some of the measures the government took to manage the situation include locking down of community engagements, banning of international travels, restrictions of domestic movements and imposing quarantines. These measures have totally interrupted the global tourism industry whereby tourists fear for their safety in the destination they plan to visit. During Covid 19 era, the global tourism industry could lose \$ 3.3 trillion if the measures put in place to contain the pandemic would last for more than 12 months (Li, Zhang, Yang, Singer, & Cui, 2021).

Debata, Patnaik, and Mishra (2020), in India assessed the impact COVID-19 had on the people and economy. It was observed that due to the measures the government took to curb the spread of COVID-19, like lockdowns, movement restrictions, and curfews among others, people suffered job losses and men were struggling to provide to their families (Debata et al., 2020). Cases of depression, anxiety, lack of confidence, stress increased in communities. This led to social issues like violence against women and children, sexual and physical violence among other vices. According to Roy and Chaube (2021), these in turn generated to physical and mental illnesses, sexually transmitted diseases, unplanned pregnancies, reproductive health problems among other complications. Basu et al. (2021), notes that women have been left with the donkey work compared to men since they are involved more on care giving to those ailing who could be elderly people, children among others. According to his study, child pornography also was noted to be on the rise in India since the outbreak of COVID-19. In this study, there are no recorded specific strategic measures the government is seen to be taking in addressing the challenges brought about by COVID-19 to its people. On the economic

sector, COVID-19 came in when the government of India had started taking measures like demonetization to revive its economy (Mahdich & Matienga, 2020).

In Nigeria, Oluwamayowa Olalekan Iredele (2020), did a study on the impact of COVID-19 to social and economic sectors and some of the strategies governments use to respond to them. The study found out that the pandemic led to loss of employment, rise in poverty, decline in GDP and rise in crime level. These outcomes were found out not really to be attributed to the lock downs the government imposed as a measure of containing the pandemic. It was concluded that both the public and individuals needed to put more trust on the health structures and support the ministry of health initiatives in combating the pandemic. Further, the government need to intensify more on research in order to come up with better ways of combating the pandemic. Even with these mentioned efforts above, it is not clear the specific strategic responses the management, leadership of institutions need to take in order to combat the pandemic challenges.

A study done by Petruzzi (2022), resilience in management of firms describes the capability of the firms to withstand any disturbance from their normal way of operation. In the study, most companies responded to the pandemic in different ways including shifting to digital communication means, online means of delivery of goods and services (Eger, Komárková, Egerová, & Mičík, 2021). These companies inclined mostly to cashless transactions, self-distances themselves physically from their customers and employees and increased their hygiene standards. This does not bring out the strategic

responses at management level in wading through the pool of challenges the pandemic poses.

According to a study done by Xu et al. (2020), specific responses to a crisis, like COVID-19 depends on the institutional context like culture, availability of resources and staff personnel. This only classifies the responses on their nature, not mentioning the specific strategies to be employed. Organizations can respond to crisis in four ways; diminishment, denial, rebuilding and bolstering (Coombs & Laufer, 2018). This means, fading away operations depending on how the prevalence progresses, completely denying the effects exist, rebuilding the damage and supporting and strengthening the existing systems. These means however do not clearly depict the strategic ways in managing firms to cope with COVID-19 challenges.

In their recent study Albers and Rundshagen (2020), arrives at four strategies firm's management can use to survive in their business during the season of COVID-19 pandemic. These include, retrenchment, persevering, innovation and exit. Retrenchment can be a way of reducing operational cost of firms and it has its own advantages and disadvantages. Persevering means firms focuses on their currently ongoing operations and its success depends on the period the pandemic shall last. Innovation has an element of revamping the strategy to help the firm sail through the challenges of the pandemic. Exit is the last option whereby firms completely shut their operations. This can free some resources which can be used to revamp the strategy to enable the firm manage the

challenges of the pandemic. These are useful strategic means but the exact way of employing them is not clearly brought out.

In Kenya, Kipngeno (2021), explored strategic policies and performance of Equity Bank. The research sourced the data through secondary and primary interviews. The study maximized the logical qualitative research that made good use of content analysis. The data was summarized and interpreted. The findings stipulated that organizational policies blueprints transformation and enhance business progressive development. The study recommended the utilization of business model promoting innovation and propelling socio-economic advancement.

