STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS AND PERFORMANCE OF UNICEF KENYA COUNTRY OFFICE

BY

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RESEARCH PROJECT SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFULMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION, SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

UNICEF:	United Nations Children Fund
UN:	United Nations
GA:	General Assembly
NGOs:	Non - Governmental Organizations
RBV:	Resource Based View
HACT	Harmonised Approach to Cash Transfers
DAO	Delivering as One
UN	United Nations
PCA	Programme Corporation Agreement
NGOs	Non Governmental Organizations
UNGASS	United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children
MDGs	Millenium Development Goals
CSOs	Civil society Organizations
IPs	Implementing Partners
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
SSFA	Small Scale Funding Agreement
CBOs	Community Based Organizations
Cos	Country Offices
CCCs	Core Commitments for Children
VISION	Virtual Integrated System of Information

DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been presented for award of any degree in any university

Signature………………………………Date………………………………………

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The research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the supervisor.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my loving Mother for her advice and support. Thank you for walking with me through this journey.

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I thank the Almighty God for guiding me through my MBA studies and research project, to Him be all Glory. I am also grateful to my supervisor Professor Zachary B. Awino for his continuous support, from the early stages of conceptual inception and through ongoing advice and encouragement to this day. Special thanks to Unicef Kenya Office and especially Grainne Moloney, my line Manager for allowing me time to study and to conduct research on the organization and offering data necessary for the same. Last but not least, I appreciate my entire family's support throughout this project. I also thank my colleagues at Unicef Kenya Country Office for availing themselves to give me the information through interview to pursue my MBA project. Without you all, this project would not have been possible. May the Lord bless you all.

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to determine the effect of Strategic Partnerships on the Performance of UNICEF Kenya. The research adopted a case study research design. This study has five chapters. Chapter one describes the background of the study. This chapter also introduces the conceptual argument of the study. In this chapter also the context of the study is discussed. This gives a description of the United Nations in Kenya, which is the context of study focusing on the United Nations Children Fund in Kenya. In Chapter two the literature review, and the theoretical foundation is discussed. Chapter three gives the research methodology where the research design, data collection and data analysis is discussed. This study was a case study of United Nations Children Fund. The case study involved a careful and complete examination of the entire units and Organization at large and embraced depth rather than breadth of the study. Both primary and secondary data was collected for this study. Primary data was collected through an interview guide that carries questions pertaining partnership strategy, the challenges encountered in the process of implementing the strategy in order to achieve results. The interview guide consisted of open-ended unstructured question to allow greater depth and breadth of responses and was administered through personal interviews to Unicef staffs namely Section chiefs, Program Specialists/Officers and Programme Assistants; Implementing Partners were also interviewed namely Program Officers/Managers. Secondary data consisted of various literatures about the company as recorded in the Organization profile, organization newsletters, annual reports, quarterly progress reports, key speeches as well as spot check reports and publications. Chapter four discussed the findings of the study which revealed that the Organization achieves its performance through implementing partnership strategy. It is through engaging patners that Unicef can have its programmes implemented and results achieved. This is done through conducting a competitive bidding process to select the best partners with the required technical capacity to undertake the programmes. However this study revealed that in implementing partnership strategy, there are many challenges that face the implementation and hinders results achievement. Despite investing heavily in the partnership strategy Unicef Kenya still has not achieved the desired results as it still faces challenges including but not limited to unreported funding which is over the allowable 6 months. The final chapter of this study is chapter five which gives the summary of the findings, conclusion and the recommendation of the study. This chapter also discusses the implications of the study to the policy makers, the theory the implication of the study in practice and especially to the practicing managers. It also gives the suggestions for further research by upcoming academicians and researchers.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The environments in which organizations operate have become uncertain and therefore volatile due to many factors. Organizations need to think strategically and come up with winning strategies; they need to translate insights into effective strategies to cope with the environments in which they operate. Organizations need to change in order to align themselves and adopt to the prevailing internal and external factors to remain relevant in their respective fields (Bryson, 1995).

They also need to develop rationales necessary to allow for adopting and implementing strategies in the volatile environment (Bryson, 1995). Performance comprise actual results as measured against intended objectives. Richard et al. (2009) states that organizational performance encompasses three specific areas of outcomes which are financial performance, product market performance and shareholder return. In humanitarian Organizations it is measured by the support extended to the beneficiaries and the impact of the same to the lives of the beneficiaries. Unicef's Strategic Partnership works well but it has not been able to reach the desired levels of performance.

The resource-based view emphasizes the firm's resources as the fundamental determinants of competitive advantage and performance of the organization, Barney (1991). This theory emphasizes the internal capabilities of the organization in formulating strategy to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance in the strategic group.

It adopts two assumptions in analyzing sources of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991), (Peteraf & Barney 2003) that firms within a strategic group may be heterogeneous with respect to the bundle of resources they control and that resource heterogeneity may persist over time because the resources used to implement firms' strategies are not perfectly mobile across firms The dynamic capabilities theory on the other hand attempts to deal with two key questions of how the senior managers of successful companies change their existing mental models and paradigms to adapt to radical discontinuous change.

The Agency Theory originated during the 1960s and early 1970s where economists explored risk sharing among individuals or groups (Arrow, 1971) & (Wilson, 1968). This literature describes the risk-sharing problem as one that arises when partners have different attitudes towards risk. In conclusion, these main strategic management theories will be applicable to management of organization as tools to assist them in making strategic and guided managerial decision.

Kenya is among the disaster stricken countries and by virtue of it being prone to disaster this study seeks to improve ways of service delivery to women and children and probably come up with new ways of doing business where necessary in line with the Partnership strategy. UNICEF like any other organization operates in a changing environment with very many challenges which leave some of the strategic areas of operations unreachable. Unicef needs to change with the environment and come up with strategies/plans that will enable it to achieve its mandate of reaching the most deprived children and women in the most difficult areas.

1.1.1 Concept of Strategic Partnership

Strategy is the heart of strategic management because it helps organizations to formulate and implement various tasks in attempt to prosper Hussey, (1991); Hill, (1992). Strategy of organizations mean large scale, future oriented plans for interacting with the competitive environments to achieve organization's objectives. (Porter 1985) defines strategy as "Creation of a unique and valued position involving a different set of activities.

Typically two companies form a strategic partnership when each possesses one or more business assets that will help the other, but that each respective organization does not wish to develop internally. One common strategic partnership involves one company providing engineering, manufacturing or product development services, partnering with a smaller, entrepreneurial firm or inventor to create a specialized new product.

1.1.2 Organizational Performance

Performance is relative and there is no one best definition of performance. Performance may be measured in many domains including the domain of financial performance, Operational and financial performance and the organizational effectiveness, Gregory & Richard (1984). Superior performance is the objective of any organization because only through performance, organizations are able to grow and progress. Knowing the determinants of organizational performance is vital as it enables the identification of those factors that should be treated with an increased interest in order to improve the organizational performance.

Organizational performance comprises the actual results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs and objectives through strategies adopted by Organizations. Evidence suggests that large organizations use both financial and non-financial performance measures, and they are biased on financial measures. Malina and Selto (2004).Maintaining a competitive advantage requires more than strategic insight. Corporate leaders must have an in-depth understanding of how to balance financial and nonfinancial measures, drive strategy down to operations, manage and measure multiple control systems.Measuring the performance of an organization is a representation of quantification of results of various activities within the organization over a period of time say 5 years or more.

For Measurements to be undertaken, the link between objectives, strategies, performance measurements and organizational results and the relevance of performance matrices must be known. This can be done using the Balance score card tool where performance is tracked and measured in four perspectives of financial performance; customer service; internal processes and Learning & Growth perspectives. Performance measurement can be done through the Balanced Score Card, a tool developed and introduced by Kaplan and Norton (1996) Professors of Harvard University in the early 1990s.

1.1.3 Partnership Strategy and Organizational Performance

Strategists who overlook performance factors are ignoring a key ingredient of company strategy and a source of advantage over competitors. The performance of an organization largely depends on the choice and effective implementation of strategy. A strategic partnership is a formal alliance between two organizations, usually formalized by one or more business contracts but falls short of forming a legal partnership or, agency, or corporate affiliate relationship. There are many advantages to creating strategic partnerships. As Grant (2008) states in his book Contemporary Strategy Analysis, "For complete strategies, as opposed to individual projects, creating option value means positioning the firm such that a wide array of opportunities become available".

Firms taking advantage of strategic partnerships can utilize other company's strengths to make both firms stronger and achieve superb performance in the long run. Approved by the Executive Board in 2009, the strategic framework emphasizes the vital importance of partnerships and defines UNICEF's approach and priorities to sharpen the strategic focus of partnerships. Partnerships contribute to results by either the creation of innovation, policy advocacy, evidence generation, or provision of essential services. Unicef achieves results through entering into partnerships with implementing partners including the host Government and NGOs both local and international. To achieve the desired performance the principal organization relies on the implementing partner’s capacity.

There is a high degree of interdependence between strategy choice, implementation and the performance of Humanitarian Organizations. The main reason behind this interdependence results from the fact that strategy is the main agent of policy implementation within any Organization. It is evident that Organizations that have effectively embraced and employed strategic planning, acquire better performance than those that have not. Hofer and Schendel (1978), Greenly (1986), and David (1997) argue that firms record improved performance once they effectively practice strategic planning.

1.1.4 United Nations Agencies

The United Nations Office is a Humanitarian Organization which is non-partisan; it comprises of 16 UN bodies and its related organizations totalling to 102. Mandated by the UN charter to support development and Emergencies in disaster stricken areas. The United Nations is an international organization founded in 1945. It is currently made up of 193 Member States. The mission and work of the United Nations are guided by the purposes and principles contained in its founding Charter. In the past the UN agencies were operating independently, each UN agency has its mandate and therefore works towards delivering results as per their mandate in their silos.

Recently, this has changed, UN agencies now plan and implement together to be able to leverage resources and achieve results through the scarce available resources. The UN is working toward delivering as one in future; there will be one UN delivering results in the different mandated areas through specialization in the different UN agencies to avoid duplication of resources and efforts. The UN is working towards creating advisory and technical groups who will be in charge of different tasks.

1.1.5 United Nations Children Fund in Kenya

In 1946, the United Nations General Assembly (GA) resolved to create the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) through resolution 57(1).At the time of its conception, UNICEF was created to provide assistance to children across Europe who had been left destitute by the Second World War. Specifically, UNICEF was a temporary emergency fund, designed to operate through 1950, and it sought to address the immediate crises that arose from the Second World War, namely the lack of shelter and food as well as the alarming rate of child mortality and their compromised security situation.

The first Executive Director of UNICEF, Maurice Pate, agreed to lead the organization on the condition that it would provide relief to all children regardless of their nationality or creed, and it is this non-partisan principle that has continued to form part of the foundation of the organization and seen UNICEF achieve what it has. As such, based on its initial success, when the time came in1950 for the UN to shut down this fund, Member States and UNICEF leadership pleaded for it to remain.

