EFFECTS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN HUMANITARIAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN KENYA

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DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for a degree in any		
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This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the		
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I also wish to appreciate the questionnaire respondents from the humanitarian NGOs who took their time to provide me with invaluable information required for this research project.

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this research project to my young son who without knowing it has inspired me to strive for higher accomplishments.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
LIST OF TABLES	viii
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
ABSTRACT	X
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of the study	1
1.1.1 Strategic Partnerships	3
1.1.2 Service Delivery	5
1.1.3 Humanitarian NGOs in Kenya	6
1.2 Research Problem	8
1.3 Research Objectives	10
1.4 Value of the Study	11
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Theoretical Foundation	12
2.2.1 Coordination Theory	12
2.2.2 Institutional theory	13
2.3 Strategic Partnerships in Organizations	13
2.4 Organization Performance	16
2.5 Strategic Partnerships and Organizational performance	17

	2.6 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps	18
(CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	21
	3.1 Introduction	21
	3.2 Research Design	21
	3.3 Population of the Study	22
	3.4 Data Collection	22
	3.5 Data Analysis	23
(CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	24
	4.1 Introduction	24
	4.2 Response Rate	24
	4.3 General Information	25
	4.4. Effects of Strategic Partnerships on Service Delivery in Humanitarian NGO	s in
	Kenya	28
	4.4.1 Strategic Partnerships	28
	4.4.2 Importance of Information Sharing	32
	4.4.3 Service delivery in the NGOs	34
	4.5 Discussion of the Findings	38
(CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS	40
	5.1 Introduction	40
	5.2 Summary of findings	40
	5.3 Conclusion	41
	5.4 Recommendations	41
	5.5 Limitation of the Study	42

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research	43
REFERENCES	4 4
APPENDICES	48
Appendix 1: Questionnaire	48
Appendix 2: Humanitarian NGOs Registered by the NGOs Co-ordination Board	52
Appendix 3: University of Nairobi Letter of Introduction	53
Appendix 4: NACOSTI Research Permit	54

LIST OF TABLES

Table 4. 1: Critical Factors for Strategic Partnership	30
Table 4. 2: Information Sharing in the Humanitarian NGOs	33
Table 4. 3: Regression Coefficient of determination	35

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4. 1: Response Rate	25
Figure 4. 2: Classification of Humanitarian NGOs	26
Figure 4. 3: Geographical scope of outreach	27
Figure 4. 4: Years of Operation	28
Figure 4. 5: Strategic Partnerships in humanitarian NGOs	29

ABSTRACT

Humanitarian organizations are an important sector in Kenya as they come out actively in times of disaster to provide humanitarian aid to the affected people. It is important that they are able to react rapidly in order to ensure that there is minimal suffering or discomfort inflicted on the people affected, and to do this, they need to improve their service delivery by forming strategic partnerships with the relevant stakeholders. The purpose of this study is to establish the effects of strategic partnerships in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya. Seventeen (17) accredited humanitarian NGOs were studied and the study applied the questionnaire survey approach to collect data and the study achieved a 100% response rate. The respondents were team leaders or heads of strategy implementation, as they best understand the subject under research. The data collected was checked for completeness, consistency, accuracy and analyzed using descriptive statistics like percentages, mean score and standard deviation. The study is grounded on coordination theory that support the fact that the activities of separate actors can be coordinated to achieve a common objective. The second theory is the Institutional Theory that support the fact that institutions utilize processes, structures, including rules, norms and routines that become established as authoritative guidelines for social conduct. The results of the study proved that strategic partnerships have a positive impact on service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

Strategic partnerships among different organizations are a growing phenomenon around the world and this is because of the proven benefits that have been experienced. Adopting a strategic partnership leads to improved performance irrespective of the type of strategy used or the country in which the partnership is established. Dyer, Kale, and Singh (2012) found that collaborations and partnerships are a significant aspect of business consideration since they enhance capabilities and performance. As a result, it implies that an organization aiming to improve its performance should consider a strategic partnership with other relevant organizations. Jabar et al. (2011) examined the relationship between organizations' partnerships and their performance and the results indicated that collaborations and partnerships is an important factor of consideration to enhance capabilities and performance. This means that organizations planning to improve their performance need to consider partnerships with other organizations. Doz & Hamel (2008) observed in their study that with the turbulent operating environment, organizations have to make strategic choices in order to remain competitive and relevant. Strategic partnerships are not only a fact of life for organizations, but also an important piece of current operations as well as future strategy, Elmuti and Kathwala (2011).

This study was based on two theories. The first one being coordination theory by Malone (1988) which is a body of principles that describes how independent partners can be coordinated, meaning, how the partners can work together harmoniously to achieve a common objective. The second theory is the Institutional Theory by Greve and Argote

(2015) that give importance to institutions and considers the processes by which structures, including rules, norms and routines become established as authoritative guidelines for social conduct. The theory determines the strategies that are produced and influence the choices and benefits that organizations deem as favorable.

The success of a humanitarian response can be improved if the parties involved have a proper understanding of the critical aspects to systematically and quantitatively evaluate specific variables, anticipate possible impacts, and adopt effective methodology of dealing with them. For efficient service delivery, the organization's management must have effective organization, appropriate execution blueprint, advance action on specific activities, access to adequate funds, functional management, and active monitoring system (George G, Zahra SA, Wheatley K, & Kan R (2001).

NGOs have gradually been identified today as important stakeholders in the provision of relief services. This is based on the capability of humanitarian NGOs to position themselves as credible institutions that are determined to solve issues of vulnerable people to achieve a vote in the economic, political, and social conversation (Austin, 2007). NGOs are well known for their involvement in charitable events and the provision of humanitarian aid when disaster strikes. A successful project is evaluated by proper planning, budget availability, the deliverables initially set for, and it is received and used by the recipients as per the expectations. Project Management Institute (2000) defines a project as a temporary objective commenced by people who work jointly to develop a specific good or service within an expected timeframe and budget to produce tangible

objectives. Humanitarian NGOs are project-based institutions as their activities are specific to the need at hand, depending on the disaster that has occurred.

In Kenya, many organizations come out actively during famine, terrorist attacks, pandemics, floods, earthquakes, tribal clashes, road accidents, and other incidences of disaster to provide humanitarian aid to the affected people. However, in as much as they try to alleviate the damages and suffering caused, the service delivery of the response is not as efficient as it ought to be because there has been a lack of a well-elaborated framework for providing humanitarian aid by these organizations.