Nkatha (2021), analyzed COVID-19 tax relief measures. The research sampled 30 SMEs ranked as top performing in Kenya. The period of study spanned from 2018-2020. The study did a comparative analysis using the secondary data sourced. The data analysis optimized SPSS to arrive at conclusive research findings. The findings indicate that tax relief measures aid the growth of business, stimulated the growth and reduced the losses.

Global, regional and local studies indicated that several industries failed due to covid-19 pandemic. Seetharaman (2020), established that different sectors like tourism, agriculture, aviation, construction, hospitality, gems or jewellery which greatly support the economy suffered massive losses. In the agriculture sector, the products are unable to reach the consumers due to supply chain bottlenecks. Construction and manufacturing industries were not spared either due to the lockdowns and movement restrictions. He concluded his study by recommending the government to come up with appropriate

strategies to balance the environment, people and economy. The study does not show the specific strategic measures the government took to address the challenges of COVID-19. Furthermore, Ozili and Arun (2020), showed that in 2020 coronavirus triggered a global recession as a result of the different measures governments put in place to combat it. Some governments were in a rush to impose lockdowns and social distancing which translated to economic devastations. Lagat et al. (2020), most industries and non-governmental institutions were affected in terms of their operations. From the research studies none has done a case study of World Vision Kenya responses strategies. Moreover, the research focused on different research topic from the current study. In addition the context and methodology of study was divergent to the current research which utilizes a case study and content analysis.

## **CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Introduction**

This topic covers the methods the researcher used in carrying out the study with an aim of achieving the research objective. The chapter pinpointed the research design, data collection method and data analysis. The research elaborates the layout useful in the research while data collection coins the nature and techniques useful in data collection.

### **3.2 Research Design**

A research design is a structural framework of varied research methods and techniques that were used by a researcher in carrying out a research. According to Goenka, Das, Saikia, and Hazarika (2019), it is “the structure and plan of investigations so conceived as to come up with answers to research set questions and to control variance”. A design states the method and approach to be used by the researcher in collecting and analyzing data which supports the study. The research was qualitative in nature and was based on a case study. The reason why it is a case study is because it was based on the context of World Vision Kenya as an organization. According to Ridder (2017), a case study is an in-depth study of a single unit with an aim of elucidating larger class features of a similar phenomenon. The case study research design helped in the determination and explanation of strategies that helped in the management of the organization. Moreover, the study blueprinted past, current and the future state of organization.

### **3.3 Data Collection**

The research was based on primary data as obtained from the top management staff of World Vision Kenya. The researcher used an interview guide as a roadmap for the study and in-depth sourcing of information. The top management, four of them, have greater information regarding the strategies of the organization. This is because they are in-charge of formulation, evaluation and executing corrective measures in cases of variance. The study target four key personnel since they are the ones concerned with the organization strategic matters. Some of the departments which were used to obtain data include the operation directorate, disaster management directorate, program quality and strategy directorate and resource acquisition and management directorate. The researcher used unstructured questions in form of an interview guide to obtain responses from the participants to be interviewed.

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

The research was undertaken by logical qualitative description. The data was collected through interviewing thereafter classified, summarized and related to the objective before content analysis. The research attempted to indicate the trends in the performance, reviewing policies and documentation. The data collected was reviewed to enhance the completeness and the accuracy. The procedure followed include defining the objectives and research questions. Comprehensive interviews enhanced the analysis through the intensive analysis of the research questions. Content analysis is a research tool used by researchers to determine the presence of certain themes, words or concepts within some qualitative data (Ackermann & Eden, 2020).

The data collected was subjected to an evaluation to ensure that the credible, accurate and the reliable strategic responses information is obtained. In a nutshell, the research can analyze the patterns in ideas, concepts and themes. It is useful in understanding individual, revealing the contexts of communication and reveal the flow of information. Data was then run through data interpretation process. This study maximized content analysis to blueprint the existing relationship of certain concepts to the researcher. It enables systematic and objective identification of special traits in the messages. In addition, it enhances interpretive and naturalistic techniques that enables the determination of themes. Content analysis is critical for qualitative method of data analysis to determine the correlation between leadership strategic responses and success in tackling COVID-19 challenges in the World Vision Kenya. In a nutshell, analysis of qualitative data entails identification, thorough examination and interpretation of themes and patterns in textual data. The analysis determines how the themes and patterns assist in answering the research question.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 Introduction**

The chapter spearheads the outcome grounded on the assembled data. It was pivotal in presentation and portrayal of the findings that was translated into meaningful results through rigorous discussion as well as interpretation. The data was assembled from interviewing the directors of World Vision Kenya who possess pivotal information on Covid-19 responses strategy. The assessment delved into the strategic responses to covid-19 pandemic challenges at World Vision Kenya.