Having seen its relevance in a disaster stricken community, and the potential it had to improve children's lives across countries and over generations, the General Assembly in 1953 resolved to shift it from being an Emergency Fund to being a permanent Specialized Agency in terms of sections 57 and 63 of the Charter of the United Nations (1945). In achieving its mandate, Unicef works in partnership with Implementing Partners and the Host Government, in this case, the Government of Kenya.

For the Government, Unicef signs the rolling workplan while with the Implementing Partners, there is the PCA, a binding document that lays down the conditions for operation. Partnership is both challenging and resource intensive. A partnership strategy is essential to guide an organization to make robust choices on its investment in collaboration: the right issue area, the right type of partnerships, and the right type of partners to ensure the greatest value to the organizations. It is important in partnership to develop a clear strategy for partnering by clarifying needs, exploring the potential benefits and risks of partnering.

1.2 Research Problem

Organizations operate in an open systems where they depend on their external environment for inputs and outputs Porter, (1985); Pearce& Robinson, (1997); Ansoff & Mcdonnel, (1990); David,(1997), Johnson & Scholes, (1999) and Thomson & Strickland, (1998). To improve performance, organizations have to fit in their respective changing environments, fitting in the environments include among others resources be it financial or human resources which will organize all the other factors to achieve results.

The Organization has to select strategy (ies) that are most appropriate to remain competitive in the volatile environment. Awino at el (2011), the strategy chosen has an effect on the performance of an organization. This can only be achieved after a careful and informed environment scan and identification of the primary factors that could affect the organizations operations. The strategy should be carefully aligned to the objectives and to the organizational structure and systems. Strategy links the organization to the environment.

UNICEF is mandated by the United Nations General Assembly to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential.The UNICEF Executive Board has approved a Strategic Plan and a set of accompanying documents to guide UNICEF's work over a four year period. For quite some time now, UNICEF Kenya has not been able to achieve the best results for Children and Women of Kenya.

This calls for a review of the strategy used by the Organization in order to achieve competitive advantage. It is important to know how successful Organizations translate their strategies into performance. Different studies on strategy and performance showed different results on their relationship. According to Johnson [49], however, 66% of corporate strategy is never implemented. This suggests that the problem lies somewhere in the middle of this strategy-to-performance, with a more likely source of being a gap in the formulation-to-implementation process.

A survey of 82 Belgian Business firms by Caeldries &VanDierdonck (1998) indicated that strategy helps organizations to strengthen their competitive position, facilitate integration and coordination of members' behaviour. Fubara (1986) did a survey and observed that companies that engage in formal planning experienced growth in profits and that this was mostly practised by organizations with International Origin than local organizations. Hofer and Schendel (2006) conducted a study on 97 manufacturing firms that averaged over $20 million in annual sales yielded a strong positive correlation between the degree of planning formally (Strategic Planning) and firm performance. This indicated that formalized strategic planning was consistently associated with high levels of organisational performance.

A study was conducted on the relation between strategic planning on both financial and non-financial performance indicators by K'obonyo & Arasa (2012) in "The Relationship between Strategic Planning and Firm Performance". Whose results conform to the theoretical arguments of other scholars that organizations achieve improved performance after effectively embracing Strategy. Awino at el, (2011) carried out a study on the effect of strategy and performance of Organization. This study indicated that Firm level factors, Firm strategy and business environment have an effect on the performance of a firm. While Aosa et al (2012) carried out a study on the implications of Strategy and resource configurations on performance of non-governmental organizations. The study established that strategy –intangible resources were significant with other domains on performance.

Another study was conducted by Asiabugwa & Munyoki (2012) on E-commerce strategy and performance in commercial banks in Kenya. The findings established that bank performance is affected by the strategies adopted by the respective banks. It further indicated that for banks to acquire financial viability, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevancy, strategies like e-commerce are inevitable for adopting in the banking sector. Despite the above mentioned studies, no known study has been conducted to establish, the effect of Partnership strategy and performance in Unicef Kenya considering its context. How does the Strategic Partnership affect performance of Unicef Kenya?

1.3 Research Objective

To determine the effect of Strategic Partnerships on the Performance of UNICEF Kenya.

1.4 Value of the Study

The findings of this study is aimed to help Unicef Kenya Office to come up with a mechanism/policy to closely monitor performance on the strategy to know whether the strategy bring the desired results hence to drop or vary. The findings of this study are also aimed at assisting Unicef policy makers as well as other organizations to attract and retain qualified and talented employees who will contribute positively and successful towards attaining of the organization goals.

The findings from this study has assisted in providing more literature to support existing theoretical propositions on the relationship of strategy and performance of Unicef Kenya as well as other organizations. The findings of this study is also aimed to add to the sources of literature on strategy and performance of Unicef and other Organizations for future researchers or those in academic field. The theory of this study has assisted in adding knowledge to the already existing theories of strategy and performance.

In practice, this study is aimed at encouraging the practicing Managers especially the young middle line managers to understand and appreciate the role of Strategy and Performance in achieving the organizations goals and mandate. The concept of Strategy and performance as described in this study will assist the managers in motivating the employees to be able to embrace strategy positively as a tool to achieving planned and desired results.

1.5 Chapter Summary

In summary, Chapter one discusses the importance of strategy in all organizations who aspire to excel and remain relevant in the market despite the prevailing volatile environments. Organizations, whether in public, private or Humanitarian exist to make certain expected returns to stakeholders. In order to survive, Organizations have to perform; Performance goes hand in hand with good/satisfactory strategy of an Organization. To achieve performance organizations of all kinds find it necessary to engage in strategy and strategic management. The environments in which organizations function have become uncertain and therefore volatile. Organizations need to think strategically and come up with winning strategies; they need to translate insights into effective strategies to cope with the environments in which they operate.

Many researchers have attempted to determine whether organizations have implemented strategic management well or not generally, previous researchers revealed that organizations that implement their strategies effectively will perform better than organizations that are lacking in implementing strategic management. Strategic management may be defined in many different ways all adding up to the processes and plans that organizations develop and implement that lead to success of the organizations goals. (Pearson and Robinson, 1997); Strategic management as a concept has evolved over time and will continue to evolve.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter contains the review of various relevant studies of Strategy and performance of Organizations of any kind. It presents a review of the relevant literature that explain Strategy and performance and literature on empirical studies conducted on Strategy and performance.

2.2 Theoretical Foundations

The Theories that explain Strategy and performance relationship in this study are The Resource-based theory also referred to as the Resource-based View (RBV), the agency and Dynamic Capabilities Theories. The Resource-Based Theory was named by Birger Wernerfelt in 1984. However the origins of the theory can be traced to the works by Coase (1937), Selznic (1975), Penrose (1959), Stigler (1961) & Chandler (1962, 1977), where they put emphasis on the importance of resources and its implication on Organization performance.

2.2.1 The Resource Based View

The Resource-Based Theory (RBV) was named by Birger Wernerfelt in 1984. However the origins of the theory can be traced to the works by Coase (1937), Selznic (1975), Penrose (1959), Stigler (1961), Chandler (1962, 1977) and William (1975) where they put emphasis on the importance of resources and its implication on Organization performance.

The theory is based on the concept of economic rent and the view of the company as a collection of capabilities highlighting the need for a fit between the external market context in which organization operates and its internal capabilities, Stilger (1961). The theory suggests that a firm's unique resources and capability provide the basis for strategy. The business strategy chosen should then allow the firm to best exploit its core competencies relative to opportunities in the external environment.

The resource-based view emphasizes the firm's resources as the fundamental determinants of competitive advantage and performance. It adopts two assumptions in analyzing sources of competitive advantage, Barney, (1991) and Peteraf & Barney, (2003). This model assumes that firms within an industry may be heterogeneous with respect to the bundle of resources that they control. Second, it assumes that resource heterogeneity may persist over time because the resources used to implement firms' strategies are not perfectly mobile across firms meaning, some of the resources cannot be traded in factor markets and are difficult to accumulate and imitate.

Resource uniqueness is considered a necessary condition for a resource bundle to contribute to a competitive advantage. Like the Chicago School tradition, the RBV is an efficiency-based explanation of performance differences. According to Barney (1999, 1991) RBV explains that a firm's sustainable competitive advantage is reached by virtue of unique resources being rare, valuable, inimitable, non-tradable, and non-substitutable, as well as firm-specific goals. These authors hold that a firm may reach a sustainable competitive advantage through unique resources which it holds, and these resources cannot be easily bought, transferred, or copied, and simultaneously, they add value to a firm while being rare.

According to Barney and Conner, (1991); Teece, Pisano & Shuen, (1997) “performance differentials are viewed as derived from rent differentials, attributable to resources having intrinsically different levels of efficiency in the sense that they enable the firms to deliver greater benefits to their customers for a given cost (or can deliver the same benefit levels for a lower cost)”. The assumed heterogeneity and immobility are not, however, sufficient conditions for sustained competitive advantage. The resources are inputs that are vital to an organization’s performance and success; and contribute into a firm’s production process. Resources are either tangible or intangible. It is through the synergistic combination and integration of sets of resources that sustainable competitive advantages are formed as individual resources may not create competitive advantage.

The RBV however, has been criticized for exhibiting circular reasoning in that one of its fundamental elements, namely, value, can only be assessed in terms of a particular context (Barney, 1991). Competitive advantage as a value creating strategy based on resource among other characteristics as valuable is a circular reasoning and therefore operationally invalid. Resources may lead to competitive advantage but this in turn defines relevant competitive structures, which in turn defines what a valuable resource is, (Schendel, 1994). A way out of this circularity is to see the relationship between resources and advantage as a longitudinal process (Porter, 1991).

There is the assumption that a firm can be profitable in a highly competitive market as long as it can exploit advantageous resources, but this may not be necessarily the case. It ignores the external factors concerning the industry as a whole. A firm should also consider Porter's Industry structure analysis of the 5 forces. Lippman & Rumelt (1982) argued that a prominent source of sustainable competitive advantage is causal ambiguity as a firm may not be able to manage a resource it does not know exists. The concept of rarity is obsolete. Hoopes, et al (2003) argue that the concept that resources need to be rare to be able to function as a possible source of a sustained competitive advantage is unnecessary.

2.2.2 The Agency Theory

The Agency Theory originated during the 1960s and 1970s where economists explored risk sharing among individuals or groups Arrow, (1971). This literature describes the risk-sharing problem as one that arises when partners have different attitudes towards risk. According to Jensen & Mecklin (1976), Agency theory broadened this risk-sharing literature to include the so-called agency problem that occurs when cooperating parties have different goals and division of labor. Specifically, agency theory is directed at the ubiquitous agency relationship, in which one party, the principal delegates work to another, the agent, who performs that work. Agency theory attempts to describe this relationship using the metaphor of a contract.

The principal and the agent may prefer different actions because of the different risk preferences. The agency structure is applicable in a variety of settings, ranging from macro level issues such as regulatory policy to micro level dyad phenomena such as blame, impression management, lying, and other expressions of self-interest. Most frequently, agency theory has been applied to organizational phenomena inter alia compensation, Eisenhardt (1985), acquisition and diversification strategies, board relationships and ownership & financing structures.