1.1.1 Strategic Partnerships

Strategic partnership is a concept defined as the cooperative effort that entities put in place to form alliances to pursue a common objective (Dyer, Kale, and Singh, 2012). Partnerships are voluntary collaborations. Will Kenton (2021) defined this concept as an arrangement between two or more corporations to undertake a mutually beneficial project while each retains its independence. Strategic partnerships create more value and develop additional resources and capabilities as the foundation for new competitive advantages and in forming strategic partnerships, organizations are able to complement their efforts and reinforce their competitive edge (Johnson and Scholes, 2014). Organizations unite to reach objectives of common interest, while retaining their anatomy. In essence, to create successful partnerships, organizations must understand when the partnerships will be beneficial and how to manage them for good results. Ndung'u (2011) described strategic partnerships as engagements in which organizations synergize and collaborate in forming

partnerships to achieve a common goal. Therefore, strategic partnerships can be termed as mutually beneficial bonds formed between two or more organizations with the view of attaining set objectives and business needs.

Partnerships are essential building blocks for organizations to achieve stronger and more effective presence. Strategic Partnerships entails sharing complementary resources between each other for the overall benefit of the participating organizations (Will Kenton, 2021). Strategic partnerships create more value and develop additional resources and capacities as the foundation for new competitive advantages. They also benefit the organizations involved by sharing knowledge and expertise, sharing risks involved and as a result obtaining a competitive advantage (Johnson and Scholes, 2014).

Inter-organizational partnership is elevated by the enhanced acknowledgement of the fact that no organization can manage to have all the required resources and expertise to pursue its objectives and goals, especially in a heterogeneous and dynamic market (Dyer, Kale, and Singh, 2012).

Service delivery in risk prone areas in Kenya has been a constant challenge, and this should be addressed through strategic partnerships by the adaptation of proactive rather than reactive processes (Johnson and Scholes, 2014). For a long time, humanitarian NGOs in Kenya have experienced critical setbacks leading to a delayed or inadequate response. However, the adoption of partnerships may have a beneficial influence on the results of the organizations in Kenya, but the question still remains as to which exact

partnerships influence the performance of the organizations in their service delivery. Therefore, this study sought to find out how strategic partnerships enhance service delivery in Kenya's humanitarian NGOs. To answer this question, the study focused on the impact of strategic organizational partnerships, integrated service delivery, strategic supplier partnership and information sharing.

1.1.2 Service Delivery

Many organizations rate their service delivery on their capacity to fulfil their mandate and obligations in an effective and efficient manner. According to John Spacey (2016), Service delivery is the process of providing a service to the external clients or to the internal clients of an organization. This process ideally includes the process of designing, developing, deploying and managing the said service by the organization. Good service delivery entails the organizations' ability to reach their target clients as soon as their services are required while at the same time utilizing their resources effectively. In a humanitarian NGO, efficient service delivery is very important as the organizations are assessed on how responsive they are to the affected people that need humanitarian aid. This in turn translates to how much funding they can get from their donors in order to keep the organization running. Therefore, if proper service delivery is not achieved, the organization may potentially go under.

Service delivery can also be described as the relationship between the service provider and the clients, where the service provider offers a product or service that the client is in need of (Ghalayani & Noble, 2011). Good service delivery provides the clients with an

increase in value. Bigelow (2018) further describes service delivery as the manner in which an organization provides its clients access to its products or services.

In the recent past, many organizations have started to manage their service delivery performance through the use of balanced score cards models whereby they monitor the service delivery performance using several criteria such as customer satisfaction, financial expenditure, recovery rate among others (Ghalayani & Noble, 2011). This therefore enables them ensure that the organization is always on track with its mandate and that no deliverables are left unattended.

1.1.3 Humanitarian NGOs in Kenya

Humanitarian NGOs provide humanitarian aid during emergencies to people who have been affected by either man-made crisis or natural disasters. In Kenya, NGOs are accredited organizations which are registered, regulated and coordinated by the NGOs Co-ordination Board, which is a State Corporation of Kenya established under the Non-Governmental Act of Parliament No. 19 of 1990 (NGOs Co-ordination Board, 2021). It started operations in 1992. There are two main categories of NGOs in Kenya: national and international organizations. National NGOs are formed and operate within the country whereas international NGOs are registered in other countries and have their operations in various countries including Kenya. These organizations have the objective of providing humanitarian aid to either save lives, lessen suffering or maintain human dignity during and in the aftermath of disasters, as well as to prevent and strengthen preparedness for the occurrence of such conditions (Austin, 2007). Humanitarian NGOs

assist in ensuring that there is swift and efficient humanitarian response available when sudden disasters strike. Austin (2007) suggests that NGOs substantial contribution to the growth of the economy is noticeable. They complement the country's programs to advance their residents' living conditions by executing various activities. Nevertheless, many of the programs often experience challenges during their execution phase.

In Kenya, there has been an increase in the frequency of national disasters. The risk of exposed persons is increased by evolving and intricate threats like climate change, new patterns of marginalization, unplanned city developments, increased violence rates, political unrest, unintentional relocation of people and the rising burden of infectious and non-infectious diseases. In an effort to respond to these issues, humanitarian NGOs are challenged by several factors such as uncoordinated response mechanisms, inadequate infrastructure and the ever-growing participation of political players in humanitarian actions Brudan, (2010). The difficulty of the humanitarian environment has led to calls for enhanced partnerships with other stakeholders in the sector. Similarly, improved prediction and technology for speedy warning call for advancements in our capability for early action and for information administration in disasters.

Spens (2009) states that the humanitarian organizations provide charitable services to save lives and lessen the burden experienced by people immediately after a disaster. A condition is termed a tragedy when the residents' existence becomes vulnerable, and the local authorities do not have the expertise to handle such a situation. Humanitarian

organizations intervene when requested by the Government of Kenya or as stipulated by the United Nations under Chapter VII (Gillmann 2010).

Humanitarian Organizations in Kenya have had to respond to numerous emergencies in the recent past of varying severity, such as election-initiated violence in 2007, floods in 2018, tribal attacks in Lamu in 2014, and the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020. As a result of these disasters, coordination among humanitarian organizations has had a need to improve to ensure improved service delivery whenever an emergency is reported. This, in turn, has prompted the establishment and improvement of the management of partnerships and information sharing between the stakeholders.

1.2 Research Problem

Strategic partnerships have the ability to enable NGOs broaden their scope of operation and therefore improve on their service delivery. There has been an emerging trend of interest in improving service delivery efficiency as applied in organizations over the past several years. According to Wassenhove (2013), this comes from realizing the role of strategic partnerships in the organizations. Scholars have conceptualized the need for aligning these concepts in humanitarian organizations. The concept of forming strategic partnerships in NGOs is to improve performance in their operations, Brudan (2010). According to Ishmael Hussein (2009), NGOs with specializations in different areas work alongside various government agencies to reduce the recovery time for the people affected by a disaster.