### **4.2 Demographic Information**

The respondents adhered to well-stipulated interview guide. This guideline provided avenues for knowing the qualification and experience in the management of strategies. Furthermore, the outcome posits that all the directors interviewed had bachelor's degree. Additionally, all of them had master's degree in addition to wide-array of certification ranging from strategies, finance, management, leadership, governance, resource mobilization, donor engagements, disaster management among others.

From the keen analysis and proficiency scrutiny, the respondents were competent, well-informed, knowledgeable, and represented the mantle of the organization. As a consequence, the provision of reliable and valid information was grounded on their seniority and involvement in strategic formulation and advisory to the board. Furthermore, their academic, past experience and professional courses enabled the

competent-based solutions, holistic knowledge and sound judgment. The interviews were expedited in the organization headquarters, commonly known as National Office.

### **4.3 Strategic Responses to Covid-19 Pandemic Challenges**

The respondents articulated the strategic responses that enabled the firm to remain buoyant despite the Covid-19 pandemic. The unprecedented changes called for pivotal yet longevity goals that promoted the operation and directed the Non-Governmental Organization to the right direction. It is worthwhile postulating that strategic responses were aligned to the global and national guidelines. According Bachvarova & Zafirova (2017) a business can detect and respond to the predicaments facing the firms. This assessment prioritized strategic responses, transformational strategic responses, operational strategic responses and financial strategic responses. These strategies were considered for the paramount role in eradication of challenges related to the predicaments.

#### **4.3.1 Strategic Responses**

Participants answered questions relating to the strategic responses to Covid-19 pandemic challenges in World Vision Kenya.. The selected team provided an intense plan for the organization including the presence of 5-years strategic plans ranging from 2021-2025 while the one affected by the Covid-19 pandemic covered 2016-2020. The interviewers demonstrated various strategic responses including adhering to the government protocols. This entailed working from home, rearrangement of sitting arrangement, shifting the resources to address predicaments and relaxing some policies to accommodate worldwide and government guidelines (GoK, 2020).

The organizational management undertook numerous online discussion with donors, board and government to come up with far-reaching solutions. It is important to note that shift in focus and channeling the resources enhance the performance. The introduction of online meeting and virtual working enhance the continuity in the operation without interruptions. The monitoring and evaluation instrument were restructured to conform to the digitalization and Covid-19 protocols.

The participants indicated that organization had good structures and equipment that had been purchased to enhance operation. The strategic planning is inevitable, therefore, continuous improvement became the nerve center of the operation. As a result, serene working environment was provided to the employees through social distance arrangement, stations for washing hands, sanitizing stations, thermometer at the entry point and presence of rapid response team that ensure seamless collaboration with the government to prevent and curb the Covid-19 predicament.

Interviewees stated that children were the lifeblood of the organization strategies. Therefore, special attention was paid to their well-being, support on education, food, and access to basic amenities. Despite the pandemic the organization went a long way to support disadvantaged people in the society. Moreover, the organization donated Personal Protective Equipment to the government to help curb the disease.

Participants pointed out that innovation and creativity took a center stage. It stemmed from use of social media to readjustment to the working condition. It is important to note that virtual communication with the donor and government became key. Moreover, donor was kept abreast of the development progress and implementations. This was possible

through virtual trips. The virtual trips involved the physical site visit by the field officer in full live coverage for the donor to view and make determination. The questions raised by the donors were addressed conclusively in the field virtually. The pictures were also sent via the emails and social media to keep them abreast. The strategic responses indicated inclusivity, agility and resilient hence meeting the standards.

#### **4.3.2 Transformational Strategic Responses**

The transformational strategies includes improving technology, fund raising and changing tactics on the operation. The predicaments was so severe and life-threatening, therefore immediate transformational strategies ensured adjustment and working alongside stipulated Covid-19 protocols and procedures. The technological resources was incorporated to reduce contacts and exposures to Covid-19. Moreover, the organization got attention of both local and international donors who came on board to support the initiative. The management also encouraged staff to support in donating to the organization since none lost employment during the pandemic height. The opportunities were looked into and concrete solutions were expedited on time.

