MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AFRICA: A CASE OF THE AFRICAN UNION CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

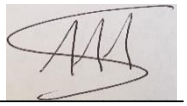
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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of the Degree of Master of Arts in Monitoring and Evaluation in the School of Business of Africa Nazarene University

JUNE 2024

DECLARATION

I declare that this document and the research it describes are my original work and that it has not been presented in any other university for academic work.

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DEDICATION

I want to dedicate my work to my family for their constant belief in me and encouragement.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ..... **i**
DEDICATION ..... **ii**
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT ..... **iii**
TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... **iv**
LIST OF TABLES ..... **vii**
LIST OF FIGURES ..... **viii**
ABSTRACT ..... **ix**
DEFINITION OF TERMS ..... **x**
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ..... **xii**
CHAPTER ONE **1**
INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND **1**
1.1 Introduction 1
1.2 Background of the Study 1
1.2.1 Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs 2
1.2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies 3
1.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs 5
1.2.3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 5
1.2.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement 7
1.2.3.3 Conflict-Sensitive M&E 7
1.2.4 Background of the AU Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) 8
1.3 Statement of the Problem 10
1.4 Purpose of the Study 11
1.5 Objectives of the Study 12
1.6 Research Questions 12
1.7 Significance of the Study 13
1.8 Scope of the Study 13
1.9 Delimitations of the Study 14
1.10 Limitations of the Study 15
1.11 Assumptions of the Study 15
1.12 Theoretical Framework 16
1.12.1 Theory of Change (ToC) 16

1.12.2 Stakeholder Theory 17
1.13 Conceptual Framework 19
CHAPTER TWO 20
LITERATURE REVIEW 20
2.1 Introduction 20
2.1.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs in 20
2.1.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa 24
2.1.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs in Africa 27
2.2 Summary and Research 29
2.3 Research Gaps 30
CHAPTER THREE 32
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY 32
3.1 Introduction 32
3.2 Research Design 32
3.3 Research Site 33
3.4 Target Population 33
3.5 Study Sample 34
3.5.1 Sampling Procedure 34
3.5.2 Study Sample Size 35
3.6 Data Collection 36
3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments 36
3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments 36
3.6.3 Instrument Reliability 37
3.6.4 Instrument Validity 38
3.6.5 Data Collection Procedure 38
3.7 Data Analysis 39
3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations 39
CHAPTER FOUR 40
DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS 40
4.1 Introduction 40
4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents 40
4.2.1 Population Response Rate 40

4.2.2 Age of Respondents 42
4.2.3 Years of Experience of Respondents 42
4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis, Findings and Interpretation 43
4.3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 44
4.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 47
4.3.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 49
4.3.3.1 Integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 50
CHAPTER FIVE 54
DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 54
5.1 Introduction 54
5.2 Discussion 54
5.2.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 54
5.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 56
5.2.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System 57
5.3 Summary of Main Findings 59
5.4 Conclusion 60
5.5 Recommendation 62
REFERENCES 64
APPENDIX 74
APPENDIX 1 – RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER 74
APPENDIX 2 – RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE 75

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2. 1: Research Gap 30
Table 3. 1: Target Population 34
Table 3. 2: Sample Size 35
Table 4. 1: Response Rate 41
Table 4. 2: Age Group 42
Table 4. 3: Years of Experience 43
Table 4. 4: Importance of KPIs 44
Table 4. 5: Analysis of KPIs influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs 45
Table 4. 6: Importance of Stakeholder Engagement 47
Table 4. 7: Analysis of the influence of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa 48
Table 4. 8: Respondents' opinion- Importance of Conflict-Sensitive M&E 50
Table 4. 9: Respondents' opinion- Importance of Conflict-Sensitive M&E practice 50
Table 4. 10: Respondents' opinion – influence of integrating conflict-sensitive M&E practice 51
Table 4. 11:Respondents' opinion – Reasons for not integrating conflict-sensitive M&E practices 52
Table 4. 12: Analysis of influence of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa 53

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1:Conceptual Framework 19

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate the effect of the monitoring and evaluation strategies and the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa taking as a case the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) of the African Union (AU). The study was based on three objectives: to assess the extent to which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) influence the performance of conflict prevention programs, to examine the influence of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs, and to establish how integration of conflict-sensitive strategies in M&E influences the performance of conflict prevention programs. The theoretical framework covered the theory of change and stakeholder theory. The study adopted a descriptive survey design to understand the research variables in-depth and make informed recommendations. The research site for the study is Addis Ababa, Ethiopia as the seat of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) of the African Union. The target population of 125 comprising staff members of the Political Affairs Peace and Security (PAPS) and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) working and supporting conflict prevention programs of CEWS was considered. The sample size of the study calculated by using the Krejcie & Morgan table is 95. The researcher used questionnaires to gather the required information by drop-off and pick-up method as well as mailed surveys depending on the convenience. The research questionnaire was tested for consistency to correct inconsistencies. Further, Cronbach's alpha coefficient has been used to estimate instrument reliability using the pilot responses, and it returned 0.801, which is fairly high. Once the required data was collected after securing authorization from the relevant bodies, the data was analyzed using SPSS version 29. After the finalization of the data collection, analysis of the data was made using means and standard deviations to assess the central tendencies and dispersion of the data. The study's results revealed alignments with findings as well as discrepancies with prior studies. It emphasized the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), stressing the need for alignment with strategic goals and the establishment of baseline and targets. A thorough stakeholder analysis involving internal and external stakeholders, as well as clear roles and responsibilities, were deemed crucial. Additionally, the study highlighted the significance of conflict-sensitive M&E practice, along with detailed context analysis. The study recommended the development of clear and measurable KPIs, the establishment of baseline and targets, with participation from both internal and external stakeholders, and prioritizing the integration of conflict-sensitive practice to address challenges and enhance the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Conflict Prevention Programs: These are specific initiatives designed to identify and address potential triggers of violent conflicts before they escalate. These initiatives may include activities such as building national capacities for early detection and intervention, promoting dialogue and reconciliation, and implementing measures to address underlying social, economic, and political grievances.

Conflict-Sensitive M&E: An approach to monitoring and evaluating programs to identify and mitigate any potential negative impacts that could exacerbate existing conflicts or lead to the emergence of new conflicts. This approach involves systematically assessing the potential risks and unintended consequences of programs, and ensuring that they are designed and implemented in a way that minimizes the likelihood of contributing to conflict dynamics.