Overall, the domain of agency theory, Arrow (1971) is relationships that mirror the basic agency structure of a principal and an agent who is engaged in cooperative behavior, but have differing goals and differing attitudes toward risk. The two streams share a common unit of analysis: the contract between the principal and the agent. They also share common assumptions about people, organizations, and information. However, they differ in their mathematical rigor, dependent variable, and style.

2.2.3 The Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Teece (2007) originated the Capability theory to explain how companies fulfill seemingly contradictory imperatives. The First is that they must be both stable enough to continue to deliver value in their own distinctive way. The second imperative is they must be resilient and adaptive enough to shift on time when circumstances demand it. Teece defines capability as a set of learned processes and activities that enable a company to produce a particular outcome. Ordinary capabilities being as the best practices whereas dynamic capabilities are unique to each company and are rooted in the company's history. These unique capabilities are captured in business models that go back decades and are difficult to imitate.

Lynda Gratton, and the late Sumantra Ghoshal called them "signature processes". They are "the way things are done around here". According to Teece (2007), Signature processes are based on things that the company has done in the past, going back to its origins. Teece suggests that three types of managerial activities can make a capability dynamic. The first is sensing meaning identification and assessment of opportunities outside the company.

The second activity is seizing by mobilizing a company's resources to capture value from those opportunities. The third activity is transforming into continuous renewal. This framework according to Teece (2007) explains how to get the future right, how to position today's resources properly for tomorrow. Dynamic capabilities are however criticized for being described in vague terms such as "routines to learn routines" hence are tautological, endlessly recursive, and non-operational.

2.3 Partnership Strategy

It might not seem to make much sense to do a strategic long-range planning and management in an industry where the environment is changing constantly. Yet even in Humanitarian Organization which is Non-partisan operating in chaotic environment strategic planning and/or management is essential for the organization to survive and thrive. Strategic partnership is an agreement between two or more organizations who cooperate in a specific business activity, so that each benefits from the strengths of the other, and gains competitive advantage. The formation of strategic alliances has been seen as a response to globalization and increasing uncertainty and complexity in the business environment as well as a tool to risk sharing, (Grant, 2008).

Strategic partnerships involve the sharing of knowledge and expertise between partners as well as spreading of risk, Arrow (1971). Previous researchers revealed that organizations that craft and implement their strategies effectively achieve superb performance as compared to those that do not practice strategic management. Research on the practice of strategy implementation indicate that organizational factors such as formalization, centralization and specialization of organization structure play a role in enhancing organizational performance (Chandler 1962).

Generally, Strategic planning advocates, researchers and management practitioners have argued for its legitimacy as a tool for effective strategic management, (Mintzberg et al, 1998). According to Doyce, there was no single measure or best measure of organizational performance. Organizations adopt different objectives and measurements for Organizational performance. Specifically strategic planning was linked with improved financial performance (Return on Investments and profit growth), effective organizational mission definition, competitive advantage and organization-environment alignment critical to creating and sustaining superior competitive advantage.

When the planning and implementation process of a strategy is executed expertly, the efforts at the strategic, operational and tactical levels merge into a seamless continuum of forward looking activity intended to ensure the survival and growth of the organization. Studies have shown that strategic planning at best produces an intended strategy which can be quite different from the realized strategy. Miller (1998), Mintzberg et al (1998). Robinson and Pearce (1988) suggested that planning should be studied as an exogenous variable influencing the relationship between the concept of strategy and organizational performance.

Strategic planning provides a basis for other management functions. Steiner (1979) observes that strategic planning is inextricably Inter woven into the entire fabric of management. It provides a framework for decision-making throughout the company and forces the setting of objectives, which provides a basis for measuring performance. According to Kotter (1996) strategic planning process can be used as a means of repositioning and transforming the organization.

Thompson, Strickland and Gamble (2007) postulate that the importance of good strategy making is to build a market position strong enough and an organization capable enough to produce successful performance despite unforeseeable events, potent competition, and internal difficulties. Quinn (1980) argues that well-formulated strategies help marshal and allocate an organization's resources into a unique and viable posture based upon its relative internal competencies and shortcomings, anticipated changes in the environment, and contingent moves by intelligent opponents in order to help achieve desired performance.

2.4 Performance of Organization

Organization performance is conceptualized and measured differently by different organizations in terms of financial and non-financial measures such as return on assets. Gregory and Richard, (1984) there is no single measure or best measure of organizational performance. Organizations adopt different objectives and measurements for Organizational performance. Studies have shown that strategic planning at best produces an intended strategy which can be quite different from the realized strategy, Miller (1998), Mintzberg et al (1998).

Robinson and Pearce (1988) suggested that planning should be studied as an exogenous variable influencing the relationship between the concept of strategy and organizational performance. Strategic planning provides a basis for other management functions. Measuring the performance of an organization is a representation of quantification of results of various activities within the organization over a period of time say 5 years or more.

Performance is a very important concept in Organizations who aspire to achieve their mandate and deliver results. While prescriptions for improving and managing organizational performance are widely available; the academic community has been preoccupied with discussions on issues of terminology, levels of analysis and conceptual bases for assessment of performance (Ford & Schellenberg, 1982).There's pressure to reach higher performance levels, and to ensure that people's work support and furthers the organization's goals. However, don't forget the importance of inspiration and good leadership, Porter, (1985), all this requires that the organization aligns performance to its strategy.

2.5 Empirical Studies and Knowledge Gaps

Various empirical studies have been done to establish the relationship between strategy and Organization performance with different conclusions. The initial studies include that done by Thune and House (1970). Thune and House studied 36 companies employing the approach of examining the performance of each company both before and after formal strategic planning was initiated. This covered both formal and informal planners. The comparison showed that formal planners outperformed the informal planners on all the performance measures that were used.

A study was conducted by Mahdan Ibrahim and Ali Khtani, Utara University, to determine the relationship between strategy Implementation and performance of Manufacturing Firms in Indonesia where 112 firms were studied. This was conducted after a reports of Indonesia Capital Market showed that the performance was unsatisfactory. The aim of the study was to investigate the performance of the firms and how they are related to strategy implementation. It also aimed at examining the degree of formalization in organizational structure of Indonesian firms and how it affects the relationship between strategy and performance. The results of the study revealed a significant relationship between strategy implementation and the performance of Indonesia manufacturing firms. As per this study, strategy implementation has a positive relationship with performance, the more effectively a strategy is crafted and implemented the better the firm performance. This also support the results of (Thune and House, 1970).

Herold (1972) surveyed 10 companies, comparing performance of formal and informal planners over a 7-year period. Based on the results, He concluded that formal planning outperform informal planning, this supported the findings of Thune and House (1970). Gershefski (1970) in his survey compared the profit growth as a result of growth of sales in companies over a 5-year period before strategic planning was introduced, and over a period of 5 years after planning was introduced. The results of the comparison concluded that companies with formal strategic planning performed well as compared to companies with little planning.

Ansoff et al (1970) conducted a study on the relationship between formal strategic planning and organizational performance. The study featured a sample of manufacturing firms that had acquired other firms. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of strategic planning on successful acquisitions and performance of the manufacturing firms. The companies were grouped into planners and non-planners and performance of each group evaluated with twenty-one financial measures.

The results showed that companies that practiced strategic planning performed better. The studies on relationship between strategic planning and performance focused on direct relationship between strategic planning or strategic management and Performance of Organization. Many of the studies on the relationship between strategic planning and firm performance were done between 1970s and early 1990s, in both developed and developing economies. These studies focused on the direct relationship between strategic planning or strategic management and Performance of Organization.

Although the studies within the African context by Woodburn (1984), Adegbite (1986) and Fubara (1986) noted that firms that practiced strategic planning recorded better performance compared to those that did not practice strategic planning, their focus, was on the formality of planning rather than the link between planning and firm performance. They also revealed that the firms that have an International origin were the ones that were practicing Strategic planning more. It is noted that the past studies did not give attention to the individual steps that make up the strategic planning process. It is perceived that the manner and extent to which each of the strategic planning steps is addressed could have implications on the realization of the expected corporate mandate.

According to Teece et al. (1997) in their seminal contribution they argued that dynamic capabilities enable organizations to integrate, build, and reconfigure their resources and competencies and, therefore, maintain performance in the ever changing business environments. Empirical testing concerning the influence of dynamic capabilities on firm performance has faced challenges regarding their description, operationalisation and measurement and by their assumed tautological relationship with firm performance.

There is increasing evidence however that a firm's dynamic capabilities affect at a great deal performance of an organization. Henderson and Cockburn (1994) confirm that a firm's ability to integrate knowledge from external sources has a positive relationship to its research productivity, measured by patent counts. Despite the ongoing progress made in the empirical inquiry of the differential effects of specific dynamic capabilities, it is evident that few studies have provided a comprehensive account of their precise impact on firm performance.

Strategic planning is an organizational management activity used to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, ensure that employees and other stakeholders are working toward common goals, establish agreement around intended outcomes, and assess and adjust the organization's direction in response to a changing environment in order to achieve superb performance, Greenly (1986). Strategy affects the operations of firms more especially given the volatility in the environment within which they operate. The performance of any firm is directly linked to the choice and implementation of the strategy.

Strategic planning applies a system approach by looking at a company as a system composed of subsystems. It permits managers to look at the organization a whole and the interrelationships of parts, rather than deal with each separate part alone without reference to others. Therefore, it provides a framework for improved coordination and control of an organization's activities. Steiner (1979) observes that strategic planning is inextricably interwoven into the entire fabric of management. It provides a framework for decision-making throughout the company and forces the setting of objectives, which provides a basis for measuring performance.

Strategy affects the operations of firms more especially given the volatility in the environment within which they operate. According to Gregory & Richard (1984), the performance of any firm is directly linked to the choice and implementation of the strategy. From the studies reviewed it is clear that no known studies have been carried out on specific individual organizations to determine best strategies suited to achieve superior performance on a given mandate. There is therefore need to carry out studies on the effect of strategy and performance on specific organizations to confirm the authenticity of the findings of this study on Unicef Kenya country Office currently implementing Partnership Strategy.

2.6 Chapter Summary

In summary this chapter discusses the relevant theories and studies to the concept of strategy and performance of organizations. Theories of strategy help the organizations to identify what strategy will achieve the competitive advantage the firm needs to survive, (Barney, 1991). For example, if an organization exists because it allocates its resources in a way that enables it achieve competitiveness and therefore high performance then strategy recognizing this purpose of the firm will complement that theory of the firm. The Resource based, Dynamic capabilities and Agency theories explain better the relationship of strategy and performance.