The respondent indicated that transformational strategic responses were predominant in the determination of economic and social transformation powerhouse. The participants indicated that these transformations were inseparable in ensuring seamless operation and proper adherence to the laid down policies. The health-related transformational strategies included advising the government and setting quarantine centers that is well-equipped. As a consequence, several lives were saved and significant steps undertaken.

Participants demonstrated that several digital platforms were built to advance the

transformation, advance training, prompted accuracy, and credible information as well as the provision of the appropriate solutions. Therefore, innovative measures were proposed and executed to increase the performance. Moreover, the respondents pinpointed that incorporating the digital platform fueled the access to faster service and instant problem solving. The ideas on virtual collective working responsibility and addressing issue came to being. Moreover, authorization of organization documents which otherwise required manual signatures were done online through electronic signature thereby speeding the operation. In a nutshell, the automation process eliminated paper work and prompted creativity and imaginations.

World Vision became the key player in the eradication of Covid-19 predicament in liaison with the government. This was possible through establishment of virtual forums aimed at mitigating the risk and promoting the performance. Consequently, the team undertook comprehensive brainstorming, policy formulation and benchmarking to ensure continuous improvement on the transformational strategic responses. The vaccination of staff and lobbying for mass vaccination of citizens through sensitization policies and communicating accurate information to promote adherence.

#### **4.3.3 Operational Strategic Responses**

The participants pinpointed the bold procedures that promote the organizational operation. This was associated with operational strategic responses. Therefore, the information system and ICT personnel was tasked to produce an amicable virtual working platform that met the security and privacy rights. The team intensified the digital operational parameters. The internet services and airtime was offered periodically while

ensuring quality performance through virtual monitoring and evaluation.

The respondents posited that procurement services were digitalized to speed up the operation and maximum output despite the predicaments. The streamlined operation increase efficiency and effectiveness. In the end it reduced the operation cost and transformed business significantly. World Vision Kenya ensured investment in longevity tools and equipment to enhance accomplishment of the objectives. Building the information powerhouse through assembling countrywide problems and availing the needful solutions.

The respondents posit that operational strategic responses solved daily business operation. It was the hallmark of the organizational continuity and enhanced the advancement to suit the demands and needs of the clients, government, donors and global. The use of smart mobile phones and computers minimized the contacts. Additionally, checking the temperature at the entry point as well as exit point, washing hands stations, stations for sanitizing, restructuring and redesigning doors to the swing ones, to eliminate frequent contact and providing the protective gears to the employees.

The respondents indicated that employees were given masks daily, personal sanitizers at the organization cost besides conducting numerous trainings. World Vision Kenya incorporated the teleworking thereby concurring with Hodder (2020). The costly physical meeting were eliminated, paper work reduced and effectiveness thrived. The organization continued the operation irrespective of the pandemic but with strict adherence to Covid-19 measures. In a nutshell, the exposure to predicament was minimized and elimination of lapses in the implementation of project diminished.

The participants concluded that the World Vision initiated a staff care and psychosocial team to address depression among staff who were affected directly or indirectly by the pandemic. World Vision Kenya leadership was cognizant of ravaged market creating scarcity and skyrocketing prices. Moreover, the disruption of trade and normalcy resulted to global recession which affected tourism, international travelling and triggering demand and supply shocks. Many companies laid-off their staff and it was paramount to have staff care and psychosocial. Even though increased employment and staffing, other sectors such as hotel industry, education and transport were affected directly hence replicating the impact on staff either directly or indirectly. Additionally, Covid-19 increased loss of lives and jobs.

Drawing from the strategies, the participant indicated that operational strategic responses sought to promote the quality of life. The strategies worked in an integrated way in promoting quality World Vision Kenya performance. The strategies increased diversity, knowledge, experience and exposure. Moreover, innovative leadership was put in place to initiate unique tactics for striking balance for social and economic value. This increased efficiency, effectiveness, productivity and performance. In summary, it aided the mitigation against the inherent risk.

The effective operational strategic responses emanated from strong entrepreneurial leadership with immense innovation and open mindset. The unprecedented changes caused severe uncertainty and loss of lives therefore the concrete solution were fundamental. Subsequently, effective operational strategic policies were pillars of persistent and resilient. World Vision Kenya operational policies were designed with greatest professional practices, innovation, vision in discharging mandates, clear to push

beyond the challenges and ceilings.