Evaluation: A systematic and objective process of collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data to assess the effectiveness, efficiency, relevance, sustainability, and impact of a program. This process involves using specific criteria and indicators to measure the program's performance and outcomes, and to determine the extent to which the program has achieved its intended objectives and contributed to conflict prevention efforts.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): Specific, quantifiable measures used to evaluate the performance and effectiveness of a program. These measures provide a means to gather and analyze data, allowing for the comparison of actual outcomes with anticipated results over time. KPIs are used to set baselines and targets, enabling a clear assessment of progress and success in achieving a program's objectives.

Monitoring: Continuous and systematic collection, analysis, and interpretation of data and information related to programs. This process involves tracking and documenting the progress, implementation, and outcomes of a program using specific indicators and measures, allowing for ongoing assessment and adjustment as necessary.

M&E Strategies: Plans and approaches used to systematically track, assess, and measure the progress, effectiveness, and impact of a project or intervention. These strategies include the use of Key Performance Indicators, Stakeholder Engagement, and Conflict-sensitive M&E to gather and analyze data, determine the program's alignment with intended goals, identify areas for improvement, and provide information for decision-making purposes.

Performance: Measurable outcomes and results of a program in terms of its effectiveness, efficiency, and impact in achieving its objectives related to the prevention of the emergence or escalation of violent conflicts. These measurable outcomes may include specific targets, indicators, and data that reflect the program's success in mitigating conflict, promoting peace, and addressing the root causes of violence.

Stakeholder Engagement: Active and ongoing involvement of relevant stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation processes of a program. This involvement includes seeking, considering, and incorporating stakeholders' perspectives, experiences, and feedback into the design and implementation of the monitoring and evaluation activities to ensure their input is utilized in shaping and informing the program's success. This may involve regular communication, consultation, and collaboration with stakeholders to ensure their meaningful participation in the monitoring and evaluation processes.

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU:	African Union
AUC:	African Union Commission
APSA:	African Peace and Security Architecture
ASF:	African Standby Force
CEN-SAD:	Community of Sahelo-Saharan States
CEWS:	Continental Early Warning System
CMD:	Conflict Management Directorate
COMESA:	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CP:	Conflict Prevention
DPA:	Department of Political Affairs
EAC:	East Africa Community
EASF:	East Africa Standby Force
ECCAS:	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS:	Economic Community of West African States
EU:	European Union
IGAD:	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
IPSS:	Institute of Peace and Security Studies
KPIs:	Key Performance Indicators
M&E:	Monitoring and Evaluation
NARC:	North Africa Regional Capability
OSPD:	Office of Strategic Planning and Delivery
PAPS:	Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department
PF:	Peace Fund
PoW:	Panel of the Wise

PSD:	Peace and Security Department
RBM:	Results-Based Management
RECs:	Regional Economic Communities
RMs:	Regional Mechanisms
SADC:	Southern African Development Community
SPPMERM:	Strategic Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Resource Mobilization
ToC:	Theory of Change
UMA:	Union du Maghreb Arabe (Arab Maghreb Union)
UN:	United Nations
UNDP:	United Nations Development Program
UNEP:	United Nations Environment Program
UNSC:	United Nations Security Council
WANEP:	West Africa Network for Peacebuilding
WB:	World Bank

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

This study examines the relationship between monitoring and evaluation strategies and the performance of conflict prevention programs, with a specific focus on the African Union (AU) Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) within the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD) under the Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department (PAPS). This chapter briefly introduces the background of the study on monitoring and evaluation practices by looking at the performance of conflict prevention programs. Assessed are the Key Performance indicators used in monitoring and evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and conflict-sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The chapter further highlights the problem statement, the study's objective, and the research question. The significance of the study, scope, delimitation, limitations, and assumptions are also covered in this chapter.

1.2 Background of the Study

The African continent has faced numerous conflicts and political instabilities, leading to significant humanitarian crises and socio-economic repercussions. In response, various organizations and institutions have implemented conflict prevention programs in Africa, but the effectiveness and impact of these programs have often been questioned, highlighting the need for rigorous monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies to assess their performance. Understanding how M&E strategies are designed, implemented, and utilized within the context of conflict prevention programs is essential for identifying areas

of improvement and maximizing the impact of interventions. The African Union (AU) has been actively involved in mitigating conflicts on the continent, with the establishment of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) within the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD) under the Political Affairs, Peace, and Security Department (PAPS). This study aims to investigate the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies and the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, with a specific focus on the AU's CEWS and related initiatives, in order to provide valuable insights and recommendations for enhancing the effectiveness of conflict prevention efforts in the region.

1.2.1 Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs

The performance of conflict prevention programs is a critical factor in determining their effectiveness in mitigating and addressing potential conflicts. Successful programs demonstrate a proactive and strategic approach to identifying and addressing potential sources of conflict, ultimately contributing to broader efforts to build peaceful and resilient societies. Performance, in this context, refers to the accomplishment and fulfillment of operations linked to a set of goals, ensuring high-quality performance and valuable abilities to ensure the successful completion of projects (Al-Nabae *et al.,* 2021).

Conflict prevention programs are essential for maintaining peace and stability, as they address the root causes of conflicts and prevent escalation into violence. The effectiveness of conflict prevention programs relies on robust monitoring and evaluation strategies to assess their impact, identify areas for improvement, and enhance their overall performance. The use of diverse Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) techniques are crucial for ensuring project success (Roba *et al.,* 2022).

Program performance not only aims to improve the success of the program's outcome but also serves as a means of refining and improving an organization's competitiveness. It is also linked with the quality of the end product delivered and involves planning, monitoring, and control. UNDP (2009) further noted that assessing performance requires understanding not only the actual achievements but also the factors that influenced them, both negatively and positively.

1.2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E), when carried out appropriately, can play a significant role in ensuring the success of many projects (Otieno, 2019). An effective monitoring and evaluation practice can provide more appropriate and timely information to support decision-making processes. Research has shown that an effective monitoring and evaluation system greatly benefits policy and program design, better operational decisions, and improved capability to advance development objectives (Ba, 2021).