The purpose of forming strategic partnerships within the humanitarian NGOs is to improve on service delivery and reduce the response time to act on the various requests that may arise (Dyer, Kale, and Singh, 2012). Despite the extensive support that the government provides to their residents in times of disasters, many challenges still exist, proving difficult for them to have well-organized frameworks and support services during disaster management even after establishing systems and programs for disaster response (Allan, 2011). National governments set the regulatory and legal frameworks governing relief services and they are responsible for 'calling' a crisis and inviting local and international aid. Given this, however, critics have developed many arguments concerning the state of concern and challenges with which humanitarian organizations help deliver their humanitarian support to people affected by disasters (Allan, 2011).

Various studies have been done in this field. For instance, Allan (2011), in his study on the risks related to corruption in humanitarian support, concluded that essentially, there is a negative association between corruption and donor funding levels in humanitarian organizations. Nevertheless, the study could not disclose other matters associated with humanitarian support, such as the effects of strategic partnerships that the organizations make to improve their service delivery. Mwas (2009) made another critical study and stated that there is a positive connection between the nature of the supply chain and the range of service delivery to the public by humanitarian organizations. James' (2008) study recognized that World Vision Kenya was receptive to catastrophes based on the very many cases that the organization responded to. Various studies have already been conducted on humanitarian NGOs but they are mostly focused on other scopes such as

how to increase funding from the donors, how to establish competitive strategies against other organizations or on the adoption of Information Technology to improve the performance of the organizations. These studies left a gap in demonstrating how strategic partnerships affect service delivery in humanitarian NGOs.

Therefore, this study sought to establish the effects of strategic partnerships on service delivery in Humanitarian NGOs in Kenya. The aim is to enhance Kenyans' livelihoods facing emergencies and disasters such as famine, drought, floods, landslides, epidemics among others by ensuring that humanitarian services are delivered promptly and efficiently.

From the above studies that has been conducted, it has been observed that there are research gaps as there has been no demonstration made on how organizations engage in strategic partnerships and what benefits they obtain from this. Furthermore, none of the researches done has attempted to analyze the specific factors influencing service delivery in Humanitarian NGOs in Kenya, which is very essential to organizations that handle disaster response. Therefore, this research aimed to find out the effects of strategic partnerships. What are the effects of strategic partnerships on service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya?

1.3 Research Objectives

This study had one objective. It was to establish the effects of strategic partnerships on service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

This study's findings will enable Humanitarian Organizations in Kenya to have a clear understanding of the issues that hinder their services delivery and incorporate mitigations in their processes for better service delivery. The study will also demonstrate how to manage the strategic partnerships in order to achieve their intended objectives. This will therefore help in reducing the number of deaths, injuries, and impact from disasters, diseases and public health emergencies. This research will be of value to the policy makers and government officials as critical partners in the provision of humanitarian aid. It will help in creating governance modalities and policies that can help boost service provision by the humanitarian NGOs.

This study will also add value to researchers in the academic field as it focuses on an area that has not been addressed comprehensively in NGOs. It will add important information to the existing body of literature and offer a platform where further studies related to strategic partnerships in humanitarian NGOs can be based on.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the literature on the factors influencing service delivery on Kenya's humanitarian NGOs. It also makes a review of the theoretical foundation, give an empirical review of the work of other researchers, and give a summary of the research gap.

2.2 Theoretical Foundation

The concept of strategic partnerships for service delivery in humanitarian contexts is wide and there are several theoretical hypotheses that can be used to explain it. This study was anchored by the two studies; Coordination theory by Malone (1988) and Institution theory by Greve and Argote (2015).

2.2.1 Coordination Theory

Coordination theory is a body of principle about how the activities of independent actors can be coordinated (Malone (1988). With this theory, it means that different partners in the humanitarian field can come together and provide their services harmoniously to achieve a common goal. Coordination theory tackles how overall goals can be divided into tasks, how tasks can be assigned to groups or individual actors and how information can be shared among different actors to help achieve the overall goals.

This theory also suggests that if organizations do not have adequate resources to undertake their tasks, they may seek to coordinate with other organizations so that they benefit from their resources.

This theory is considered an effective method of sharing and transfer of special knowledge between partners. It formulates the synergies of the partnering organizations and is important for the success of long term objectives.

2.2.2 Institutional theory

Institution theory is a body of principle that considers procedures by structures, including rules, standards and routines, which become recognized as authoritative guidelines for social conduct (Greve and Argote (2015).

With this theory, humanitarian NGOs can achieve very high levels of service delivery in implementing their projects as different organizations will be able to respond very effectively and precisely to the required need. As a result, the damage caused by disasters will be greatly be reduced as the response time will be reduced since all the key players will be acting harmoniously.

2.3 Strategic Partnerships in Organizations

A strategic partnership entails a competitive advantage where different entities that form strategic partnerships enjoy added advantage and improved service delivery to their clients (Elmuti & Kathawala, 2011). For a partnership to be considered strategic, the partners have to remain independent, however organizations have to partner with other organizations that have similar goals or those that complement their strengths so that they can benefit from each other's capabilities (Kim, 2007).

Elimuti and Kathawala (2011) found that through strategic partnership, organizations were able to effectively prepare themselves against volatile market uncertainty. This therefore makes the organizations to be highly responsive to their target clients and therefore highly competitive in their overall performance. In addition, this improves on the organization's innovation, flexibility, growth, long term sustainability and reliability.

Kim (2007) stated that a robust partnership between organizations is a significant way of supporting firms' achievement of their common objectives. The increased rivalry is no longer among different entities, but now entities are forming partnerships to achieve common goals in their respective fields. Therefore, firms must expand their focus of study and decision-making to include not only single organizations but also their entire industry. Partnerships constitute three significant currents: finances, information, and materials (Regina et all, 2006). Handling the harmonization and combination of these currents within and across organizations is vital in realizing efficient organizational partnerships. Efficient information sharing between entities is, therefore, a requirement for excellence in service delivery.

In recent years, strategic partnerships have been propelled by the development of (ICT) which has enabled institutions to share information more effectively (Regina et all, 2006). Sharing of important information between humanitarian NGOs is critical because response time is determined by how quickly information is received.