The respondent emphasized that the human resource department reviewed policies and incorporated the user-friendly approach to ensure smooth operation on matters touching on staff. Foremost, change in operational strategies was introduced to deviate from the previous functioning of the World Vision Kenya. Therefore, human resource re-adjustment and fitting to the initiated mechanism increase preparedness and reduced resistance to change. The timely monitoring and evaluation through electronic and virtual means kept the employees on the toes and increased their productivity. The structured and procedural testing and contact tracing minimized the spread of Covid-19 Pandemic. Furthermore, World Vision Kenya established human-centered mechanisms that were instrumental in capacity building and increasing awareness.

#### **4.3.4 Financial Strategic Responses**

The participants pinpointed that immense implementation of project demanded for integration of human capital, technology, resources mobilization and keen attention to cash flows. The financial strategic responses were the chief player in the market. The participants illustrated that holistic standards were the driving force for resource mobilization. The resource mobilization was promoted by high integrity standards, accountability and using the resources only on the project recommended and approved. The shifting of resources was not allowed unless approved by the board and the donors hence creating a transparent framework capable of enhancing sustainable returns. Therefore, full disclosure became the paramount rule of the game to win the donor confidence.

The respondents illustrated that financial strategic responses were the powerhouse of the World Vision Kenya. From the implementation of the projects to the support of key issues aimed at eradicating Covid-19 relied on the financial support. The financial issues were integral fabric for quality performance. The organization sought to remain buoyant and agile through the financial strategic responses that lubricated the good financial health and eradicated illiquidity. The participants accentuated that organization sought to remain competitive in the market and remain abreast in the market. Robust and vibrant financial strategic responses enhanced the objective and visionary management of cash inflow and outflow.

The robust procedures and policies relating to the financial strategic responses received great attention, evaluation, review, and execution as per the recommendation, authorization and approvals. There was strict adherence to budgets and only a few funds were diverted to Covid-19 mitigation after approval from the donors. According to participants this procedures activated the emerging plans and fueled the spirited campaign against Covid-19. Consequently, the donors and well-wishers managed to observe the feasibility and viability and continued to fund the projects. The virtual trips with live coverage of the state of the projects, constant communication and access to in-depth information on financial state, expenditures and work-in- progress.

The participants explained that strategic plan 2021 to 2025 was detailed and subdivided into sections subjected to implementation in phases of six months. The midterm strategy review disclosed the progress and helped in correcting negative variance. Moreover, timely service delivery was made a major concern and therefore holistic avenues that

increase adherence were incorporated. Therefore, the prudent management of resources was stipulated to increase sound implementation of the projects to meet high standard.

The participants opined that resource mobilization was highly coveted and the World Vision Kenya intended to enhance implementation project and meet set timelines. In a nutshell, result-oriented and goal-oriented intention remained the key pillar of the organization. Therefore greatest caliber of analytical skills coupled with understanding of wide array of issues. Subsequently, financial wellbeing of World Vision Kenya was attained through objectives.

Financial strategic responses were game-changers through unique capabilities, solving problems and addressing challenges instantly. The supremacy of financial strategic Covid-19 responses include the adherence to protocol by advocating for virtual means of money transfer which was reinforced. World Vision Kenya leadership enhanced robust online submission and approval of financial documents including transfer of funds. The policies and strategies agreed with Mustajab et al (2020). The lockdowns, restriction of movement, quarantines, curfew and social distance affected the cash flow and financial sector, as a result, concrete outcome depended on the quality response strategies.

As per Obeng-Odoom (2020) the Non-Governmental Organization were affected severely since their donor faced great impact. Hence, NGOs received double strategies and were among the firms hit substantially by the covid 19. Many business, government and non-government institution laid off their staff due to financial distress and inability to meet due whenever they were obligated to pay. In that case, innovative framework was pivotal in counter-attacking the pandemic since NGOs adhered strongly to the strict budgets.

Fortunately for World Vision Kenya, no staff was laid off due to the prudent financial strategic decisions taken by the management in the midst of the pandemic.