Kulmie et al. (2023) highlight the significance that governments have accorded to M&E as it ensures the effectiveness of service delivery. He states that M&E increases transparency and promotes democracy, thereby contributing to good governance. He further points out that an increased level of accountability, transparency, and higher-quality service delivery are all facilitated by efficient monitoring and evaluation, which also benefits staff members by building capacity and inspiring them. Effective M&E is also said to have a positive impact on organizations in that it provides information that can support decision-making and improve performance while at the same time supporting the achievement of planned results (UNDP, 2009).

Many international and regional organizations have institutionalized M&E practices in their programs. For the European Union (EU), M&E are core operational and financial management elements. They allow preventive and corrective actions to be undertaken where needed while learning from experience. When it comes to the EU's external actions, established to promote peace, prosperity, and security and ensure the interests of Europeans across the globe, it has established clear monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to ensure full accountability and transparency in implementing its priorities and assessing progress it has made towards the achievement of its objectives (EU, 2021).

Another organization that has institutionalized monitoring and evaluation practices is the African Union. Through its 50 years continental framework, namely, Agenda 2063, which is developed for a shared strategic framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development, the organization has set up a monitoring and evaluation system that serves as a guide in tracking and reporting on the performance and progress of implementation of Agenda 2063 (AU, 2020). The AU had identified that the programs it had created over the years had not yielded the desired results due to a variety of reasons, including the lack of a proper M&E that allows the tracking of actions taken, the identification of gaps, and the proposal of remedial programming, implementation, and financing as such the establishment of an M&E system. The M&E Framework serves specific purposes, which include reinforcing the culture of planning and managing for results and enhancing accountability and shared responsibility among the various participants and stakeholders.

1.2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs

The effective implementation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies is crucial in assessing the performance and impact of programs. By systematically measuring and analyzing the outcomes of these programs, M&E strategies provide valuable insights into their performance, enabling stakeholders to identify areas for improvement, make evidence-based decisions, and optimize resource allocation.

The successful implementation of conflict prevention programs hinges on the effective assessment of key performance indicators, robust stakeholder engagement, and the integration of conflict-sensitive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategies. By examining key performance indicators, stakeholders' active involvement, and the incorporation of conflict-sensitive M&E frameworks, this section aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how these elements influence the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs. Through this exploration, we seek to uncover the intricate interplay between these variables and their collective impact on the outcomes of conflict prevention efforts.

1.2.3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

According to Church and Rogers (2006), indicators comprise of information that signals change. They further indicate that indicators can be quantitative or qualitative variables that signal the change related to the program or intervention. Program implementers can identify progress made towards desired outcomes by using indicators.

Emphasizing the importance of indicators, UNDP (2002) highlights that program managers need to establish baseline data and select performance outcome indicators for them to be able to conduct effective outcome monitoring and Evaluation. It is essential to ensure that baseline data and appropriate performance indicators need to be established at the very start of an intervention.

Organizations use Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to measure the performance and progress of projects or programs toward achieving their goals and objectives. KPIs allow the tracking and monitoring of performance over time, identify areas of improvement, and enable organizations to make data-driven decisions. Additionally, Svetozarovová, Pollák & Zuzana (2016) stated that KPIs provide insights into the progress and success of specific objectives or goals while highlighting that performance indicators are often used to monitor and track performance over time, identify areas for improvement, and make data-driven decisions. Moreover, KPIs allow us to see what we have already accomplished and what is left to achieve set objectives.

Nyonje & Kyalo (2014), as cited in the work of Mercy (2022), suggested measuring indicators, setting targets, identifying performance measurements, and comparing measured results against predefined standards to make up a model for M&E planning. Hence, KPIs play a crucial role in monitoring and evaluation planning. They support the measurement of progress, performance assessment, accountability and transparency, learning, resource optimization, continuous improvements, and evidence-based decision-making. In the context of conflict prevention programs, the current study seeks to assess the extent to which KPIs in M&E planning influence their performance.

1.2.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholders, when directly involved in the monitoring and evaluation process, can contribute to the achievement of program objectives. If involved, stakeholders participation in the assessment of the performance and success of the program. Sulemana & Simon (2018) suggest that increasing the level of participation of key stakeholders in M&E of programs is able to improve transparency and accountability, among others. Karimi *et al.* (2020), while assessing stakeholder engagement in M&E and the performance of literacy in the Numeracy Educational program, identified a strong positive relationship between stakeholder engagement and the performance of literacy and numeracy educational program.

Tengan and Aigbavboa (2017) have also indicated that poor participation of stakeholders in M&E may have contributed to many challenges faced by local government projects in Ghana. Moulid *et al.* (2021) have also identified that stakeholder engagement has an impact on the performance of projects. Therefore, the current study seeks to assess the influence of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs.

1.2.3.3 Conflict-Sensitive M&E

Conflict-sensitive M&E, indicates the way M&E is to be carried out in conflict-prone or affected situations. According to International Alert (2004), conflict-sensitive monitoring assesses the interaction between the context and the project. Conflict-sensitive MJ&E allows an organization to understand the context in which it operates and the

interaction between the context and the intervention. It will enable the organization to minimize negative impacts and increase positive ones. Understanding the project's intended and actual implementation is crucial to carrying out proper conflict-sensitive monitoring and Evaluation. Conflict-sensitive M&E should be included early in the design of interventions. In addition, there must also be flexibility to adapt and modify the original project design during implementation in response to M&E findings. According to Haider (2014), conflict sensitivity also needs to pay attention to the possible unintended impacts of interventions. Among the challenges cited by the author for achieving conflict-sensitive approaches are the inconsistent application of it throughout the project life cycle, capacity issues, and lack of accountability for failure to incorporate conflict-sensitive M&E. Hence, examining the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E and its influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs becomes essential.

Monitoring and evaluation strategies are powerful means that allow an organization to track progress and the performance of its programs or projects. However, the researcher did not find any research that links M&E practices and the performance of conflict prevention programs. To this end, the proposed study will bridge this gap.

1.2.4 Background of the AU Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)

At the heart of the African Union Agenda 2063 is the need to ensure that the mechanisms for conflict prevention, management, and resolutions on the continent are operational. To achieve the set goal, there needs to be a fully functional and operational African Peace and Security Architecture (APSA). The Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) is one of five pillars of the APSA. CEWS was established to facilitate the

anticipation and prevention of conflicts in all AU Member States and to provide timely information on evolving violent conflicts based on specifically developed indicators (Article 12 PSC Protocol).