The existing literature has provided two dominant perspectives, which include economic and process aspects. According to Elmuti & Kathawala (2011), an economic perspective provide that an organization can make effective decisions after obtaining perfect information from the networks generated through strategic partnerships. On the other hand, the process aspect views the replacement of rational solutions with behavioral decisions irrespective of having perfective information. Humanitarian NGOs decision-making depends on the nature of the disaster that would lead to forming a partnership (Regina et all, 2006). As a result, it is based on problem-based links as opposed to intentionally selecting a partner. The other aspect is the NGOs decision-making process. There is limited dependence on both aspects of perfect information required to make decisions. As a result, the process approach is more evident in many humanitarian non-governmental organizations. The process entails the management's capacity, implementation of activities, knowledge development, and target setting.

Kibira (2015) found that organizations form strategic alliances to improve service delivery, gain market share, and increase profitability. His study also revealed that prevalent strategic partnerships predispose a firm's competitive advantage. Elmuti & Kathawala (2011) focused on technical sectors and found the significance of strategic partnerships in enhancing service delivery. The research revealed that firms utilized strategic partnerships to gain specialized assets to offer better services. As a result, it proved that strategic partnerships are vital avenues to understand market strategies and test new technology for effective service delivery.

2.4 Organization Performance

Organization performance is how efficiently an institution attains its set goals and objectives. It is the measure of how competent an organization is and how well it achieves its objectives (Stoner, Gilbet and Freeman 2003). The concept of organization performance is therefore based on the idea that an organization is the voluntary organization of human capital, capital resources and productive assets for the achievement of set targets.

Organizational performance is the achievement of high levels of quality productivity and customer satisfaction by improving personnel skills through training and development (Mbithi 2014). Organizational performance can be represented in two different approaches; the first one is the financial approach and the second one is the non-financial approach.

Financial approach of organizational performance relies mostly on criteria relating to the company's revenue. However, according to Muriithi (2010) the use of financial approach only is not sufficient, as it does not capture the overall condition and wellbeing of the organization. To achieve a comprehensive assessment of the organization's performance, it is therefore important to have a mix of approaches including the financial approach and the non-financial approach including, effectiveness of the organizational business processes, client satisfaction and staff development. This way, a comprehensive status of the organization can therefore be determined.

In Kudate's (2014) study that focused on the effects of strategic partnerships between small and big enterprises, he established that while partnership was considered a favorable choice, smaller enterprises required extra information prior to entering into partnerships. This study suggests that there are more knowledge gaps that need to be studied further on how partnerships are organized and managed and how this affects the performance of the organizations.

Therefore, contemporary performance measurement systems for organizations should take into consideration both the financial and non-financial aspects of so as to have a wholesome representation of the organization.

2.5 Strategic Partnerships and Organizational performance

The relationship between the formation of strategic partnerships and the performance of the involved organizations is not substantively documented in the available literature. On review of the literature, it has been established that most of the research focused on the relationship between partnership and service delivery on different scopes but not on the humanitarian NGOs field. The link between the formation of strategic partnerships and organization performance and service delivery has contradicting evidence obtained from the existing literature. Varadarajan & Cunningham and Ziegelbauer and Farquhar (2004) found a positive correlation between the formation of strategic partnerships and performance of the organizations. In this regard, the question that remains unanswered is what are the effects of strategic partnerships in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya? Therefore, to fulfill this gap and further explore the correlation, it is important to carry out this research project.

2.6 Empirical Studies and Research Gaps

On reviewing previous literature, two main perspectives of strategic partnerships are revealed. These are the process perspective and economic perspective. The process perspective views the replacement of rational solutions with the decisions that are behavioral without having the perfect information (Elmuti & Kathawala, 2011) whereas the Economic perspective suggests that once an organization acquires perfect information from the networks created through strategic partnerships, it is therefore able to make informed decisions (Bleeke & Ernst, 1993).

Elmuti & Kathawala (2011) focused on the entry into novel technical sectors in an industry found that pre-entry partnerships are widespread. The study showed that organizations used the partnerships to obtain value especially by utilizing specialized assets and obtaining relevant information regarding a developing market. Therefore, the authors argued that the partnerships were important in testing new market models, test new technology and understand market dynamics in the developing markets.

Kibira (2015) assessed the effect of strategic partnerships on commercial banks' competitive advantage in Kenya. The study indicated that the decision of banks to develop strategic alliances with other entities was pitched towards gaining more market share and as a result achieve higher profits. Other studies have concluded that the reason of forming strategic partnerships is to gain additional skills and knowledge, provide improved services, reduce operational costs, share risks, eliminate competitors from the market, enhance efficiency and penetrate new markets. This study concluded that the strategic partnerships improved the bank's competitive edge.

Efficient service delivery in NGOs should involve various stakeholders that differ in terms of their interests, logistic skill, purpose, expertise, and culture. These include relief organizations, governments, private firms, donors, military, and other societal organizations like colleges, houses of worship, and hospices (Howden, 2009).

The responsibility of non-logistics program units is to perform needs assessment, manage donor relationships, plan for the right supplies, monitor and evaluate the impacts levied by the distributed networks. Humanitarian organizations are required to provide humanitarian aid and other humanitarian services in times of disasters. People struck by disasters expect assistance from all quotas of life. Burcu et al. (2010) state that disasters' abrupt and unforeseen nature cannot call for pre-planning. However, the impact of such disasters can only be addressed through well-set disaster management and planning processes (Kovacs & Spens, 2011). Given such situations, well-formulated and coordinated organizations are essential.

Several studies have been done in this field, but none specifically targets strategic partnerships in humanitarian NGOs. For instance, Kamanu's (2005) study focused on the link between strategic alliances and NGO development in Kenya and Agare's (2012) study observed that dependency on donors is the main characteristic of Kenyan NGOs. Additionally, most local and global studies have focused on the competition perspective where the researchers base their studies on establishing the competitive strategies adopted by humanitarian NGOs while forming strategic partnerships. The studies have not

captured the link between strategic partnership and the organizations service delivery. This study will therefore bring out the different perspective by tracing the effects of strategic partnership on service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya.

To a large extent, humanitarian NGOs significantly contribute to the improvement of the living conditions of many people by protecting their safety as they carry out their day to day activities. Due to the complex nature and competition within the organizations, many have resulted in forming partnerships to generate value. To achieve effective results in strategic partnerships, the collaborating organizations need to have clearly defined objectives and agreed upon strategies on how to achieve these goals.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the research methodology that has been used in this research paper and covers the research design, data collection methods, data analysis, and reporting. The chapter also provides the details on how the researcher collected data to get maximum information related to the subject under study. It also shows the research respondents from whom data was collected from and the data analysis method and rating criteria.

3.2 Research Design

This research paper has used a descriptive cross-sectional survey in collecting data from the respondents (Humanitarian NGOs). Creswell (2009) stated that a descriptive study's role is to collect evidence regarding current prevailing circumstances and not having made any changes to achieve accurate observation. This design also allows large volumes of data be collected in an accurate manner and within a shorter period.