The main aim of strategy is to ensure focus, monitoring and measurement of results against objectives, targets and goals set. Strategy in place within any given organisation largely determines a firm's performance, (Richard et al 2009). Strategy also affects the operations of firms more especially given the volatility in the environment within which they operate. Strategy is the link between firms and environment that is likely to be affected by the frequent changes in the environment and hence will be changed and varied to align with the inevitably changes in order to deliver on the goals and desired results. The performance of any organization is directly linked to the choice and implementation of the strategy.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter the researcher will discuss the methodology that will be employed in investigating the effect of Partnership strategy on the performance of Unicef Kenya. This chapter discusses among other elements the data collection tools and techniques, research design as well as the techniques that will be used to analyze the collected data.

3.2 Research Design

This study is a case study Rajendra (2008) has defined research design as the linkage and organization of conditions for collecting and analyzing of data in a way that aims at combining relevance to the research purpose with economy in the procedure. The main reason for selecting descriptive research design is because allows one to establish the relationship between variables. It will focus on collecting information which is based on current status of the events which will explain what occurs in relation to various variables in a situation.

It also provides a knowledge base when little is known about a phenomenon or such things as clarification of a situation, information, or description of subject characteristics that will contribute to the refinement of the research problem, formulation of the hypothesis, or design of data collection and analysis procedures (Powers & Knapp, 2006).

3.3 Data Collection

Data collection is the process of gathering and measuring information on variables of interest, in an established systematic fashion that enables one to answer stated research questions, test hypotheses, and evaluate outcomes. The data collection component of research is common to all fields of study including physical and social sciences, humanities and business. The goal for all data collection is to capture quality evidence that then translates to rich data analysis and allows the building of a convincing and credible answer to questions that have been posed.

It is an important aspect of any type of research study. Inaccurate data collection can impact the results of a study and ultimately lead to invalid results. Both secondary and primary data was utilized. The data was collected from a number of sources including the Annual report, mid-year review reports detailing the results achieved; Implementing partners progress reports, Spot check reports and programme monitoring reports. The researcher also conducted face to face interviews with selected Unicef staff, namely Programme Officers/Specialists, Section Chiefs and Programme Assistants and implementing partners staffs of the same cadre. The researcher used interview as data collection tool.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the process of finding the right data to answer your question, understanding the processes underlying the data, discovering the important patterns in the data, and then communicating your results to have the biggest possible impact. In analyzing qualitative data the researcher will scrutinize and summarize the data using content analysis.

Content analysis has been defined as a systematic, replicable technique for compressing many words of text into fewer content categories based on explicit rules of coding (Berelson, 1952; GAO, 1996; Krippendorff, 1980; and Weber, 1990). Holsti (1969) offers a broad definition of content analysis as, "any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages". This involves observation and detailed description of objects, items to things that comprise the study. This technique will be used in order to enable the researcher understand the role of Strategic Partnership in improving the performance of Unicef Kenya.

3.5 Chapter Summary

In summary the researcher discussed the methodology that was used to carry out the research in this chapter. Data analysis is the process of finding the right data to answer your question, understanding the processes underlying the data, discovering the important patterns in the data, and then communicating your results to have the biggest possible impact. In analyzing qualitative data the researcher scrutinized and summarized the data using content analysis.

This technique was used in order to enable the researcher understand the role of Strategic Partnership in improving the performance of Unicef Kenya. The analysis offered a chance to compare and complement the primary data collected within the research project with secondary data. The analysis of complementary secondary data ensures the quality of content analysis, especially validity. Data collected was analyzed in three phases: Preparation, organizing and reporting.

CHAPTER FOUR:

DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the qualitative analysis of the primary data collected from Unicef Kenya Office and Implementing Partners. It gives the interpretations of findings from the analysis of the primary data. The chapter also makes a comparison of the findings, the literature and findings of previous studies on Partnership Strategy and Performance in response to the research problem in chapter 1. The chapter will seek to confirm the hypothesized relationship between Partnership Strategy and Performance.

4.2 Profile of Key Interviewees/Informants

The researcher collected the data from a number including the Annual report, mid-year review reports detailing the results achieved; Implementing partners progress reports, Spot check reports, programme monitoring reports; the main tool used was face to face interviews with selected Unicef staff, namely Programme Officers/Specialists, Section Chiefs and Programme Assistants and implementing partners staffs of the same cadre. Majority of the staff that were interviewed are those that have been in the system for more than five years hence the best source of information as they are able to compare the performance of Unicef Kenya office for the last country programmes and the current strategic objectives for the current country programme.

Programme Officers and/or specialists are in charge of coming up with Programme Cooperation Agreements (PCA) between Unicef and the Implementing Partners in line with Unicef's Mandate and the rolling workpaln. Based on Unicef's Mandate and Programmes and of course capacity of the Implementing partners, Unicef ProgrammeOfficers/Specialists agree on the programmes to be implemented and the geographic areas of coverage. Unicef provide both Financial and Technical support to the Implementing Partners in order to enhance performance and achieve results for children and women.

Unicef Programme Assistants are in charge of mostly managing grants or funding and Cash disbursement to the implementing partners. They are also the focal persons of HACT assurance activities in their respective sections. HACT assurance activities include among others spot checks, Audits, Micro assessments and capacity building. They ensure there is a realistic schedule for assurance activities as well as ensuring that they conduct these activities and submit reports to the Country Office for further follow ups. They are responsible for capacity building staff in their respective sections and implementing partners on among others, Unicef Financial processes.

The section Chiefs are the result managers or the Head of Sections/departments; these have the overall responsibility of the performance of their respective sections. They are accountable for all the activities in their sections and are answerable in case of loss of funds in the sections. They are required to ensure that performance in their section is at its best and that results are achieved and confirmed based on evidence.

Implementing Partners are NGOs both local and international and the Host Governments in this case Kenyan Government whose role is to implement activities and agreed in the PCA agreements and the rolling workplan. For an implementing partner to qualify partnering with Unicef, they must have the technical capability, not involved in any terrorist activities, must not support breast milk substitutes, must be registered with the government as an NGO must have a board of directors among others. This will be confirmed by Unicef through Micro assessment that must be conducted before entering into partnership.

4.3 Data Analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used in data analysis. Bryman (2004) states that qualitative content analysis is “probably the most prevalent approach to the qualitative analysis of documents” and that “it comprises a searching-out of underlying themes in the materials being analyzed (p. 392). He defines qualitative analysis as follows: “An approach to document that emphasizes the role of the investigator in the construction of the meaning of and in texts.

There is an emphasis on allowing categories to emerge out of data and on recognizing the significance for understanding the meaning of the context in which an item being (and the categories derived from it) appeared (Bryman, 2004, P.542). Theory – guided analysis was also integrated in data analysis. The analysis offered a chance to compare and complement the primary data collected within the research project with secondary data. The analysis of complementary secondary data ensures the quality of content analysis, especially validity.

Data collected was analyzed in three phases: Preparation, organizing and reporting. The preparation phase involved the selection of units of analysis McCain (1988). According to Robinson (1995), researchers are guided by the research question of the study in choosing the content they analyze. When analyzing data the researcher strives to make sense of the data and to learn what is going on Morse (1995). The data was again organized using inductive content analysis. This helped reduce the number of categories by collapsing those that are similar into broader higher order categories (Burnard, 1991).

4.4 Unicef Mandate

UNICEF changed from providing temporary relief to providing long-term sustainable development goals as well as assisting countries to be able to provide for their own children in the future. UNICEF has extended its mission to Africa and Asia which were not previously included in its work. The organization realized that children cannot be viewed in isolation but must instead be recognized as a part of every aspect of society.

For example, where there were refugees, or the homeless, or the sick, there were children involved. These situations made children more vulnerable and UNICEF realized that there was need to improve the lives of children through increased development, thus they started to focus more broadly on issues of development. UNICEF aims, through its country programmes, to promote the equal rights of women and girls and to support their full participation in the political, social, and economic development of their communities.

The document “A World Fit for Children”, which is the outcome document for the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Children (UNGASS), speaks to the mandate of the organization as it elaborates on the specific goals needed to achieve in order to have a ‘child friendly’ society. This document saw the inclusion of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) into the discussion surrounding children and set clear guidelines as to where UNICEF’s work was headed over the next twenty years at the least.

In delivering its mandate, Unicef has quit a number of strategies including Capacity Development of the people, organizations and society as a whole to unleash, strengthen, create, adapt and maintain capacity over time. Evidence generation, policy dialogue and advocacy; Partnerships between various parties, both State and not-State, External Communication and Public Advocacy the voice of UNICEF speaking out for all children particularly the most marginalized; Identification and Promotion of Innovation by doing something new or different that adds value, and is not always about technology, Support sharing and dissemination of lessons and models to increase synergies and coordination across all sectors.

Among the strategies is also Service Delivery of direct services, products and processes are valuable in relation to the extent in which they benefit the most vulnerable children. Gender Mainstreaming and Equality where the interests, needs and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognizing the diversity of different groups of women and men is also among the Unicef strategies in effort to achieve performance and deliver results. In Capacity enhancement or optimizations the organization ensures engagement of the current skills while building capacity of the counterparts to enhance the results System strengthening: working within the government system to ensure results are achieved, while optimizing the results for children.

The researcher found out that another important strategy that Unicef applies is the Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy where results are monitored based on evidence generation. UNICEF has conducted an extensive literature review to identify tools, methodologies and good practices for monitoring and evaluating partnerships. On this basis, the organization is strengthening programming, monitoring and evaluation approaches. It has begun to measure its performance in partnerships, and works closely with national partners to strengthen monitoring and evaluation of partnerships as a key programme strategy.

Since 2010, country offices complete a self-assessment of their performance in managing partnerships as part of the annual review and reporting process. All country offices report on their performance against six global performance benchmarks related to partnerships. Based on the outcome of this review, country offices then take action to enhance effectiveness. For 2011, more than two-thirds of country offices reported that they met the global benchmarks.

Country offices also report on their engagement with United Nations agencies and international financial institutions at country level on an annual basis. This enables systematic tracking of these important partnerships in particular, including their associated results. Unicef also implements Multispectral engagement where it involves collaborating with other sectors and actors to enhance results for children. The study also revealed that it also implements Equity based/ right based approach to ensure the most vulnerable are considered for support while ensuring that the rights bearers understand their rights.

It also achieves results through direct engagement with the various ministries at both national and county level- this is in line with UNICEF strategy for engagement, and in line with the key priorities set out in the country program document. Unicef also achieves results through direct support to enhance policy environment for the various programs that are geared towards enhancing the lives of children and women.

It also engages in evidence generation and modelling of programs that could have an impact on women and children. The main strategy of interest to this study is the Partnership Strategy. Unicef works through collaboration with humanitarian partners in support of policy formulation on children's right, health and survival, and implementation of the same in the counties. All interventions are guided by the government structures and strategies that are in place.

4.5 Unicef Partnership Strategy

Partnerships are at the heart of the UNICEF mandate, UNICEF is strongly committed to partnerships with relevant actors as a means to achieve results. Today's complex global challenges require partnerships across sectors and societies to achieve equitable and sustainable results for children and realize the promise of a World Fit for Children. The United Nations General Assembly(UNGA) defines partnerships as "voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and, as mutually agreed, to share risks and responsibilities, resources and benefits". They are distinct from commercial contractual arrangements regulating the delivery of services or the provision of goods.