CEWS seats within the Department of Political Affairs Peace and Security (PAPS) under the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD) and the working methods are streamlined within the work of the Regional Desks for Early Warning and Governance Monitoring and the Situation Room. One of the Aspirations that resonate with the core mandates of PAPS' is Aspiration 4, "peaceful and secure Africa', which focuses on the contribution to the efforts of Member States and Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms (RECs/RMs) towards the prevention, resolution, and management of conflict and disruptive crisis. One of the department's core functions is to support conflict prevention by developing and disseminating legal and policy frameworks on governance, political, peace, and security issues (AUC, 2019).

CEWS focuses on activities and strategies that aim to make countries more resilient to the eruption and escalation of violent conflict and programs that address the sources of conflict. It is geared to respond to the requirements and specific needs of decision-makers. The protocol relating to the establishment of the African Peace and Security Council in its Article 12 states that CEWS also consists of the observation and monitoring units of the Regional Mechanisms.

A monitoring and evaluation system is in place within the African Union through its former Strategic Policy Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Resource Mobilization (SPPMERM) Directorate and the current Office of Strategic Planning and

Delivery (OSPD). The Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department (PAPS) (merger of the former Peace and Security Department (PSD) and Department of Political Affairs (DPA) of the African Union) within which CEWS seats has adopted Results-Based Management (RBM) through all its programs in order to provide a more coordinated approach to improving performance and accountability. Therefore, the proposed study will be undertaken to assess the effect of M&E strategies on performance of conflict prevention programs, taking as a case study the Continental Early Warning System of the African Union.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Many organizations and institutions in Africa are actively involved in implementing conflict prevention programs in response to ongoing regional and internal conflicts that are prevalent in numerous countries. Despite these efforts, there is an urgent need to evaluate the efficacy of these programs and highlight areas for improvement. However, the existing approaches to Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) within many organizations, including the African Union, often prioritize meeting donor requirements over effectively assessing performance (Vianney et al., 2020 & Kabonga, 2019). While M&E is intended to ensure accountability and transparency in achieving organizational priorities, it is frequently underutilized as a mechanism for evaluating progress and enhancing program performance.

Although previous studies have highlighted the positive correlation between M&E strategies and program performance (Hubert & Mulyungi, 2018; Kissi et al., 2019; Ndirangu, 2020; Kinyanjui, 2020; Leonida, 2022; Okumu, 2023; Workneh & Aga, 2023,

), there remains a significant research gap concerning the specific impact of M&E strategies, such as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), stakeholder engagement, and conflict-sensitive M&E, on the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs.

This gap poses a fundamental challenge to accurately evaluating and enhancing the performance of conflict prevention initiatives, thereby hindering organizations' ability to measure impact, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability. Therefore, this research aims to investigate the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategies employed at the African Union Continental Early Warning System during the implementation of conflict prevention programs, with the goal of identifying best practices, gaps in current approaches, and areas where interventions can be optimized.

1.4 Purpose of the Study

This study aims to examine the monitoring and evaluation strategies and performance of conflict prevention programs, taking as a case the African Union Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). By analyzing M&E strategies, specifically Key Performance Indicators, stakeholder engagement, and conflict-sensitive M&E, the study aims to provide a comprehensive description of the surveyed group's characteristics, and opinions which can inform decision-making and further research.

1.5 Objectives of the Study

i. To assess the influence of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System.

ii. To examine the influence of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System.

iii. To establish the influence of integrating conflict-sensitive practice in M&E on the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System.

1.6 Research Questions

The study is intended to answer the following questions:

i. How do Key Performance Indicators influence the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System?

ii. How does stakeholder engagement influence the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System?

iii. How does the integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E influence the performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System?

1.7 Significance of the Study

By examining the monitoring and evaluation strategies and their influence on conflict prevention program performance, the findings of this study can directly benefit the Continental Early Warning System of the African Union responsible for conflict prevention initiatives through the Regional Desks for Early Warning and Governance monitoring as well as the Situation Room.

The study could enable CEWS to learn more about internal monitoring and evaluation procedures, recognize any gaps or difficulties they may be facing, and do further studies in order to take appropriate remedial action to address those issues and enhance their current M&E strategies.

Recommendations that will emerge from this study will give insights to come up with practical M&E strategies while undertaking conflict prevention programs. Apart from the internal benefits, institutions directly working with the CEWS and partner institutions could also benefit from the study. It will allow partners to develop M&E guidelines that can be used to successfully monitor conflict prevention programs on which they partner with the AU. In addition, this study could be the basis for researchers and scholars wishing to do further studies on the subject.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The study is primarily focused on the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) of the African Union Commission located in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. Additionally, the research will require the perspectives and opinions of the Governance and Conflict

Prevention Directorate (GCPD) and the three units and cross-cutting programs within the same Department as CEWS, and the observation and monitoring centers of the 8 RECs and 2 RMs which are part and parcel of CEWS [Community of Sahelo-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East Africa Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), Southern African Development Community (SADC) and Arab Maghreb Union (UMA)] and 2 RMs [North Africa Regional Capability (NARC) and East Africa Standby Force (EASF)] as they have direct linkages in allowing it to deliver on its mandate of facilitating the anticipation and prevention of conflicts.

The study will examine the effect of three monitoring and evaluation strategies (Key Performance Indicators, stakeholder engagement and conflict sensitive M&E) on performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System. The research will encompass the period from the inception of the CEWS program in Addis Ababa to the present day.

1.9 Delimitations of the Study

The delimitation of this study includes the focus on the African Union Continental Early Warning System. The researcher's extensive experience within the organization, spanning over a decade, has influenced the selection of the case. In addition, monitoring and evaluation has been institutionalized at the African Union and it is one of the organizations with conflict prevention as one of its core mandates. To this end, the study assumed that conflict prevention initiatives run by the AU CEWS serve as a solid

foundation for assessing monitoring and evaluation strategies and the performance of conflict prevention programs.

The current study is delimited to assessing the extent to which Key Performance Indicators, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluating conflict-sensitive practices have an influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs.