A descriptive cross-sectional research design is a systematical review in which the researcher does not have direct control of the independent variables as their behavior has already taken place or because they ultimately cannot be manipulated (Dowdy & Wearden, 1893). Thus, this research paper aimed to gather evidence from the non-governmental humanitarian NGOs in Kenya and show their authentic representation.

3.3 Population of the Study

A population is the entire member set in a specified group that the researcher is interested in drawing participants from (Mugenda and Mugenda 2003). Collins and Millsap (1998) define a population as the whole group of subjects or individuals that a researcher has interest in making general conclusions about.

This study was conducted through a census and the population of the study was the accredited humanitarian NGOs in Kenya as listed on Appendix 2.

As at November 2021, there were seventeen registered humanitarian NGOs by the NGOs Co-ordination Board as published in the Non-Governmental Organizations directory (2021).

3.4 Data Collection

This research used primary data and the data collection was done through questionnaires to respondents, which were self-administered, whereby the respondents completed the questionnaires by themselves and then submitted their responses back the researcher. This ensured firsthand information was received from the respondents in the organizations and therefore ensuring accuracy of the study.

Questionnaires were used to obtain data about the population because they are fast, costeffective, reasonable, and simpler to manage. The questions in the questionnaire were formulated in order to obtain relevant information in regards to how strategic partnerships in the organization has affected the overall service delivery of the organization, which kinds of partnerships work and which partnerships do not work. The questionnaire also had both multiple-choice questions and open-ended questions.

Once the information was received from the seventeen NGOs through the questionnaires, it was analyzed and processed for further reporting. The target population was disaster response team leaders or heads of strategy implementation as they are best positioned to answer the questions concerning the subject under research. All the humanitarian NGOs operating in Kenya have offices or representation in Nairobi and therefore accessible for data collection.

3.5 Data Analysis

After data collection, the researcher checked them for completeness, consistency and data accuracy. To analyze the quantitative data, descriptive statistics was used including percentages, mean score and standard deviation and the reported in form of graphs and tables.

In his study, Smith (2015) recommended analyzing qualitative data; therefore, received data was arranged, sorted, examined by their respective categories, and conclusions made based on the findings.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

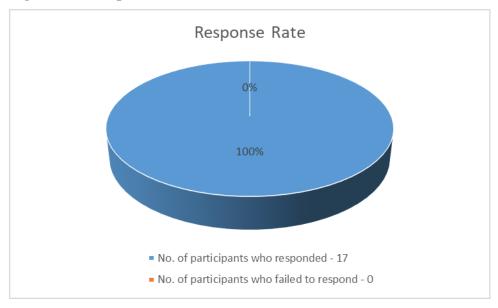
4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis and the results of the research following the steps outlined in the research methodology. This research intended to determine the correlation between strategic partnership and service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya. Data was collected from the registered humanitarian NGOs in Kenya using questionnaires that depicted the objective of the study, thereafter an analysis of the data was done, and the findings displayed in form of charts, figures and tables.

4.2 Response Rate

This study targeted seventeen (17) accredited humanitarian NGOs with each being issued one questionnaire. Questionnaires were administered to the disaster response team leaders and heads of strategy implementation within the 17 NGOs and the response rate was 100% as indicated in the figure 4.1 below. The returned questionnaires were checked for consistency, errors in filling, completeness and adherence to the set instructions before analysis. Therefore, all the 17 questionnaires were analyzed and the response rate was adequate for the research.

Figure 4. 1: Response Rate



4.3 General Information

This study focused on various aspects of the humanitarian NGOs in order to obtain comprehensive information regarding the organizations. This included their classification, geographical scope of operation, number of years in operation and their orientation towards strategic partnerships and how this affects their service delivery. The findings are presented as below;

4.3.1 Classification of Humanitarian NGOs

There are two major classifications of NGOs. International classification which means that the organization is registered in another country and has its operations in various countries including Kenya and national classification, which means that the organization is registered and operates only in Kenya. The study concluded that 58.82%, of the humanitarian organizations were international organizations whereas 41.18% of the organizations are national organizations.

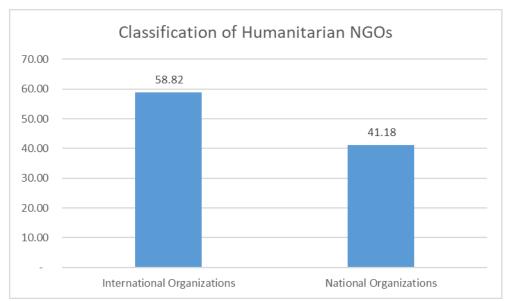


Figure 4. 2: Classification of Humanitarian NGOs

4.3.2 Geographical scope of outreach of Humanitarian NGOs

Geographical scope of outreach focusses on the range of outreach the organization offers its services. There are four levels of operation, which are local, national, regional and international levels. Local level means that the organization has an outreach only within one area or one county in Kenya, national level means that the organization has an outreach across Kenya, regional level means that the organization has an outreach within the east Africa community countries and international level means that the organization has an outreach across many countries including Kenya.

The study found that 64.71% of the organizations had an international scope of operation. This means that they operated in Kenya as well as across many other countries. In addition, there were 11.76% in each of the remaining three categories operating at a

regional level, national level and local level. This is therefore to confirm that the humanitarian NGOs involved in this study were obtained from all the four tiers.

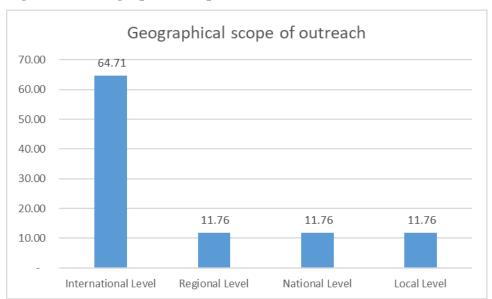


Figure 4. 3: Geographical scope of outreach

4.3.3 Years of Operation

The respondents of the questionnaire were also asked to state the number of years their organizations have been in operation. The results indicated that 82.35% of the organizations have been in operation for more than ten (10) years, as indicated in fig 4.4. This therefore implies that the organizations have extensive experience in the provision of humanitarian aid services, are well-established organizations and therefore understand the benefits of strategic partnerships.