Didier, Huneus, Larrain, and Schmukler (2021) concurred with the study that financial vibrant of the organization relied on the economic development and performance. The transition from the past financial techniques to the current one aided the productivity and increase a scalable and financial transaction efficient and speed. The participants emphasized the hallmarks of financial strategic responses in promoting the implementation of projects, facilitating education and scholarship. Moreover, the strategies were the yardstick for all other departments.

#### **4.4 Discussion and Summary**

The study was driven to analyze the strategic responses to Covid-19 pandemic challenges at World Vision Kenya. Researcher targeted respondents including; operation director, disaster management director, program quality and strategy director, resource acquisition and management director. The grand strategic responses promotes the wide-spectrum objective, covering the operation, transformation and finance. The study aimed at giving a conclusive, extensive and unified overall strategic responses to Covid-19 challenges the organization faced. From the virtual donor's live coverage and comprehensive reports and intensive examination of work in progress. The continuous benchmarking promoted innovation and adjustment to Covid-19 challenges. The strategies provided a permanent roadmap for growth, execution of projects, performance and going concern.

The study reignited by the applicable theories coining the interrelationship. Strategic Covid-19 responses to the pandemic was well connected to goal setting theory which

emphasize on the organization of human capital to realize the objective. It is a master plan for smooth work stream. Agency theory coined the separation of issues and activities. For example donor provides the funds while employees ensure execution on mandate by the owners. Resource dependency theory coined the importance of interrelation between external environment and organization. During this period the donors, government, senior management and client collaborated seamlessly.

Strategic responses aimed at teamwork, innovation and sound policies. This were the recipe for unlocking and execution of projects. The security strategies were incorporated to enhance access and control of key issues based on the employee's job. The adjustment was aimed at reaching credibility, high reputation and promoting of the stakeholders. The strategies aimed at eliminating exposure to Covid-19, customer satisfaction and safeguarding employees' welfare (Bachvarova & Zafirova, 2017). The performance increased drastically despite previous anticipation low performance. Indeed, the strategies were agile to adjustment and adaptive to fast-business environment. This propelled the business towards a continuity operation without going concern challenges.

The transformational strategic responses streamlined the transition in longevity. According to the respondents, the training and development promoted collective responsibility. The staff were tasked to give report virtually on their safety and well-being to ensure entire workforce was protected against pandemic. The online transactions, availing airtime to employees, internet bundles, equipment and computers enabled a seamless transformation. The transformation strategies led to the protection of staff and clients welfare. Accordingly, community mobilization of health staff, donating laboratory and testing kits and tactical approach to pandemic increased success rate. The

transformational strategic responses conform to Zuo and Miller (2021) postulation that ability to adapt to changes is roadmap for increase productivity.

Operational strategies affected the business and crucial undertakings kept the business buoyant. The lockdown, curfews and restriction impaired the normal working among firms including World Vision Kenya. The organization walked the untrodden path with the help of operational strategic responses. These strategies were aimed at creating smooth operation and effective discharge of duties irrespective of the scorching pandemic. The productivity and project implementation remain the core of the organization after shifting concentration to life-saving mechanisms. World Vision Kenya incorporate holistic development and growth via training and building confidence of employee through dissemination of concrete, detailed and accurate information.

Empirically, Poddar (2020) associated Covid-19 pandemic with major changes in the supply chain and logistic undertaking. This increased to production side, demand and customer behavior. The oil industry was affected significantly and faced great uncertainties hence investor hesitated in making their investment. According to Conger (2020) employee safety was critical and took significant portion of expenditure. The survival of businesses in United States of America was guided by strategies including cutting down on the cost. The respondent indicated that resources were prioritized again and shifted to most advanced sections. Additionally, the senior management, board and donors agreed that some portion of development be reallocated for containment of pandemic. The respondent indicated that World Vision Kenya had reserve funds which were allocated immediately to keep the firm abreast.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **5.1 Introduction**

The chapter is pivotal in the elucidation of comprehensive summary and extensive recommendation to build on the study's concept and context. In addition, the study looks at the limitation and areas of in-depth inquiry thereby clarifying wide-spectrum of issues. It is the cornerstone of the futuristic assessment through in-recommendation and section that demand for rigorous analysis. The theories and practices top-up the analytical and diligent knowledge.