1.10 Limitations of the Study

As with the majority of studies, the design of the current study is subject to limitations. The study relies heavily on the responses from the Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security staff members, and the Regional Economic Communities/Regional Mechanisms therefore creating the potential for self-report bias. To address this challenge, the researcher undertook several measures which include ensuring anonymity and confidentiality to reduce the likelihood of bias by encouraging more honest and accurate self-reporting, combining self-reported data with other sources of information, requesting clarifications by conducting interviews, use of structured questionnaire that allowed the researcher to maintain consistency and comparability across responses and using personal rapport built over the years to get more honest and accurate information.

1.11 Assumptions of the Study

The study assumed that the respondents would provide reliable information that would enable the researcher meet the study objectives. This is based on the fact that the respondents work directly on conflict prevention programs or support conflict prevention

programs. In addition, since the researcher has worked directly with the majority of the respondents over a decade, it is assumed that getting responses and clarifications from respondents in time to undertake this research would be easier.

1.12 Theoretical Framework

The study was informed by two theories which are Theory of Change and Stakeholder theory. The theories anchor the variables of the study and share insights into Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E, M&E stakeholder engagement and conflict-sensitivity M&E, which can have an effect on the performance of conflict prevention programs. The following sections will elaborate on each of the theories.

1.12.1 Theory of Change (ToC)

The Theory of Change (ToC) is a model that describes the relationships between a program and its intended results that are described in the research question. This theory was first popularized by Carol Weiss in 1995, so it could serve to describe a number of assumptions, one of which is to explain the connection between program activities and outcomes. According to Claude & Didace (2020), ToC is a valuable tool that enables the effective tracking of inputs, outputs, and outcomes of a project. Theory of Change is a framework for mapping out the causal relationships that lead to the expected results or impact from interventions or actions. Theory of Change begins by clearly defining the long-term outcomes or impact that a program aims to achieve, and also requires organizations to identify and articulate assumptions about the change needed as well as consider the factors that influence the intervention. Organizations can use the Theory of Change to understand and describe how their interventions contribute to the desired

outcomes. According to Harris *et al*. (2014), the fundamental concept of the Theory of Change is the necessity to ensure that the aims of a specific intervention, such as projects or programs, are met. According to Vogel (2012), TOC has been used to evaluate development projects and programs. The Theory has also allowed an organization to understand on how change happens in a particular context. The theory of change is linked to the current proposed research undertaking in that it informs proper monitoring and evaluation-planning and the proper execution of the developed plans.

Theory of Change in the context of the current study is linked to the fact that is can be used to identify key inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes, and impacts of programs which can then be used to develop a set of Key Performance Indictors to measure the performance of conflict prevention programs.

1.12.2 Stakeholder Theory

Stakeholder theory was first published by R. Edward Freeman in the California Management Review in 1983. The theory notes that it is instrumental to involve stakeholders that would in turn allow decision-making processes to be more inclusive and ensure that stakeholders feel ownership of the program, which is believed to lead to a more sustainable outcome (Freeman, 1983). The core tenet of much of the stakeholder theory literature states that focusing on stakeholders by treating them well and managing their interests will allow an organization to have good performance (Harrison & Wicks, 2013).

The very essence of stakeholder theory is essentially building relationships and creating value for all. All stakeholders are equally important to an organization, and any trade-off ought to be prevented. In his 2010 work, Freeman argued that “to successfully

create, trade, and sustain value, a business must engage its stakeholders." On their part, Sarikaya and Özdemir (2009) state that successful business management is based on the relationships and the working methods with stakeholders. Furthermore, Stocker *et al*. (2020) state that creating comprehensive strategies that enable stakeholder involvement and collaboration is vital to improving relationships with stakeholders.

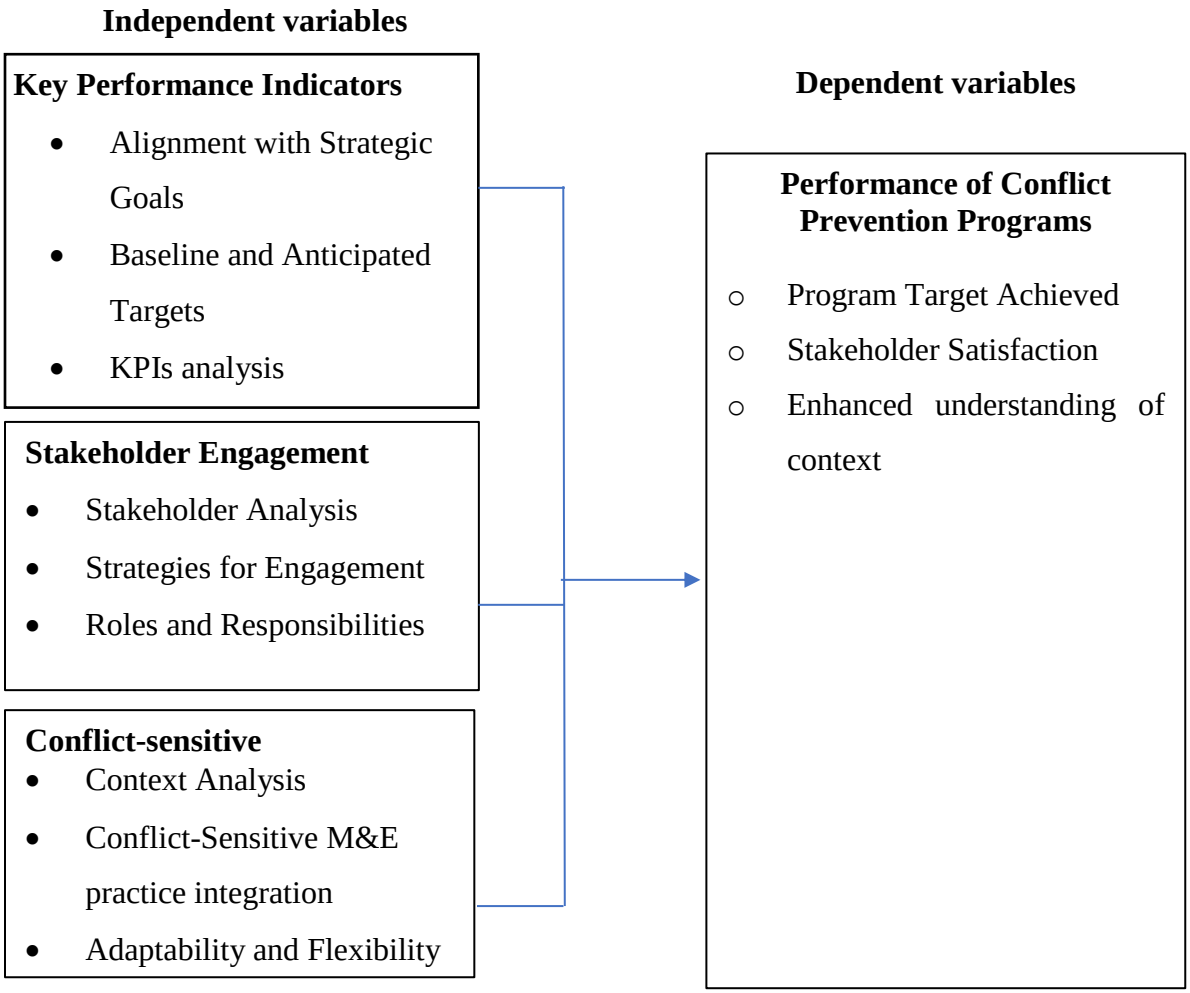
Stakeholder Theory provides the framework for understanding, engaging, and collaborating with stakeholders. In the current study, Stakeholder Theory emphasizes the identification and engagement of relevant stakeholders who are impacted by or can impact conflict prevention programs. To this end, the Logical Framework (LogFrame) model will be used, as it can help assess the effect of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs.