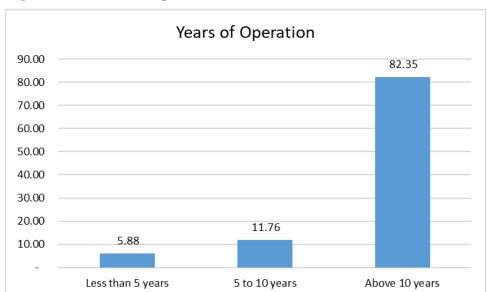


Figure 4. 4: Years of Operation

4.4. Effects of Strategic Partnerships on Service Delivery in Humanitarian NGOs in

Kenya

The purpose of this study was to establish how partnerships affect service delivery in humanitarian NGOs. Efficient service delivery is how accessible services of an organization are to the recipients of the services.

George, Zahra, Wheatley and Kan (2001) found out that having established partnerships among organizations created high value compared to entering into competition. The findings of the study are therefore described below;

4.4.1 Strategic Partnerships

The purpose of this study is to find out the correlation between strategic partnership and service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya. The study therefore established the following;

4.4.1.1 Formation of Strategic Partnerships

The study sought to understand if and why humanitarian NGOs form strategic partnerships with other organizations and the effects of the partnerships on service delivery. Further to the study, it was determined that 100% of the organizations in this category formed strategic partnerships with other organizations as indicated in figure 4.5 below. This therefore means that the organizations recognize the importance of forming strategic partnerships with other organizations in order to improve their service delivery.



Figure 4. 5: Strategic Partnerships in humanitarian NGOs

4.4.1.2 Importance of Strategic Partnership

The study explored the benefits of forming strategic partnerships with other organizations in the same field of operation. The Likert scale was used in obtaining responses which was structured as below:

1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neutral; 4-Agree; 5-Strongly Agree.

The calculation of the mean and standard deviation of the findings is presented in table 4.1;

Table 4. 1: Critical Factors for Strategic Partnership

No.	Scale factors in Strategic Partnerships	Mean	Standard
			Deviation
1.	Strategic partnerships with other organizations	4.24	1.091
	enables the NGO reach people in need in an		
	efficient manner		
2.	Strategic partnerships minimizes price volatility	3.18	1.185
3.	Partnership with other organizations has improved	3.88	0.993
	the overall service delivery of the organization		
4.	The organization recognizes the need to ensure	4.71	0.985
	good partnerships with its stakeholders/partners		
	such as donors, governments, media, suppliers,		
	among others		
5.	The organization appreciates the different roles	4.24	1.091
	played by each of its stakeholders during		
	emergency responses		
6.	The organization has established modalities and	3.71	1.047
	structures to address the conflicts that arise from		
	the different stakeholders/partners.		

From the findings above, it was determined that the organizations recognize the need to ensure good partnerships with their stakeholders and partners such as donors, government agencies, media and suppliers with a mean score of 4.71. It also indicates that it is important for each of the partner to undertake its role effectively, especially during emergencies. In addition, strategic partnerships with other organizations enables the NGO to reach people in need in an efficient manner and partnerships with other organizations improves the overall service delivery of the organization.

Other factors that have been observed in moderation are that strategic partnerships minimizes price volatility and that most of the organizations have established modalities and structures to address the conflicts that arise from the different stakeholders/partners.

These findings are consistent with a study by Doz & Hamel (2008) which observed that organizations form partnerships which assist them in reducing liabilities and enhance their stability and improve on their image.

4.4.1.3 Challenges NGOs face when forming Strategic Partnerships

This study explored the different challenges that the organizations face while forming strategic partnerships. The findings determined that there is a wide range of challenges and obstacles that the organizations face which include but not limited to the ones listed below;

 Conflict among partners on the priority of projects to be implemented and having different levels of commitment from the partners.

- ii. Having difficulty in agreeing a fair model of sharing the available resources.
- iii. Failure of some partners to achieve their set targets on different projects and therefore affect the outcome of the overall objectives.
- iv. Lack of proper communication and coordination between the partners.
- v. Over expectation of some partners because they have provided funding for a project.
- vi. Insufficient funding for projects
- vii. Incase of a Public-Private partnership i.e collaboration with government agencies, there is a lot of bureaucracy involved which can hinder the implementation of a project or the required service.
- viii. Finding organizations with similar objectives or interests can be difficult.
- ix. Some organizations are not comfortable sharing some information with their partners and therefore this may hinder service delivery.

Austin (2007) reported that some of the challenges faced while forming and implementing strategic partnerships are improper governance, interference by donors, asymmetry in sharing information and inadequate resources.

4.4.2 Importance of Information Sharing

This study has significantly discovered that information sharing between different stakeholders has improved service delivery within humanitarian NGOs. The Likert scale was used in obtaining responses which was structured as below:

1-Strongly disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neutral; 4-Agree; 5-Strongly Agree.

The calculation of the mean and standard deviation of the findings is presented in table 4.2;

Table 4. 2: Information Sharing in the Humanitarian NGOs

No.	Scale factor in Information Sharing	Mean	Standard
			Deviation
1.	The organization has embraced the use of Information	3.94	1.197
	Technology (IT) and this has improved information		
	sharing with its partners.		
2.	Information sharing is an essential aspect of achieving	4.24	0.970
	improved service delivery		
3.	The NGO is keen on ensuring that important	3.94	1.088
	information is shared with the relevant partners in order		
	to have improved service delivery		
4.	Important and relevant information moves both	3.82	1.074
	upstream and downstream to the relevant departments in		
	a timely manner		
5.	The organization recognizes the importance of mass	3.88	1.166
	media in the process of information sharing to the all the		
	relevant stakeholders.		
6.	The Organization has clear and defined lines of	4.41	1.064
	reporting		

From the above findings, it is evident that the humanitarian NGOs appreciate the importance of sharing important information with their strategic partners and stakeholders in order to ensure there is proper coordination of activities, which in turn translates to improved service delivery. The organizations have also embraced the use of Information Technology (IT), which has improved efficiency, data protection and confidentiality of the information being shared.

George, Zahra, Wheatley and Kan (2001) in their study demonstrated that strategic partnerships influence the performance of organizations by increasing the knowledge and information flow within the partnerships and as a result increasing the possibility of improving performance and service delivery.

4.4.3 Service delivery in the NGOs

This study aimed at establishing how partnerships affect service delivery in humanitarian NGOs. The respondents were required to demonstrate if strategic partnerships are helpful in enhancing service delivery within their organizations. Efficient service delivery can be termed as ease of access by the people who require the services, which is important for the success of the organization.