The organization’s role as a facilitator of and contributor to effective partnerships, as outlined in the UNICEF strategic framework for partnerships and collaborative relationships adopted by the Executive Board in 2009, remains pertinent, especially in the context of its equity-based approach and humanitarian action. However, this capacity cannot be taken for granted; a dynamic approach to partnerships is essential to address the challenges of an evolving development and partner landscape.

The researcher confirmed that Unicef really relies on Partnership to achieve its results. Unicef does not implement programmes directly thereby depending on Partnerships to deliver results. The performance of Unicef largely depends on the performance of its partners. Partnership engagement- humanitarian and development actors including the private sectors Multispectral engagement- collaborating with other sectors and actors enhances results for children.

The partnership landscape is characterized by networks of actors coming together to address specific development challenges. Such multi-stakeholder partnerships take various forms, ranging from broad coalitions to formalized partnerships, and use innovative approaches to access goods and services, pool resources and knowledge, establish policy frameworks and coordinate actions to create transformational results. For instance, public health experts attribute the continuing decline in under-five mortality to the increased use of key health interventions, many of which have been scaled-up through multi-actor initiatives.

Innovative financing for development mechanisms involving a mix of actors have grown significantly during the last ten years. These multi-stakeholder partnerships are emerging as visible and legitimate actors in development, with established governance structures, resources, technical capacity and political influence. The rise of these new actors challenges the role of the traditional multilateral development cooperation system.

The researcher found out that UNICEF has introduced some organizational changes to enhance partnering capacity. First, UNICEF has taken steps to reduce the administrative burden of partnerships, particularly with CSOs. The Programme Cooperation Agreement (PCA), a legal document that highlights the rules of the game including the budget, and the guidelines for partnerships with CSOs were revised to highlight the partnership arrangements with CSOs and simplify the internal processes seen as major bottlenecks to achieving the desired results.

These internal processes related to vetting potential partners, preparing and agreeing on the programme document, as well as reviewing and approving the partnership agreement by the organization and transferring resources. In addition, as part of the organizational commitment to streamline procedures for emergencies, simplified operating procedures for UNICEF response to major emergencies were promulgated in 2012. These simplified procedures contain a significant number of revised processes to develop and launch a Programme Cooperation Agreement in the shortest possible time. UNICEF regularly consults with CSO partners to identify ways to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of partnerships.

UNICEF continues to develop and refine tools and guidance for the development and management of partnerships. The Programme Policy and Procedures manual was updated to include a section on partnerships and integrate guidance on partnerships in different stages of programme planning and implementation cycles. The organization also developed new or revised guidance for more selective engagement in GPPs, the management of partnerships with CSOs, as well as guidance on leveraging partnerships for advocacy, equity and innovation.

It also adopted a risk management policy that provides guidance for all operations, including partnerships. UNICEF has taken steps to enhance human resources capacity for effective partnering. A partnership skills training course was piloted in 2011. The organization also reviewed its human resources management procedures, including job descriptions and the competency framework, to include competencies and skills for effective partnering.

Fourth, UNICEF is strengthening its knowledge base and improving information management for partnerships. Country-level partnerships with a broad range of development actors are now tracked through the Enterprise Resource Planning system, known as VISION. Knowledge management has been enhanced, including resources and tools, good practices and lessons learned in partnering. These actions will help improve data analysis and information management as well as promote better partnering practice.

Lastly, UNICEF has increased its emphasis on partnerships in its external communication. Its new public communication and advocacy strategy highlights the importance of partnerships for achieving results for children. The organization advocates the value of partnerships, and promotes its work with partners through the

UNICEF website and in reports, publications, media and communication materials as well as key speeches and statements.

The strategy informs the roles of each partner. This helps to ensure each partner is up to task and delivers as per the expected outputs. The strategy clearly describes the expected outputs and the strategies to be undertaken to achieve those results including how to measure that the results have been achieved and a work plan within the agreed timeframe; partnership strategy therefore acts as a guide/road map to achieving the desired results.

The partnership strategy helps to provide guidance to the implementing partners on what to focus on and what deliverables the partner needs to focus on. However, sometimes the indicators are pre-determined leaving no room for the partner to address some of the issues. Partnership is vital as both parties collaborate in collating the gaps and needs that require to be addressed. There is also a mutual agreement on how to address the identified gaps and needs. UNICEF need to recognize implementing partners when citing the achievements through visibility materials.

4.6 Research Findings

In achieving results, Unicef works with implementing partners who implement Unicef –supported programmes. This study has revealed that Unicef IPs (Implementing

Partners) are mainly the host Governments and Civil Society Organizations (CSO). .In the case of Kenya Country Office, the IPs are the Government of Kenya including the County Governments and the Civil Society Organizations both local and International.

The researcher found out that to qualify to partner with Unicef, the partner must meet the basic global criteria for engaging with UNICEF; these include among others that the partner is not associated with terrorist activities, the partner is not in violation of the Break Milk Substitutes Act 2012, the implementing partner meets the national legal requirements for operating as a legal entity – is legally registered with the authorities, has registered address in the country and has a board of directors.

The partner will then have to undergo micro assessment which is normally conducted by a third party contracted by Unicef to assess the capacity of the partner to implement the agreed Unicef supported programmes in order to achieve superb performance and eventually achieve the desired results as stipulated in the agreements. The partners will also have to sign a rolling work plan if it is the Government and PCA and SSFA or MoU if it is CSOs. The research revealed that UNICEF recently introduced changes in its programme planning cycle to improve efficiency and flexibility. Based on informal consultations, this has enhanced the organization's partnerships with governments through the use of rolling work plans that align programme planning to government planning cycles.

At the global level, the organization has strengthened its partnership with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, producing joint technical guidance and regularly co-convening capacity building and advocacy workshops. The research revealed that in Kenya Office, Unicef has entered into MoU with the government where rolling work plans have been designed in collaboration with government counterparts, that align programme planning to government planning cycles.

The Kenya Country office concluded its old country programme and entered into the new country programme; The GoK-Unicef four year Country Programme 2014-18 which was designed in collaboration with the Government counterparts, UN and other partners. The new programme is aimed at sustaining current efforts to advance the rights of all children and adolescents in Kenya, especially the most vulnerable.

In order to strengthen programme efficiency and effectiveness, the Cross Sectoral result Area of the new country programme focusses on operations and programme management excellence. This will help the Country office to achieve its objective because the programme requires the input of cross sectoral result areas. The outcome will set standards for the CO governance and direction.

The new programme which will be implemented in the context of the UN Delivering as One (DaO) reform in Kenya will benefit from the synergies of the UN agencies in Kenya and convening power of the UN in various thematic areas. Working within the DaO framework, UNICEF will strengthen the application of the HACT framework including through undertaking joint micro-assessments and capacity building activities. UNICEF pursue close partnerships and coordinate UN programmes to generate greater influence on, and leverage resources for the realization of child rights in Kenya.

It has also been revealed that Partnerships with CSOs play a vital role, in implementing UNICEF-supported programmes. UNICEF Kenya works with Partners towards a common goal through a mutually agreed work plans. Accountabilities and responsibilities are clarified, and each partner brings strengths, comparative advantages and contributions towards delivery of results for children and women. UNICEF partners with the Government of Kenya and non-government organisations to design and implement programmes aimed at plugging bottlenecks towards the realization of results for children and women. UNICEF support to partners involves both technical and financial resources.

On the technical side, support focuses on strengthening evidence generation and operational research, policy dialogue and advocacy, capacity building in planning, results-based management, human rights-based approach to programming, modelling; and innovation and building partnerships to leverage resources for children. Where financial resources are involved in the partnership, which is most often the case, UNICEF transfers resources but both partners share the risks. All Parties are accountable to donors, stakeholders and the women and children they aim to serve.

The research showed that when a partner, Non- Government partners, meet the basic requirements to partner with Unicef, they then in collaboration with Unicef, draw the programme document and the budget for the agreed activities to be implemented by the partner on behalf of Unicef. The activities in the programme document inform the budget. This document when completed, it is referred to as the Programme Corporation Agreement – PCA. It is through this document that activities will be implemented and hence Unicef results achieved.

This study has revealed that there is now greater clarity on which CSOs UNICEF is partnering with, in what regions and counties, on what focus areas and for what objectives, and the amount of cash that the organization is committing to these partnerships. This extensive information helps inform decision-making about the type of guidance needed for enhanced coordinated action with civil society, more equitable distribution of UNICEF resources, and more structured focus on achievement of results.

In advancing the equity agenda, UNICEF is reinforcing its engagement with community-based organizations to reach the most disadvantaged and excluded communities and to extend essential services. It also continues to strengthen its partnerships with other civil society actors to achieve equitable results for children, particularly working with civil society coalitions and networks. This includes organizations of persons with disabilities, and members of religious communities and organizations to address attitudes and practices that are harmful to children. At global level, UNICEF engages major child-focused international non-governmental organizations to promote collaborative approaches and joint initiatives to advance the equity agenda.

It was also revealed that Unicef engages in humanitarian response during emergencies, hence humanitarian collaboration. Humanitarian collaboration aims to improve the quality of the emergency response by UNICEF and its partners. Since 2009, the organization has been actively engaged in partnering more effectively and leveraging coordination forums for stronger results through the cluster approach and humanitarian platforms.

UNICEF has forged new ways of working in this coordination body informed by a formal review of the partnership aspects as well as the impact of the co-leading arrangements on the effectiveness of the cluster itself. In terms of policy commitment and strategies, UNICEF adopted in 2010 the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) that outline a framework, principles and accountabilities for partnerships in humanitarian action.

It was revealed in this study that key actions were undertaken to strengthen humanitarian partnerships. In 2010, UNICEF convened a consultation with humanitarian NGO partners, which highlighted the need for stronger partnership tools and monitoring of partnership performance, a joint capacity development strategy, sustained communication and enhanced knowledge management, and identified ways to improve administrative procedures.

A review of the stand-by arrangements confirmed that standby partnership is an innovative and pragmatic way to deliver aid effectively. Its flexibility, the diversity of its partners and ability to deploy diverse sets of skills rapidly were seen as a key attribute of the partnership. The review also contributed to strengthening UNICEF and its partners' institutional commitment to partnerships in humanitarian action and led to an expansion of UNICEF standby partnerships.

The research revealed that Implementing partners view Unicef as donors, as partners, and mediators. Based on assessment conducted in 2011, most of the partners had indicated appreciation for UNICEF as technical lead and support for the achievement of results through its support in both financial and technical. Partnership is viewed as a voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties. In such cases the partners agree to work together to achieve a specific goal. In some cases the partners feel like it is a boss servant relationship in which UNICEF assumes the role of the boss and the partners feel that they have to abide with the decisions made by UNICEF.