1.13 Conceptual Framework

The figure below explains the dependent and independent variables the study will examine within the context of monitoring and evaluation strategies. The study will focus mainly on M&E stakeholder engagement, Key Performance Indicators, and conflict-sensitive M&E.

Dependent variable: Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs

Independent variables: Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies



Source: Author (2024)

Figure 1:Conceptual Framework

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter offers a comprehensive review of the existing literature concerning the effect of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) strategies and program performance. It aims to provide a condensed overview of the existing discourse, prominent authors, prevalent theories and hypotheses, research inquiries, and pertinent methodologies. By primarily focusing on empirical studies, the review seeks to offer an in-depth comprehension of the research context and identify the gaps that the thesis endeavors to address.

2.1.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs in

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are vital in the M&E process, allowing organizations to monitor their progress toward attaining set objectives. They help organizations shape and track growth with respect to their goals. KPIs as performance measurements are important since they can provide information on the extent to which strategic objectives are linked to an organization in achieving desired performance (Setiawan *et al*., 2020).

Midor et al. (2020) also indicated that KPIs function as a managerial control tool to highlight inefficiencies, ensure efficient use of resources and facilitate decision-making in order to attain the desired goal. They further asserted that the selection of KPIs should be linked to strategic objective for good results. KPIs are also said to be crucial for organizing

and regulating management choices. KPIs help in defining and measuring project golas that are essential for success (Sinoimeri et al., 2023).

According to Atikno et al., (2021), the development of indicators used in assessments must be valid and reliable. The authors further state that if these conditions are not met the results obtained from the assessment by the use of the KPIs are unusable and that the information obtained might be misleading. According to them, there are different kinds of KPIs for different sectors and so there is need to identify which one is related to ones needs. This notion was substantiated by Asih et al., (2020) who stated that KPIs improve performance. However, it is important to highlight that for KPIs to be effective, must be based on good knowledge of the program to be implemented and the results must be used to improve performance (Atikno *et al*., 2021).

Although companies tend to have a large number of indicators, it is recommended that the number of KPIs be smaller. KPIs are the few main indicators that best reflect key processes of activities (Klimaitienė *et al.*, 2020). KPIs represent a set of measures focusing on key aspects of project performance, looking at current and future successes. Parmenter (2010), in his book titled "Key Performance Indicators: Developing, Implementing and Using Winning KPIs" asserts that partnership with various stakeholders directly concerned with the project or program, empowerment of the team members, particularly those directly involved in the projects, measuring and reporting only on what matters, and linkage of one or more of the organization's strategic objectives are the founding stones for guiding the development and use of KPIs. This was supported by Gunasekaran and Kobu (2007), who noted there is a need for employees to understand the reason why they are using measures

and also know why they are required to use them as they might feel threatened by the measures, which could result in the manipulation of data where only efforts instead of results are measured.

An organization operating a well-planned monitoring and evaluation system for its programs will likely realize maximum performance. KPIs are vital in this regard as they provide a measurable and objective way to assess project performance. It is important to note that great emphasis has to be placed on setting a baseline that represents the starting point of performance against which progress can be measured and a target that will represent the desired level of performance or the goal that an organization aims to achieve. In the context of planning, KPIs are essential for setting measurable targets that align with a project's strategic objective. This is supported by Jacqueline & Ogbe (2022), in their study of M&E practices and the project performance of the Twigire Muhinzi project at Rulindo district, Rwanda, who adopted a case study to uncover the relationship between the M&E planning process and beneficiary satisfaction. From a population of 591 stakeholders of the Twigire Muhinzi project in Rulindo District, the study sample size of 240 respondents were part of the study. The study's findings show a strong correlation of 0.802, a fairly significant association between the M&E planning process and satisfying beneficiaries, but only explains 64.3%.

Knowledge of a project's Critical Success Factors (CSFs) and team consultations are cited as essential factors in any KPIs. Inadequate or inappropriate selection of KPIs, lack of clarity in defining them, failure to consider external factors, lack of reliable data, and misalignment with organizational strategic objectives are cited as reasons why KPIs

may fail to accurately assess the performance of projects or programs. This notion is affirmed by Klimaitienė *et al.* (2020). Using a theoretical approach, the author studied the application of KPIs to improve the efficiency of monitoring the organization's activities and asserts that to obtain maximum benefits from KPIs, they have to be achievable, timely, relevant, and measurable. He further states that selecting the optimal number of indicators is critical and asserts that the associated cost of tracking a single indicator should not exceed the benefit of the process.

Studies suggest that assessing the extent to which Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E planning influence programs has never been easy. Njiru *et al.* (2023) in the work of analyzing M&E practices on the performance of non-governmental organizations' projects in Kiambu County, Kenya, highlighted that the M&E plan contains the fundamental assumptions on which M&E goals are based, indicating that monitoring and evaluation planning considers all requirements for early detection of monitoring and evaluation progress. The study's findings indicated a very strong connection between monitoring and evaluation planning practices and non-governmental organization's project performance.