4.4.3.1 Regression Analysis

In order to establish the relevance and correlation of strategic partnerships on service delivery, a regression analysis was carried out as shown below;

Table 4. 3: Regression Coefficient of determination

Model	Coefficients		t	P
	beta	Std error	beta	
Enables the NGO reach people	0.398	0.592	0.672	0.517
in need in an efficient manner				
Minimizes price volatility	0.487	0.300	1.624	0.135
Improving overall service	0.598	0.672	0.889	0.395
delivery of the organization				

The regression analysis results on table 4.3 demonstrate that that there is a significant link between strategic partnerships and service delivery with a correlation coefficient of 0.395. This confirms that there is direct correlation between strategic partnerships and service delivery and therefore an increase in strategic partnerships enhances service delivery.

4.4.3.2 How to improve service delivery in NGOs

The respondents provided various proposals that would assist in improving the service delivery in their respective organizations. The recommendations that were put forward include the following but not limited to;

- i. Enhancing communication in all levels of the organization
- ii. Fostering strong cultures and creating an inclusive working environment for all staff.
- iii. Keeping proper records within the organization, especially for all critical projects.

- iv. Performing due diligence before undertaking any new projects.
- v. Keeping strong work ethics and maintaining professionalism.
- vi. Reducing overdependence from partners.
- vii. Having proper and prudent use of available resources.
- viii. Strengthen the use of Information Management systems for improved information sharing, data protection, reduced turnaround time and errors.
- ix. Have improved collaboration between the NGOs and corporate sector in order to improve community outreach.
- x. Have improved support from the government as opposed for them to only playing the role of gatekeepers.
- xi. Capacity building of employees and engagement partners on the importance of forming strategic partnership with other organizations.
- xii. Having the partners involved in fieldwork projects so that they can clearly understand the challenges the organization is facing at the ground level and therefore finding lasting solutions.
- xiii. Pay or compensate the staff adequately in order to have motivated employees who will in turn perform well and improve service delivery.

4.4.3.3 Technology

The use of technology within the organizations is very important when fostering partnerships with other stakeholders. This is because technology creates a secure platform where information can be shared, transactions can be done and organizations can integrate seamlessly and efficiently.

Technology also ensures that data is secure and can only be accessed by the designated personnel from each participating organization.

4.4.3.4 Monitoring and Evaluation

In order to measure the impact of the strategic partnerships, it is essential that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) is implemented to observe and detect any variations that may occur. With M&E, the management is able to keep a track of the implementation and progress of the strategic partnership and identify where there is need for improvement. Therefore, to manage the quality of the partnership formed between two or more organizations, the partnership has to be monitored and evaluated and if a positive outcome is observed, then it becomes easy to demonstrate its benefits.

4.4.3.5 Stakeholder Involvement

When organizations are forming strategic partnerships, all the stakeholders should be keenly involved in the process to guarantee that each party gets the best out of the partnership and input their optimum resources into the partnership that will be of benefit to all participating organizations. Proper communication and coordination is also important between the organizations.

Regular meetings should be held to ensure that the mandate of the partnership is upheld, plans of the agreed projects to be implemented are conducted, monitoring of ongoing projects is conducted and evaluation of completed assignments is conducted. This will ensure that the objectives of the partnerships are effectively achieved.

4.5 Discussion of the Findings

This study has demonstrated the important features that strengthen strategic partnerships between the organizations. These features include embracing information technology as a platform for information sharing during partnerships, having clear vision of the strategic partnerships, having clear reporting guidelines, conducting monitoring and evaluation of the partnerships and ensuring mutual benefit to all participating parties. This corresponds with the findings by Ziegelbauer and Farquhar (2004) which states that in order to achieve success, cooperation among partnering organizations is important because it has a positive impact on the service delivery. Therefore, there should be a clear vision and intention when forming strategic partnerships and resources should be allocated optimally to ensure equity between the partners.

This study also corresponds with the findings by George, Zahra, Wheatley and Kan (2001) in their study which stated that strategic partnerships influence the performance of organizations by increasing knowledge and information flow within the partnerships and as a result increasing the possibility of improved performance and service delivery.

This study is anchored on two theories, Coordination theory by Malone (1988) and Institution theory by Greve and Argote (2015). Coordination theory is about how different partners can work together harmoniously to achieve a common objective. The findings of this study therefore ratify that strategic partnerships between humanitarian NGOs has contributed significantly to the improvement of service delivery as the organizations are able to utilize each others strengths. The second theory is the Institutional theory which considers procedures by structures, including rules, standards and routines, which become recognized as authoritative guidelines for social conduct.

The findings of this study also ratify this theory as for partnerships to be effective, there has to be proper structures, rules and routines to be adhered to for accountability. Information Technology is also one of the key structures that was identified as a key platform for ensuring secure and efficient partnership between the organizations.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND

RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the deductions of the research, conclusion and policy

recommendations for future studies. This chapter also outlines the limitations of the

research.

5.2 Summary of findings

This study has revealed that forming strategic partnerships between humanitarian NGOs

is important in improving service delivery. These partnerships are made to accomplish

the set goals and objectives enabling the organizations to access extra resources and reach

out to the people in need more effectively. This study has also revealed that in the

humanitarian NGOs sector, the international humanitarian organizations are the majority

at 58.82% and the national organizations forming the remaining 41.18%. This means that

Kenya has a high presence of international organizations, which allows the sector to

access both local and international resources from the international stakeholders.

The outcomes presented in this study revealed that there is positive correlation between

strategic partnership and service delivery. Many of the organizations in this sector have

engaged in more than one partnership and the same has had a notable influence on its

service delivery. The outcomes further demonstrated that organizations that formed

strategic partnerships have taken advantage of resources of other organizations and as a

result, this has improved their service delivery.

40

5.3 Conclusion

This study concludes that strategic partnership across all categories of humanitarian NGOs is very essential in the improvement of service delivery to the public. As the organizations are not in the business of profit making, their true value lies on how effectively they can provide aid services to the people in need. Therefore, it is important they obtain the most effective way of delivering their services. Humanitarian NGOs in Kenya are diverse with both locally and internationally registered organizations, all of which have a common goal which is to support people who have been affected by disasters and are in need of humanitarian aid.

The study has demonstrated that strategic partnerships between the organizations bring a host of benefits in improving service delivery such as enabling the organizations reach the people in need in a much efficient manner, reduce price volatility of inputs, avail more capital and resources, bridge the gap in expertise and knowledge, share ideas among others.

Information Technology has also proven to be an important tool in ensuring that partnerships are formed seamlessly and information is secured. This gives the participating organizations more confidence knowing that confidential information is only accessible by the designated people within the organizations.

5.4 Recommendations

The results of this study have demonstrated that, humanitarian NGOs should frequently review their strategic partnerships and team up more with other organizations in order to improve their service delivery and performance. This study recommends strategic

partnerships as a brilliant strategy that the organizations can utilize. They should find partners with common interests with whom they can complement each other's strengths and resources and build strong networks with.