In such cases the output is more meant to serve the interest of UNICEF than those of the partner. This perception is often for the partners who feel like they are technically challenged and do not want to voice this out. This therefore calls for capacity building, communication and dialogue to maintain the partnership. Some partners appreciate the partnership with UNICEF and view the partnership as a road map to achieving results. However, it has been revealed in this study that other partners view the partnership as a tool for achieving financial benefits to sustain their organizations, therefore Unicef is a cash cow for some organizations.

Strong partners who are technically sound are more likely to view it as a partnership to achieve results. In such cases a common understanding is arrived at for the goals and the expected outputs of the partnership. However, among partners who are weak in a given technical field and are still upcoming, the tendency to raise proposal for financial gains is common. This is in an effort to build their 'name' and to strengthen their financial base. Such view partnering with Unicef as a tool to raise financial benefits, therefore a cash cow.

It was also revealed that, in implementing Partnership Strategy, there are challenges that may hinder achieving of results from time to time. Some areas of operation are not accessible due to the insecurity situations; this makes it difficult and almost impossible for Unicef staff to monitor results or the programs implemented by the IPs. In this case Unicef is forced to engage a third party consultant to undertake monitoring of the activities. This may not be done upto the expectation of Unicef because the third party involved may not have the background of the programme therefore will not be in a position to monitor the programme and submit a detailed report.

This therefore compromises performance on the part of IPs and eventually Unicef thereby not achieving the intended results. In terms of reporting, it was revealed that there is a distinct difference between the partners' reports and the actual activities on ground amidst a minority few partners. The Partners normally report quarterly, where they submit a financial expenditure report showing the amount of funding spent during that quarter and a progress or activity report equivalent to the amount spent detailing the activities implemented during the reporting period. This however is not the case to majority of the IPs when the results are monitored. In most cases some partners have perfect reports on both financial and progress but the actual results are minimal and not equivalent to the reports.

Unicef's mandate is to reach all the children in the world and especially the most vulnerable especially in the most difficult areas. The complex contextual environment especially insecurity affect both UNICEF and partners in achieving results. When insecurity is high in the most difficult areas of operations where children are most vulnerable, it is difficult and makes it almost impossible for the Implementing partners to access and implement programmes in those areas in the case of Unicef Kenya, Mandera County on the North Eastern part of Kenya suffers the most in terms of insecurity leading to inaccessibility. This compromises performance and hinders achievement of results.

There is also a risk in the partnership where there is a difference in the interpretation of success between the partners; the common goal is not always common leading to partners having different goals that are not stipulated in the partnership. This also leads to Poor performance by some partners in terms of analysis during program design, implementation and reporting of results. The partner's internal processes and policy also affect performance as they are at times rigid hence results are not achieved fully.

In terms of expenditure as per the approved PCA, the partners at times fail to adhere to the terms of partnership agreements for instance on reporting requirements and deadlines as well as compliance to the general policies among others. This therefore brings lack of transparency on the side of partners leading to mistrust and therefore beats the whole purpose of the partnership.

This is evidenced when a partner utilizes the funds contrary to the budget and has to refund the ineligible costs as per Unicef's policies. This again compromises implementation of activities as the funds meant for those activities have been diverted to other activities which are not agreed in the PCAs, leading to low performance resulting to not achieving the results.

The study also revealed some challenges faced by partners in the course of implementing partnership strategy. The partners pointed long bureaucracies on the part of Unicef which leads to delays in getting the PCAs approved thereby leading to delayed implementation of the pragrammes and again compromising achieving of results. There is also piece meal information sharing and diverse interpretation of requirements by different sections, this also puts the implementing partners in a difficult situation as a result hinders result achievement.

The Implementing partners also sited short funding duration as a challenge which compromises performance. Some projects run for 3, 4 5 or even 6 months while work involved in preparing project documents for these short projects is too much. Once program documents are approved and the agreement is reached by both parties, the first month is set in planning with the counties and start-up activities. In this case little time for implementation left and more time for closure/exit, in such project very little results are yield. This survey showed that it has proved to be difficult and almost impossible to set realistic targets for short term funded and short duration programmes. This compromises results a great deal.

The study showed that once Unicef funding period is closed, it takes time for another agreement to be approved and put in place this leads to temporary closure of the programmes which on the other hand affects the progress of continuity of the programme as the partners will be forced to start up once again every time a project comes to an end. This tampers with the project as it calls for new recruitment and finding other office space for the fully Unicef funded programmes.

Unicef works with the Government through Implementing partners as well as directly to strengthen Government structures and systems. This structure makes the Government both National and County government reluctant to undertake their responsibilities in terms of owning the projects and even allocate funding in their budgets for such activities. This makes sustainability impossible because once Unicef pulls out, the programmes stop almost immediately. In such cases, advocacy efforts become a challenge on the side of the CSOs.

It was revealed that, in order to deal with the challenges of partnerships strategy, there is need for continuous bilateral discussions with the organization which should engage both technical staff and the management. The technical should then be taken further at the sectoral level for implementation of the discussion action points. It was evident that there is also need to have joint planning and field monitoring, it is through joint supervision that weaknesses can be pointed out and problems can be solved. From this study, it was evident that there is a gap in capacity building of the partners in specific areas of weakness in an effort to build a common understanding.

There is also need to act quickly in case of any possibility of a risk coming up rather than waiting for the risk to happen then work towards managing the risk. To be able to prevent risks from occurring, this study revealed that there is need for more stringent micro assessments, spot checks, end user monitoring, evaluations and audits among other assurance activities as it is from these activities the organization can identify and prevent risks before they occur.

It was also revealed that there is need for clear definition on the roles of partners and the role of the Principle agency in this case Unicef in the partnership agreement. Monitoring of all activities should not be underestimated and the necessary adjustments should be made in time to favor the desired outcome. Constant feedback to the partner and the involvement of the other stakeholders in the area of implementation is also key. This allows for more consulted efforts towards achieving a common goal. There should be competitive selection of IPs in order the select IPs who have the required capacity to implement the programmes and to create a culture of competitiveness.

Continuous engagement with IPs especially on program strategy was also found to be crucial in order to achieve planned results. In such cases where the partner is exiting, there is need to have a clear exit strategy so that evaluation can be done to ensure that the partner really implemented the programme satisfactorily and results were achieved. Unicef creates an enabling environment through providing technical, financial and tangible supplies to the implementing partner in order to implement the programmes agreed in the approved PCA.

Unicef then is responsible for monitoring the programmes implemented by the partners. Unicef monitors the funds disbursed to the partners immediately disbursement is done. When the partners report back to Unicef on how the funds have been utilised, unicef then follows up to see whether the funds were utilised as per the approved budget and whether the programmes in the field have been implemented and results achieved based on evidence.

Unicef also is responsible to conduct EUSM to ensure that the supplies reach the intended beneficiary. The supplies are delivered through the Government in the different counties. On the other hand the study revealed that, the Implementing Partner is accountable for results; the IPs as stipulated in the Programme Corporation Agreement is expected to achieve the desired results for children and women thereby achieving performance on behalf of Unicef. The IP is also expected to leverage for resources both technical and financial.

This study revealed that in coming up with the strategy, there was some engagement of the implementing partners and some staff at some level not in the whole process. The survey revealed that at the level of execution there was little to no engagement on the side of some staff. While on the other hand it was evidenced that there was significant consultation with the Government and other partners who agreed on the key deliverables and the most appropriate delivery or implementing method to achieve the intended results; where the rolling work plan for the Governments provide the direction for the programming.

This normally happens at beginning of every programme cycle and annually through the rolling plans. Partnerships allows UNICEF to undertake projects (irrespective of whether it has the internal capacity or not) by relying on the capacities of the identified partners to carry out the tasks hence achieving results for the women and children of Kenya and eventually the world. The research showed there is a relationship between partnership strategy and performance of Unicef because it helps streamlining work engagement and further identification of the more partners with the required capacity.

It makes the partners more royal to UNICEF than to the Government which provides the strategic direction. The partners are sometimes limited in the kind of support they can provide to the counties as their funding is geared towards some agreed outputs.

When changes occur at the county level, the partners are not in a position to adjust with speed. Therefore the partners need to be sensitized on the partnership engagement in order to achieve results.

The partnership strategy provides a framework for engaging with implementing partners. It is a joint approach where inputs and results are shared. The Unicef HACT framework is used to transfer and report on results achieved hence ensuring and monitoring performance of the IPs. However, partners are sometimes affected by late transfer of funds while UNICEF is affected by unliquidated/unreported funds. It also allows partners to be involved and carry some responsibility for the implementation of projects and provides them with the resources to do so (on shared/partnership basis). This has helped in building the Partners capacity and profile.

4.7 Discussion

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of Strategic Partnerships on the Performance of UNICEF Kenya and the research question is sought to describe how Partnership strategy affect the performance of Unicef Kenya give. It was apparent from the research findings that Strategy is critical to any organization which seeks to strive and excel in the market or in its field of operation. Performance being a very important concept in Organizations who aspire to achieve their mandate and deliver results should be aligned to the strategy in place. While prescriptions for improving and managing organizational performance are widely available for instance (Nash, 1983), the academic community has been preoccupied with discussions on issues of terminology, levels of analysis and conceptual bases for assessment of performance (Ford & Schellenberg, 1982).

There's constant pressure even every organization just as in Unicef Kenya as revealed in the findings to achieve performance targets, to reach higher performance levels, and to ensure that people's work supports and furthers the organization's goals. Use of formal performance measures is one approach to managing performance. However, don't forget the importance of inspiration and good leadership (Porter M. 1982), all this requires that the organization aligns performance to its strategy.

Performance management is the process used to manage this performance. The key question asked is, "How well is an employee applying his or her current skills, to what extent is he or she achieving the outcomes desired?" The answer has traditionally been found in the performance evaluation process, where managers look for hard data to tell how well an employee has performed his or her duties. In this case, Unicef Performance is determined by how well the partnership strategy is being implemented by both the principal and agent in the partnership strategy. Performance may be measured in many domains including the domain of financial performance, Operational and financial performance and the organizational effectiveness, (Gregory & Richard 1984).

Superior performance is the objective of any organization because only through performance, organizations are able to grow and progress. Knowing the determinants of organizational performance is vital as it enables the identification of those factors that should be treated with an increased interest in order to improve the organizational performance Gregpry & Richard (1984). Organizational performance comprises the actual results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs and objectives through strategies adopted by Organizations.

Unicef measures performance using both financial and non financial measures. For the financial measures the organization always aspires to see that all the cash disbursements to the implementing partners are reported or liquidated within the set deadlines while for non financial measures, Unicef ensures that there is value for money and that there are tangible results in the field and based on evidence not on paper as stated by Malina & Selto (2004).

Maintaining a competitive advantage requires more than strategic insight, Lippman & Rumelt (1992). Corporate leaders must have an in-depth understanding of how to balance financial and nonfinancial measures, drive strategy down to operations, manage and measure multiple control systems. In driving corporate performance, an Organization will need to explore the critical link among strategy, performance measurement, organizational design, and corporate governance.