In this case, Sinoimeri *et al.* (2023), in their study of KPIs implementation in supply chain management, assert that for KPIs to positively influence performance, the following are needed: clarity of purpose, having fewer and more meaningful measures and creating wider ownership.

Parmenter in his 2010 book and his guide to implementing KPIs (2023) also states that many organizations have found that KPIs have made little or no difference to their

performance. The author attributed this to the fact that these organizations did not establish a sound environment where KPs could operate and develop. He further cites the processes required, some of which are the commitment of the senior management team, the establishment of a "winning KPI" project team, marketing KPI systems to all employees, selecting KPIs, and developing reporting frameworks.

Reviewing literature suggests a limited number of articles deal with Key Performance Indicators in M&E planning and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs. However, various organizations have widely practiced the use of KPIs to assess the performance of their programs or projects. Therefore, there is a need to determine the extent to which KPIs in M&E planning influence conflict prevention programs.

2.1.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa

Research indicates that stakeholder engagement in M&E plays a crucial role in the success of any project or program. Including pertinent stakeholders in the M&E process is necessary to ensure that their opinions, requirements, and expectations are considered, and it guarantees that all stakeholders understand the objective and purpose of the evaluation process. Stakeholders can include a wide range of individuals, groups, and organizations who have an interest in the program and expectations of good outcomes (Karimi, 2020). Leonida (2022) also states that involving stakeholders in the selection of M&E indicators improves the quality of M&E data, which in turn improves performance.

Involving stakeholders in M&E fosters partnership and collaboration. It enables stakeholders to cooperate in defining and achieving shared objectives, sharing

responsibilities, and developing trust. Research indicates that this can lead to better outcomes. Leonida (2022), in a study titled "Monitoring and Evaluation and Performance of Environmental Projects in Kenya: A Case of a Selected Project at the Institute for Law and Environmental Governance," noted that stakeholder participation in M&E is essential if one wants a positive project performance. The author further explains that in order for this to be true, the participation levels need to be adequate. This was affirmed by Kinyanjui (2020) in his work looking at M&E practices and Governance in Hope Worldwide Kenya, in which he indicated that if stakeholders are adequately involved in the M&E design phase, preparation of timetables and work plans, it can have a positive influence on the performance of projects. Bwogen and Murigi (2023), on their part, presented evidence that stakeholder involvement significantly affects performance while undertaking a study on the effect of stakeholder involvement on the performance of Bomet Country Government, Kenya, while involving all 384 participants of the country government.

While the involvement of all stakeholders is said to positively impact the performance of projects, it has also been found that it could face barriers. This has been highlighted in the work of Zarewa (2019). Karimi *et al*. (2020), on their part, noted that the collaboration of stakeholders in setting objectives, developing M&E plans, and implementing changes influences the performance of projects. The authors, while looking at literacy and numeracy education programs in public primary schools in Nairobi County, Kenya, found that a strong positive relationship exists between stakeholder engagement and performance and went further to look at the causal relationship between the two. Further analysis using regression was done, and the results indicated that stakeholder engagement strongly influences performance, but it only explained 48% of the variations.

In ensuring project success, stakeholder identification plays a crucial role in understanding who has an interest or influence in a project. This notion is supported by Karimi *et al*. (2020) and Okumu (2023), who indicated that performance highly depends on the engagement of stakeholders, in which the identification of stakeholders and the level of stakeholder involvement and participation play a crucial role. In addition, clearly defined roles and responsibilities are essential in assessing stakeholder engagement when looking at the performance of projects. It is said to also foster a sense of ownership and commitment, leading to better performance of projects or programs. However, failure to ensure that stakeholders are satisfied with their role in M&E could have different outcomes.

A number of strategies are cited by scholars as being beneficial in engaging stakeholders in M&E process while assessing the performance of projects. Some of these strategies include involving stakeholders in M&E from the beginning, having a clear communication strategy to help ensure that stakeholders have a say in how M&E activities are undertaken, and also providing insight into how they can contribute to the success of the project; fostering collaboration and cooperation so that stakeholders feel comfortable in sharing their perspectives, provision of training and capacity building to stakeholder with the aim of enhancing their understanding of M&E concepts and techniques, and establishment of a feedback mechanisms to gather stakeholders feedback (Mitchell *et al.*, 2020; Karimi, 2020).

Simon et al. (2021), in their study of the influence of stakeholder's participation in M&E process on the implementation of HIV & AIDS projects in Kenya, established that

stakeholders play a critical role in M&E process and there is as such a need to include all stakeholders in the M&E process.

Mugo et al. (2015), in their study of M&E of development projects and economic growth in Kenya, established that too much stakeholders' involvement could lead to undue influence on M&E functions thus reducing the likelihood of M&E system implementation. This was also supported by Micah and Luketero (2017), in their work assessing the influence of M&E systems on performance of Non-Governmental projects in Kenya, who found that too much stakeholder involvement in M&E negatively influenced projects' performance in the long run. On the other hand, Tengan and Aigbavboa (2017) discovered that poor participation of stakeholders in M&E of local government project delivery may be a reason for the poor performance of the project in their research assessing the level of stakeholder engagement and participation in M&E of construction projects in Ghana. The current study, therefore, closes the knowledge gap and investigates the extent of stakeholder engagement in M&E planning and its impact on conflict prevention programs' performance.

2.1.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs in Africa

According to OECD (2012), most programs do not take into consideration conflict sensitivity and are not effectively adapted to the context in which they operate. However, it indicates that conflict sensitivity is now synonymous with being effective and specifies that there is a need to evaluate conflict sensitivity in conjunction with the assessment of other criteria. On specific criteria is the assessment of conflict-sensitive approach which

focuses on assessing and monitoring the potential impacts of a program on conflict dynamics. Conflict-sensitive M&E, while focusing on assessing the intended and actual outputs of a given project like traditional M&E, focuses on the understanding of the context in which the project is being implemented and measures the interaction between the project and the context with the intention of avoiding negative impacts and promoting positive ones. According to Bruch *et al.* (2023), a good plan that is undertaken in an inclusive, participatory, and conflict-sensitive way is essential for effective and sustainable interventions.