The study recommends that the government and policy makers should formulate policies and laws that encourage organizations to form strategic partnerships by creating a conducive environment to do so. Once this is done, it will create modalities and a platform that will help in boosting the quality of service delivery by the organizations during times of need.

Another recommendation for this study is to the researchers in the academic field to study and find more ways on how service delivery can be improved in different sectors, and not only on NGOs. This will ensure that all services are provided seamlessly and effectively across the board.

5.5 Limitation of the Study

This study faced some challenges, with the first one being obtaining responses from the designated recipients. This is because several of the organizations had moved their offices, or adopted a working-from-home model, and therefore finding the respondents was not easy. In addition, some respondents were not very willing to provide the information requested in the questionnaire citing sensitivity of the information. Fortunately, after some rigorous efforts, and presenting the introduction letter from the University that assured the respondents that the data was being collected for academic purposes only and that their responses will be treated with confidentiality and anonymity, all respondents provided their responses.

Another limitation of the study is that it is only limited to the humanitarian NGOs sector.

Therefore, the findings can only be applied to this sector as other sectors may not have

the same working conditions as that of the target sector.

This study may also have some limitations due to the use of questionnaires for data collection as some respondents may have personal biases like emotions and attitude in regards to strategic partnerships that may not portray the true view of the organization. Therefore, this might not reflect the facts and may distort the findings of the study.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Research

There is need to conduct further research in this field to analyze the correlation of strategic partnerships and service delivery. Further research can therefore be conducted on other sectors of the NGOs focusing on other scopes of work to determine how service delivery can be improved by different factors, including forming strategic partnerships. This will help in identifying the various challenges that organizations face and how they can be resolved in order to improve the efficiency of their operations.

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 International Journal of Innovation, Management and Technology, Vol. 2, No. 6,

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

EFFECTS OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS ON SERVICE DELIVERY IN HUMANITARIAN NGOs IN KENYA

This questionnaire intends to gather information on the effects of strategic partnership on service delivery in humanitarian NGOs in Kenya. The questionnaire target respondents are disaster response team leaders in the humanitarian NGOs. Information gathered through this survey will only be used for academic objectives of this study and interviewees will remain anonymous.

PART A: Background Information

Please tick whichever is appropriate in the space provided

PI	ease tick whichever is appropriate in the space provided	
1.	What is the classification of your organization?	
	International Organization (Registered and operate in various con	untries including
	Kenya)	()
	National Organization (Registered and operate in Kenya only)	()
2.	What is the geographical scope of outreach of your organization?	
	International Level (Across many countries) []	
	Regional Level (e.g East Africa Community) []	
	National Level (Across Kenya)	
	Local Level (Within one area/county)	
3.	For what period of time has the organization been in operation?	
	Less than 5 years [] Above 10 years	[]
	5 to 10 years []	

4.	Does your organization form	strategic partnerships with	other organizations?
	Yes	No []	

5. If yes, to what extent does your organization form strategic partnerships?

i. Little Extent [] ii. Moderate Extent [] iii. Great Extent [] iv. Very Great Extent []

Part B: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP

Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by marking (\checkmark) in the box provided below: -

Scale;

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

	Scale factors in strategic partnership	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Strategic partnerships with other organizations enables					
	the NGO reach people in need in an efficient manner					
2.	Strategic partnerships minimizes price volatility					
3.	Partnership with other organizations has improved the overall service delivery of the organization					
4.	The organization recognizes the need to ensure good					
	partnerships with its stakeholders/partners such as					
	donors, governments, media, suppliers, among others					
5.	The organization appreciates the different roles played					

	by each of its stakeholders during emergency responses			
6.	The organization has established modalities and			
	structures to address the conflicts that arise from the			
	different stakeholders/partners.			
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Yes []		No []		
8. What challenges	does your organization to	ace in formi	ng strategic	
partnerships?				 •••••

Part C: INFORMATION SHARING

This section is about information sharing between the organization and its partners. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement by marking (\checkmark) in the box provided below: -

Scale;

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

	Scale factor in Information sharing	1	2	3	4	5
1.	The organization has embraced the use of Information					
	Technology (IT) and this has improved information					
	sharing with its partners.					
2.	Information sharing is an essential aspect of achieving					
	improved service delivery					
3.	The NGO is keen on ensuring that important information					
	is shared with the relevant partners in order to have					
	improved service delivery					
4.	Important and relevant information moves both upstream					
	and downstream to the relevant departments in a timely					
	manner					
5.	The organization recognizes the importance of mass					
	media in the process of information sharing to the all the					
	relevant stakeholders.					
6.	The Organization has clear and defined lines of reporting					
		•		•	•	•

7. W	/hat	othe	r wa	ys c	an t	e us	sed t	o im	pro	ve s	ervi	ce de	elive	ery i	in yo	our	orga	ıniz	atio	n?	
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Appendix 2: Humanitarian NGOs Registered by the NGOs Coordination Board

- 1. Care International in Kenya
- 2. International Rescue Committee/Kenya
- 3. AMREF Health Africa/Kenya
- 4. Kenya Human Rights Commission (KHRC)
- 5. World Vision International-Kenya
- 6. Family Health International 360 (FHI 360)
- 7. Danish Refugee Council
- 8. Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)
- 9. Awareness against human trafficking (HAART)
- 10. Mercy Corps Kenya
- 11. Africa Harvest Biotech Foundation International.
- 12. Doctors without borders (MSF)
- 13. Oxfam International
- 14. Amnesty International- Kenya
- 15. Save the Children
- 16. Action Aid Kenya
- 17. Plan International

Appendix 3: University of Nairobi Letter of Introduction



UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

Telephone: 4184160-5 Ext 215 Telegrams: "Varsity" Nairobi Telex: 22095 Varsity

Nairobi, KENYA

18 February 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Dear Sir/Madam,

INTRODUCTORY LETTER FOR RESEARCH MAURICE NGILA - REGISTRATION NO. D61/72907/2014

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University. He is conducting research on "Effects of Strategic Partnerships on Service Delivery in Humanitarian Non-Governmental Organizations in Kenya"

The purpose of this letter is to kindly request you to assist and facilitate the student with necessary data which forms an integral part of the research project. The information and data required is needed for academic purposes only and will be treated in Strict-Confidence.

Your assistance will be highly appreciated.

Thank you.

PROF. JACKSON MAALU

DEAN, FACULTY OF BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT SCIENCES

JM/jo

Appendix 4: NACOSTI Research Permit