The component of measuring results in Unicef is guided by the Monitoring and Evaluation strategy. This however is seen to be not very strong as required hence results are not achieved to the desired level. The researcher found out that the performance of Unicef is dependent on the performance of the Implementing partners who implement programmes supported by Unicef. There are many advantages to creating strategic partnerships. As Grant (2008) states in his book Contemporary Strategy Analysis, "For complete strategies, as opposed to individual projects, creating option value means positioning the firm such that a wide array of opportunities become available".

In this case Unicef is able to have its programmes implemented as well as pass the risk of any probable loss of funds to the implementing partner. For the Implementing partners to achieve results, Unicef provide the resources as stipulated in the approved Programme Corporation Agreement, while the Implementing partner implements the agreed programmes and is also accountable for any losses of funds.

In order to achieve results in any partnership agreement, the two parties must have the same attitude towards risk to avoid the problems that come along with risk-sharing. The parties must have the same goal in the partnership, Jensen & Mecklin, (1976). Specifically, agency theory is directed at the ubiquitous agency relationship, in which one party, the principal delegates work to another, the agent, who performs that work. In this case the Principal, Unicef delegates the role of implementing programmes to the agent, the implementing partner who is required and bound by the agreement to deliver the desired results despite any conditions. For the results to be achieved, Unicef and the IP must share the same goals of the partnership.

The success of an organization depends on its strategy choice and implementation all through evaluation, Porter (1982). For Unicef to achieve performance, it will also depend on the choice, implementation and evaluation of its strategy. Unicef has chosen to implement the partnership strategy in order to achieve results for children and women. This strategy has seen Unicef achieving results but not satisfactorily reason being the usual strategy to performance problem with a more likely source of being a gap in the formulation-to-implementation process.

There is a high degree of interdependence between strategy choice, implementation and the performance in Organizations, Porter (1985). The main reason behind this interdependence results from the fact that strategy is the main agent of policy implementation within any Organization. It is evident that Organizations that have effectively embraced and employed strategic planning, acquire better performance than those that have not.

Hofer and Schendel (1978), Greenly (1986), and David (1997) argue that firms record improved performance once they effectively practice strategic planning. It has been revealed in this study that, Unicef crafted a very good strategy that is applicable to all areas of Unicef operations no matter the context, Hussey, (1991); Hill, (1992) Strategy is the heart of strategic management because it helps organizations to formulate and implement various tasks in attempt to prosper. The partnership strategy applied by Unicef has proved to be a good strategy however, there is a gap in the entire process of strategy development to implementation.

This study has revealed that the consultation during strategy development was evident but very minimal and not in the entire process; This is contrary to the recommendation of strategic management that implementers in this case partners and staff should be fully engaged in order to for them to own the strategy and eventually achieve satisfactory results, Barney (1991) . It also indicated that contribution from a particular cadre of people was considered while contribution from majority of the members was not considered, and mostly the implementers of the strategy.

According to Barney (1999, 1991) RBV explains that a firm's sustainable competitive advantage is reached by virtue of unique resources being rare, valuable, inimitable, non-tradable, and non-substitutable, as well as firm-specific goals. For the Implementing partners to be relevant and succeed, they must have unique resources that the agent, Unicef does not have; they must as well have the same goals that the agent has otherwise, there may arise the agency problem brought about by the two parties in an agreement having different goals. This study revealed that most of the implementing partners have hidden agendas in the partnership;

It has been revealed that some Implementing partners view Unicef as their cash cow therefore they will do anything to inter into partnership with divided focus. Some IPs are genuine while others are not and their main agenda is not to achieve the most vulnerable children and women and to access funding to run their organizations. Teece (2007) originated the Capability theory to explain how companies fulfill seemingly contradictory imperatives. The First is that they must be both stable enough to continue to deliver value in their own distinctive way. The second imperative is they must be resilient and adaptive enough to shift on time when circumstances demand it.

Teece (2007) defines capability as a set of learned processes and activities that enable a company to produce a particular outcome. This research has revealed that before IPs get into partnership with Unicef, they must undergo capacity assessment to identify weaknesses if any and to assess the general capacity of the IPs in order the engage IPs who have the capacity to implement the given programmes in terms of technicality, financial internal control, procurement processes, flexibility among others.

It was revealed that for Unicef to achieve superb performance, the Implementing partners must achieve performance first. Partnership strategy therefore relates to performance of an Organization Gregory & Richard (1984). In Unicef Kenya, Partnership strategy ensures cost efficiency, it ensures that the partners involved have the required capacity in place to undertake the stipulated programmes at minimum costs; This is achieved through a series of assessment that is conducted to the partner before entering into partnership and eventually sign the agreements.

The partnership strategy also ensures wider coverage with multiple partnership leading to coverage of various activities to enhance service delivery. In addition, partnership encourages innovation as well as skill optimization and diversity this is because different partners have different mandates and skill set, therefore engaging them ensures diversity of approach to addressing the children issues thereby achieving performance (Gregory & Richard 1984).

4.7.1 Comparison with the Theory

According to Arrow, (1971) in the Agency Theory where economists explored risk sharing among individuals or groups in the partnership strategy, there is need for the parties to the contract to share the risk that comes with implementing of the strategy. This literature describes the risk-sharing problem as one that arises when partners have different attitudes towards risk. Agency theory attempts to describe this relationship of the cooperating parties using the metaphor of a contract. The theory also stresses the underlying important relationship between the shareholders or owners and the agents or managers in ensuring the success of the organizations. The theory is concerned with resolving two problems that can occur in agency relationships.

The first is one arises when the desires of the principal and agent conflict; this is evident when the principal cannot verify that the agent has behaved appropriately. Secondly when it is difficult or expensive for the principal to verify what the agent is actually doing, this happens when the principal and agent have different attitudes towards the risk, Jensen & Mecklin (1976). This study agrees with this theory that, for any two cooperating partners, they must have and work towards a common goal as well as share the risk that comes with partnership strategy.

The Dynamic Capability theory of Teece (2007) explains how companies fulfill seemingly contradictory imperatives and stresses on stability and resilience of the organizations. The parties to the partnership must be both stable enough to continue to deliver value in their own distinctive way as well as resilient and adaptive enough to shift on time when circumstances demand it.

Teece (2007) defines capability as a set of learned processes and activities that enable a company to produce a particular outcome. Ordinary capabilities being as the best practices whereas dynamic capabilities are unique to each company and are rooted in the company's history. This study conquers with this theory that the organizations partnering with Unicef must have the capacity to deliver the mandate of Unicef.

This study agrees with the theories and reveals that strategic planning can be used as a means of repositioning and transforming the organization and indeed contribute positively to the organizational performance, Kotter (1996). Unicef is not mandated to implement its activities directly, therefore it is through implementing the Partnership strategy that the organization has adopted that enables Unicef to achieve its mandate on children and women.

4.7.2 Comparison with other Empirical Studies

Various empirical studies have been done to establish the relationship between strategy and Organization performance with different conclusions. From the empirical studies, there has been evidence concerning the relationship of strategy and organizational performance that have shown positive relationship. Thune and House (1970) conducted an empirical study of 36 companies employing the approach of examining the performance of each company both before and after formal strategic planning was initiated. The comparison showed that formal planners outperformed the informal planners on all the performance measures that were used. This study reveals that organizations which engage in strategic planning perform better that those that do not embrace strategic planning. This is because strategy is the road map to performance of an organization.

Herold (1972) suggests that formal planning outperformed informal planning in his survey of 10 companies, comparing performance of formal and informal planners over a 7-year period. This study also supports the findings of Thune and House (1970). Gershefski (1970) in his survey compared the profit growth as a result of growth of sales in companies over a 5-year period before strategic planning was introduced, and over a period of 5 years after planning was introduced. The results of this comparison support the study of Herold and Thune and House that companies with formal strategic planning performed well as compared to companies with little or no planning at all.

A study was conducted by Mahdan Ibrahim and Ali Khtani, Utara University, to determine the relationship between strategy and performance of Manufacturing Firms in Indonesia where 112 firms were studied. The aim of the study was to investigate the performance of the firms and how they are related to strategy implementation. It also aimed at examining the degree of formalization in organizational structure of

Indonesian firms and how it affects the relationship between strategy and performance. The results of the study revealed a significant relationship between strategy and the firm performance. As per this study, strategy implementation has a positive relationship with performance, the more effectively a strategy is crafted and implemented the better the firm performance. This also support the results of (Thune and House, 1970).

Ansoff et al (1970) conducted a study on the relationship between formal strategic planning and organizational performance. The objective of the study was to determine the impact of strategic planning on successful acquisitions and performance of the manufacturing firms. The companies were grouped into planners and non-planners and performance of each group evaluated with twenty-one financial measures. The results showed that companies that practiced strategic planning performed better. These studies focused on the direct relationship between strategic planning or strategic management and Performance of Organization. This study also conquered with the previous study of Thune and House (2007).

Another study was conducted by Woodburn (1984), Adegbite (1986) and Fubara (1986) which noted that firms that practiced strategic planning recorded better performance compared to those that did not practice strategic planning. They also revealed that the firms that have an International origin were the ones that were practicing Strategic planning more. Unicef has managed to achieve results due to the fact that it has embraced strategy and adopted Partnership strategy to conduct is business. However, the results of this study reveals that, Unicef has not been able to achieve the expected or desired results due to some laxity in the implementation of the partnership strategy specifically on the point of monitoring results of the Implementing Partners.

This study agrees with their findings and gives a revelation that strategy (Strategic Partnership) leads to achievement of superb organizational performance, Steiner (1979) because a strategy is a long term plan of the organization and it is in line with the MISSION and VISION of the organization which defines the reason for organization existence as well as the future focus of the organization. The findings of this study suggest that the rules of the partnership should be reviewed and clear guidelines put in place for the partner who will not stick to the agreement conditions.

4.8 Chapter Summary

Summarizing this chapter, the objective of strategy is to create, sustain and renew advantage in order to achieve superb performance. According to (Mintzberg, 1998)

Strategy formation is judgmental designing, intuitive visioning, and emergent learning; it is about transformation as well as perpetuation; it must involve individual cognition and social interaction, cooperation as well as conflict; it has to include analyzing before and programming after, as well as negotiating during; and all of this must be in response to what can be a demanding environment.

This study has revealed that Unicef developed and is now implementing partnership strategy but it has not been able to achieve satisfactory results due to the strategy formulation – implementation problem. This endless formulation-implementation-performance cycle leads to subsequent attempts at implementing a mistaken strategy. When this occurs, it is hard to tell if weak performance is due to good implementation of a bad strategy, or the result of poor implementation of a good strategy. It is very vital to engage the staff and put more emphasis on the entire strategy process and not only at formulation stage.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the results from the data that was analyzed through content analysis, it will give a conclusion of the findings and make recommendation. The summary and the conclusion will be related to the research objectives and findings which will therefore determine the answer to the research question. The limitations of the study will be examined and further present the suggestions for future research.