### **5.2 Summary**

The strategic responses to Covid-19 pandemic challenges by World Vision Kenya, strived for the continuous improvement that enhance quality performance. The driving force was to improve all the areas, department and generally the organization irrespective of the scorching pandemic. The study was guided by holistic efficiency, productivity,

continuous improvement and the economies of scale which kept the organizational buoyant. Therefore, both the long-term and short term goals were the pointers of the organization. Moreover, timely strategic responses mandated the mapping out and issuing of binding directives for the benefit of the organization.

The results postulated that engaging strategic responses, financial, operational and transformation remained the cornerstone for broadening the undertaking, ensuring organization remain afloat despite the major obstruction from the pandemic. The digitalization of the processes were incorporated to increase the operation while eliminating the rampant spread of Covid-19 through minimization of contacts, social distance and adhering to both curfews and travel restrictions. In a nutshell, it gave rise to working from home.

The innovative and creative ways such as taking donors through virtual trips, daily updates on the work-in-progress through the World Vision Kenya platform enhanced the donor confidence. Moreover, the forum virtual meeting, brainstorming and benchmarking ensured that organization remained buoyant, financially fit and continued improving.

The assessment postulated that the greatly-desired outcome was the driving force towards prudential generation of strategies to remain abreast in the market. The findings illustrated that strategic responses to Covid-19 aimed at eradication and minimizing consequence. In the end, it reduced the anticipated predicaments. Moreover, it created adjustment on the organization culture as well as structure. The psychosocial support and staff care improved the welfare of the employees and motivated them to feel part and parcel of the organization. The outstanding performance were recorded during the process and World

Vision Kenya remain afloat, supported children, projects, government and economic outlook.

The transformational strategic responses steered the multifaceted capability of seeking to increase the performance. It was built on the stable foundation and digital powerhouse which adhered to privacy and security. The provision of products such as face masks, hand sanitizers and washing soaps increased the eradication of Covid-19. Moreover, lobbying for vaccination increase the protection of their employees and boost their immunity.

The futuristic performance on capital efficiency and financial stability was addressed through financial strategies. Good governance and inflection of innovation while launching virtual trips via life coverage of projects from the scratch, work in progress, completed work and opportunities to be unlocked. Moreover, the human-centered strategies aimed saving lives and supporting global and national government to end the pandemic.

### **5.3 Conclusion**

This study wrapped-up on the strategic responses to Covid-19 pandemic challenges by stating that the World Vision Kenya emerged victorious and successful within short time compared with other organization. It is imperative to note that more staff were recruited during the period therefore there were no lay-off. Additionally, the strategic responses cultivated the serene environment for upgrading knowledge, skills and experience with combating Covid-19 pandemic. The strategies ranged from operational, transformational

to financial. The strategies conform to the reviewed human resource policies, technology-based and donors' requirements.

The donors and stakeholders were kept abreast on the progress to spearhead full disclosure. This built transparency and accountability. Moreover, the Non-Governmental Organization repositioned itself, gained competitive advantage and became the game-changer in tackling Covid-19 pandemic. World Vision Kenya cultivated holistic and serene environment for staff to empower their skills, experience and knowledge on the use of different gadgets useful in curbing Covid-19 pandemic. The organization initiated staff care to keep in touch and motivate the affected staff. The infusion of creativity and innovation on the virtual trips build the confidence among the team.

The strategic responses fueled momentum and donor's confidence. The participants indicated that transformation, operational and financial strategies were very important in arresting the situation. Working from home with intensification of monitoring to attain key targets, increased agility and streamlined operation. The immensity of creativity, innovation, knowledge and skill created avenue for the problem solving and curbing Covid-19 Pandemic. The capabilities in teams of organizational equipment, helped World Vision Kenya to respond immediately.

The continuous improvement was paramount in channeling resources towards pressing issues and prioritizing accordingly to eliminate mishaps and further inconveniences. Practical bold steps were forwarded by the top management to the board of directors and donors for the approval. The in-depth focus on the goals approved increased the confidence. World Vision Kenya was greatly sourced by the government and

organization for their advisory opinion on managing the Covid-19 pandemic due to their preparedness and qualified staff.

In summary, the intensive and extensive issues, strategies, tactics and plans were incorporated to match the policies and blended to enhance continuance improvement. The execution of the project was eased. The teamwork enhance collaboration, innovation and mutual co-existence in the struggle to eliminate Covid-19 pandemic. Subsequently, the study elucidated the incorporation of the prevailing technology and reinforced development. This protected the organization in the long-run and clients-centered strategies built a crucial yardstick for repositioning. In a nutshell, it landscaped the wide-array of strategic responses hence remained afloat and relevant in the market.