5.2 Summary

The study has shown that Unicef has sixteen global strategies which are tailored to suit the various country offices and they adopt them on the ground. These strategies have been in existence for a long time. The most practiced strategy is the Partnership Strategy as Unicef does not implement its programmes directly but does so through engaging Implementing partners. It has been revealed that Unicef draws Programme Corporation Agreements and SSFAs with the CSO and Mou with the host Government to implement the programmes.

The objective of the study was to determine the effect of Strategic Partnerships on the Performance of UNICEF Kenya and the research question is sought to describe how Partnership strategy affect the performance of Unicef Kenya given its uniqueness. It was apparent from the research findings that Strategy is critical to any organization which seeks to strive and excel in the market.

The respondents of this study indicated that the key to achieving performance is through strategy. Organizations that have a realistic strategy in place always excel. Unicef Kenya despite the many strategies it has, the strategy that has led to achieving results is the partnership strategy. Through partnership strategy, Unicef has been able to engage partners to implement programmes on its behalf even in the most difficult places despite the many challenges.

The research has clearly identified that there was little engagement of staff and partners in crafting the strategy and some contributions from the partners and staff were not put into consideration in the final document. There is therefore need to engage all the parties to a partnership in crafting of the strategy, this will enable the implementers of the strategy to accept and own the strategy throughout implementation of the strategy. It is also equally important for all the parties to a partnership agreement to understand their role and have a common objective if results are to be achieved.

5.3 Conclusion

Managers who overlook strategy and heading towards failure and failing their respective organizations. Studies and theories have confirmed that organizations that embrace strategy always excel, but the probability that organizations that do now embrace will fail is close to obvious. This has been confirmed in this study that strategies are the engine of any organization. Unicef Kenya Office achieves performance through embracing its partnership strategy.

The objective of this study was to determine the effect of Strategic Partnerships on the Performance of UNICEF Kenya. This has been met following the findings of this study which have revealed that, in deed partnership strategy affects the performance of Unicef Kenya because it is through partnerships that implementation of the programme is undertaken. Unicef engages Implementing partners to implement its programmes.

Therefore the performance of the implementing partners leads to performance of Unicef Kenya which is accountable to reports results to its headquarters. It is evidence that if the Implementing partners fail, then Unicef fails automatically and therefore no results will be achieved. Unicef needs to ensure that it assesses the capacity of partners thoroughly before engaging it as an implementing partners. It is through sound partnership that Unicef will achieve high performance.

5.4 Recommendations and Implications of the study

Organization achieve superb performance by embracing and proper implementation of Strategy thereby achieving the desired results. Unicef can achieve superb performance through proper implementation of Partnership Strategy. In order for Unicef to achieve higher performance, it should embrace its partnership strategy and implement it fully. There should be team involvement from the beginning all through monitoring and evaluation of the strategy to verify that desired results have been really achieved.

In terms of policy commitment and strategies, UNICEF adopted in 2010 the revised Core Commitments for Children in Humanitarian Action (CCCs) that outline a framework, principles and accountabilities for partnerships in humanitarian action.

The Humanitarian Action Report 2010 also highlighted UNICEF approaches and field experiences in collaborating in emergencies. Key actions were undertaken to strengthen humanitarian partnerships. In 2010, UNICEF convened a consultation with humanitarian NGO partners, which highlighted the need for stronger partnership tools and monitoring of partnership performance, a joint capacity development strategy, sustained communication and enhanced knowledge management, and identified ways to improve administrative procedures.

A review of the stand-by arrangements confirmed that standby partnership is an innovative and pragmatic way to deliver aid effectively. Its flexibility, the diversity of its partners and ability to deploy diverse sets of skills rapidly were seen as a key attribute of the partnership. The review also contributed to strengthening UNICEF and its partners' institutional commitment to partnerships in humanitarian action and led to an expansion of UNICEF standby partnerships. It is recommended that all parties to the partnership should know their roles and implement according to these roles stipulated in the Programme Coporation agreement. Strategy is the roadmap to achieving performance in any organization. Organizations that ignore strategy draw their roadmap to failure. Organizations should develop rationales necessary to allow for embracing strategy through adopting and implementing strategies in the volatile environment (Bryson, 1995).

Performance comprise actual results as measured against intended objectives. Richard et al. (2009) states that organizational performance encompasses three specific areas of outcomes which are financial performance, product market performance and shareholder return. It is evident in this study that monitoring of results is not adequate, it is therefore recommended that Unicef like any other organization should improve in monitoring the results versus the amount of cash disbursed in order to achieve results intended.

The research has met the objective of the study which was to determine the effect of partnership strategy on the performance of Unicef Kenya country Office and subsequently answered the research question how the Unicef Strategic Partnership affect performance of Unicef Kenya. This however has various implications to the policy, theory and practice.

5.4.1 Policy

The findings of this study have revealed that there is a gap in monitoring of results in the field and suggested recommendations to improve monitoring or results. Unicef Kenya Office and the policy makers can use these to come up with a mechanism/policy to closely monitor performance of the implementing partners in order to achieve results and improve the performance of Unicef at large

5.4.2 Theory

The research has confirmed that the success of an organization is indeed dependent on the strategy of the organization, in this case partnership strategy which requires that the partners should have a common goal in the partnership as well as risk sharing with the partners in order to achieve results. The results of the study credence the Agency theory where economists explored risk sharing among individuals or groups, (Arrow 1961).

This literature Arrow (1961), describes the risk-sharing problem as one that arises when partners have different attitudes towards risk. Therefore this will support the existing theories and help strengthen partnerships and improve on performance. They can formulate strategies to effectively deal with the factors that are of least significance to implementing partnership strategy. Other academicians will also benefit from this study in terms of theory comparison.

5.4.3 Practice

This study will help the practicing manager to appreciate the role of strategy in improving performance of an organization. They will learn the importance of engaging players to a partnership strategy or to any other strategy from the inception to the final stage. It is vital to engage participation of staff in the entire process of strategy formulation to evaluation, it is only through total engagement of the implementer of a strategy that will ensure total ownership of the strategy leading to full implementation of the strategy. It is only through engagement that there will be no resistance to strategy implementation by the implementers.

The upcoming Managers will have enough knowledge about strategy and performance to refer from as they engage in their daily executive roles. Top management formulate the strategic purpose and direction of the organization by articulating and communicating the desired vision of the organization's future. Strategy is important for an organization to achieve and maintain a competitive advantage thereby achieving performance in their operating environments.

5.5 Limitations of the Study

The study targeted the Section chiefs, Programme Specialists/Officers Programme Assistants and Implementing partners of the same cadre because of their in depth understanding and their direct involvement with the partners and therefore directly implement the partnership strategy. However most of these targeted staff were unavailable to respond due to their official work responsibilities.

The nature of this study, interviewing respondents, required that respondents find time to dialogue with the researcher and have them confirming by signing and having the interview sheet stamped with an official rubber stamp, this proved to be a challenge as it was not easy to explain why the need to rubber stamp interview guide. During this study, there was a requirement that a letter from the organization should be submitted before data collection, this really delayed this project because it was not quite convincing for the organization to issue a letter and at the same time have all the interview sheets stamped with an official rubber stamp. Some responds felt that the information they have provided is confidential and despite assurance that it will be treated in confidence they felt it can still end in wrong hands. They declined to put a Company rubber stamp and these interview sheets are not part of the analysis.

5.6 Suggestions for Further Research

Due to the limitations of this study, there is need to carry out further studies in the area of strategy and performance in organizations in order to achieve results and also seek to identify how other players implementing partnership strategy cope with challenges of partnership strategy. It should be understood that strategy is the way to every organization which aspire to succeed and remain relevant in the market. Partnership strategy enables the organizations in partnership to share risks and acquire the skills that are not available in their organizations and which they do not intend to have.

It may also be important to replicate this study in future to identify any improvement in the performance of Unicef Kenya after addressing the challenges identified in this study and find new ways of improving partnership strategy in Unicef. Another area for further research would be to find out whether monitoring of results as recommended in this study would affect the performance of an organization. This further research could be performed in another context.

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Appendix: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Personal Profile

1. When did you join the Organization?
2. What Position are you holding in the Organization?
3. What is your role in achieving results or Mission of Unicef?

Main Project Profile

1. How does Unicef deliver its Mandate in achieving results for Children and Women of Kenya
2. Which strategy does Unicef apply to achieve results?
3. How does Partnership Strategy relate to the performance of Unicef Kenya?
4. In coming up with the strategy was there staff and partner’s involvement?
5. How does Partnership Strategy affect Unicef Implementing Partners?
6. How do Unicef Partners perceive the partnering with Unicef?
7. Is the partnership viewed as a tool to achieving results or Financial benefits?
8. What challenges did you face in achieving superb performance through implementing Partnership Strategy?
9. How did you counter the challenges?
10. What were the lessons learnt?

11. What is the role of Partners in Implementing Partnership Strategy in the efforts to achieve results?

12. How do you compare Last Country Programme's performance with the current Country Programme basing argument on the last 2 quarters?

APPENDIX II: INTRODUCTION LETTER

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
MBA PROGRAMME

Telephone: 020-2059162
Telegrams: "Varsity", Nairobi
Telex: 22095 Varsity

P.O. Box 30197
Nairobi, Kenya

DATE 7th August 2015

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The bearer of this letter CONSTANCE ROSE NGOTO

Registration No. D61/65113/2013

is a bona fide continuing student in the Master of Business Administration (MBA) degree program in this University.

He/she is required to submit as part of his/her coursework assessment a research project report on a management problem. We would like the students to do their projects on real problems affecting firms in Kenya. We would, therefore, appreciate your assistance to enable him/her collect data in your organization.

The results of the report will be used solely for academic purposes and a copy of the same will be availed to the interviewed organizations on request.

Thank you.

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS
07 AUG 2015
P.O. Box 30197-00100, NAIROBI

for. PATRICK NYABUTO
MBA ADMINISTRATOR
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

APPENDIX III: DATA COLLECTION AUTHORIZATION LETTER

MEMORANDUM

United Nations Children's Fund
Kenya Country Office
Nutrition Section
P.O. Box 44145, 00100 Nairobi, Kenya

Telephone 254 20 762 21051
Facsimile 254 20 762 22688
E-mail gmoloney@unicef.org
www.unicef.org

Good luck
Madhavi Ashok
25/8/2015

To: MadhaviAshok
OiC Representative

Thro' Grainne Moloney
Chief, Nutrition Section

From: Constance Rose Ngoto
Nutrition Section

Date: 17 August 2015

Subject:Request to be allowed to do a Research Project on Partnership Strategy and Performance of Unicef through Implementing Partners.

I am in the process of completing a Master of Business Administration, Strategic Management and Planning. It is a requirement that I should do a research Project to qualify and be allowed to graduate.

I would like to determine the effect of Partnership Strategy and performance of Unicef, through implementing partners through interviewing a few staff who work directly with Implementing Partners.

The findings of this study will help the Organization to improve monitoring of performance hence improve results on women and children.

Your approval will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your support.

unite for children

unicef