#### **5.4 Recommendation**

The research resulted in significant outcome while pinpointing areas for enhancement. The study recommends for strategic responses in each organizational department to curb unexpected eventuality. The strategies enhance the business or the organization to remain afloat. In this cases the strategies increased the capability of the World Vision Kenya in its operations. The study recommends for strategic and project implementation personnel to keep independent track of the projects and account for the work-in- progress.

The study advocates for significant money reserved for any trends and changes in normalcy. This money is useful in curbing immediate predicaments that faces the organization. It assist the continuity of the business and increase it capability. Moreover, it recommends for the unique products and service that goes beyond national boundaries. Additionally, it recommends for the continuous upgrade of system and technology to beat

the market trend and gain competitive edge. Hence the innovation and creativity should be nurtured and executed to map the organization globally.

The findings indicated that drastic measures were undertaken, recruitment of more experience and competent staff. The training were increased and propelled. Therefore, the continuous improvement and quality performance was pegged on the resources and staff. The study recommends for continuous improvement of organizational resources that meet economies of scale and reduce the cost burden to the organization.

The study recommends for more virtual trips and clearer road map guiding the projects steps, and periodic reporting to build confidence, increase efficiency and effectiveness. Therefore, World Vision Kenya should endeavor to keep quality track of project through technology and showcasing the projects through technological means. Moreover, Staff with great knowledge and experience should be incorporated to run the objective of firm.

### **5.5 Limitation of the study**

The greatest limitation of the study was finding the appropriate time to interview the directors. From the observation and up on checking to confirm all the director had tight schedule undertaking different issues. However, upon persistent requests and visiting the headquarters, the directors accepted my request to interview them. Nevertheless, the information was confidential and the researcher clarified its purpose in the academic journey.

## **5.6 Areas of Further Research**

The researcher advocates for extension of the study by scrutinizing the strategic responses on the organizational innovation. Furthermore, the study on human resource response strategic on Covid-19 Pandemic can help in advancing knowledge. This research prioritizes the study of donor's confidence and execution of projects, financial soundness and implementation of projects. Finally, the study recommends for more study on the effects of Covid-19 on growth and thriving of NGOs in Kenya.

## **5.7 Implications of the Study on Theory, Policy, and Practice**

The strategic responses are costly and involves the approval of immense budgets. The procedures are expensive and involving. The NGOs are driven for offering meaning to lives, social economic empowerment and improving standard for the neglected and disadvantage children. Creativity and innovation is key area for building and reaping significantly. Moreover, imagination shapes the mindset and is critical for continuous performance improvement.

The policy and strategies should be subjected to amendment periodically to meet the prevailing trends. Therefore, intense professionalism and knowledge should be incorporated. The training needed to promote innovation, research and development should be key pillars. Additionally, shaping the mindset through entrepreneurship is fundamental to substantial organizational steps.

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## **APPENDIX**

### **Appendix I: Interview Guide**

This interview guide is structured and designed to gather information on the strategic responses World Vision Kenya adopted in combating the challenges of COVID-19 pandemic. The study is being carried out for a research project in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA) at the University of Nairobi. The information gathered using this guide shall be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and is purely meant for the purposes of this study only.

### **STRATEGIC RESPONSES TO COVID -19 PANDEMIC CHALLENGES AT WORLD VISION KENYA.**

Please respond to following questions regarding the link between the nature of strategic responses and organization effectiveness.

1. What were the immediate strategic responses to pandemic? How was it unique from the rest?
2. What were the greatest response strategy? How was it utilized?
3. How was the operation of the organization affected and what measures were taken?

4. Which transformational mitigation measures were implemented in the organization?
5. How does the organization monitor the performance of its strategy?
6. How did the organization ensure its operations continued as planned?
7. What are some of the strategic actions which ensured that staff care was implemented after the coming of the pandemic?
8. How did the organization use automation and machination to its advantage on the onset of the pandemic?
9. How did the organization ensure donor confidence is retained when the pandemic set in?
10. What are some of the measures taken by the management to ensure organization policies were upheld after coming of the pandemic?
11. What were the major challenges in curbing Covid-19 pandemic?
12. Which changes and innovation steps were taken that eases the fighting of pandemic?

**Thank you for your responses**