One method stated as a measure of understanding the context in which projects are to be undertaken is conflict analysis. The UN (2022) supports this notion in a publication on conflict sensitivity, peacebuilding, and sustaining peace, which indicated that monitoring peace and conflict dynamics is key to ensuring that the program does "no harm" and positively impacts outcomes throughout its lifecycle. Therefore, thorough conflict analysis should be done prior to any formulation of the project strategy.

An organization undertaking a conflict-sensitive M&E will likely realize maximum program performance. This is highlighted by Ndirangu (2020) in the study on the influence of M&E on conflict resolution intervention, a case of Turkana County, Lodwarn Town. One of the study's specific objectives was to examine conflict sensitivity in conflict resolution intervention. The study found that conflict sensitivity, peace-building capability, and community participation played an important role in conflict resolution and recommended that participatory conflict analysis be used in all stages of the projects in order to ensure positive performance. Understanding the context, including the root causes,

dynamics, and actors involved, helps identify potential risks and opportunities and informs the design of an appropriate M&E.

In order to undertake a conflict-sensitive M&E, there is a need to develop a set of indicators that will allow one to measure the extent to which the program is achieving the intended outcome (USAID, 2004). However, there should be room for flexibility when it comes to indicators and impact measurement, as the context under which programs are to be undertaken might have changed. Flexibility is also required in terms of activity timing in order to respond to conflict dynamics. Scholars state that indicators in such cases must focus on social cohesion, power dynamics, and local perceptions of change.

2.2 Summary and Research

According to the literature reviewed, monitoring and Evaluation strategies influence project or program performance. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E planning, M&E stakeholder engagement, and M&E conflict-sensitivity are some of the strategies emphasized by various journals and scholarly work as influencing factors that affect program performance. The empirical review referred to work on Health, development programs, NGOs, Agriculture, Contractors, Environment, Literacy and Numeracy, and economic growth projects from Kenya, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Malawi, Rwanda, Ghana, and Ethiopia.

The researcher was unable to find studies that are directly linked to the M&E strategies and performance of conflict prevention programs. Therefore, the current work tries to address the knowledge gap while also adding to the body of references.

2.3 Research Gaps

Table 2. 1: Research Gap

Variable	Literature Source	Title	Methodologies	Findings	Knowledge gap
KPIs	Hubert & Mulyungi (2018)	Influence of Monitoring And Evaluation Planning On Project Performance In Rwanda: A Case Of Selected Non-Governmental Organizations In Gasabo District	Descriptive survey design, sample size of 106 respondents. Use of Karl Pearon's coefficient of correlation to analyze data	There is a positive significant correlation of 0.8 between M&E Planning and Project Performance, as well as the importance of KPIs as performance measurements	Effect of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) on the performance of conflict prevention programs
Stakeholder engagement	Leonida, 2022;	M&E and Performance of Environmental projects in Kenya: A Case of a selected project at the institute for Law and Environmental Governance	Descriptive survey design. Target population of 40. Use of descriptive statistics using SPSS	Stakeholder participation in M&E is essential for positive project outcomes to be realized	Examination of stakeholder engagement and its effect on the performance of conflict prevention programs
	Hauya, 2023 &	M&E practices on Performance of Government Agricultural Affordable inputs (AIP) program in Lilongwe District, Malawi	Quantitative research methodology. Target population 60. Descriptive data analyses technique used	Stakeholder engagement influence performance of Government AIP & Participation of all necessary stakeholders in stakeholder analysis	

				positively influenced the performance of AIP	
Conflict-sensitive M&E	Ndirangu, 2020	Influence of Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms on Conflict Resolution Intervention: Case of Turkana Country, Lodwar Town	Descriptive research design was employed. Sample size of 109. Study used non-probability sampling technique	Linkages between increased conflict sensitivity and more effective peacebuilding programming	Relation between conflict-sensitive practice and performance of conflict prevention programs

Source: Researcher (2024)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This section provides a review of the research methods used in the study. The research design adopted, the target population, the sampling method used, the sample size of the study, the data collection instrument, the mechanisms for pilot testing, reliability, and validity checks adopted, and lastly, the data analysis methodology adopted will be discussed.

3.2 Research Design

Greener (2008) states, "A research design is a grand plan of approach to a research topic." The current study aims to explore the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. This study will utilize a descriptive survey design to depict the current status and prevailing conditions of the variables under examination. To gather quantitative data, structured questionnaires with closed-ended questions are employed to elicit specific responses related to the measured variables. The findings of the descriptive survey are presented using tables and figures. It is important to note that the descriptive design does not seek to establish causal relationships between variables but rather to provide an accurate and comprehensive representation of the subject of study (Saunders *et al*., 2012). Therefore, the use of descriptive survey design in this study will enable an assessment of the effect of M&E strategies on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, by looking at the African Union Continental Early Warning System.

3.3 Research Site

The research is carried out in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia which is the seat of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS) which is part of the African Union Commission. CEWS is part of the Political Affairs and Peace and Security Department (PAPS) of the AU and is mandated to undertake conflict prevention programs. The site choice was based on the fact that stakeholders are located in Addis Ababa, except those from the Regional Economic Communities and Regional Mechanisms. The study location also gave the researcher greater access to program records, data, and reports utilized to support the research.

3.4 Target Population

According to Alvi (2016), "target population refers to all the members who meet the particular criterion specified for a research investigation." The target population of the current study consists of staff members of the Continental Early Warning System (CEWS), which includes regional desks and situation room staff, Conflict Management directorate (CMD) project management team members, staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs within the CMD and staff from the Governance and Conflict Prevention Directorate (GCPD) of the African Union Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department (PAPS). It also includes staff members of the observation and monitoring units of the Regional Early Warning Systems (RECs)/ Regional Mechanisms (RMs) who are directly involved in the implementation of conflict prevention programs designed by CEWS.

Table 3. 1: Target Population

Description of Responders	Population	Ratio
CEWS	26	0.21
CMD Project Management Team	6	0.05
Staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs of the CMD	43	0.34
Staff from GCPD	10	0.08
Staff of the observation and monitoring units of the RECs/RMs	40	0.32
Total	**125**	**1**

3.5 Study Sample

This section discusses the study's population size and sampling procedures. It also provides a rationale for the selected sampling procedure and an explanation of the number of participants involved in the study.

3.5.1 Sampling Procedure

In this study, a non-probability quota sampling technique was employed due to the expedited and cost-effective nature of obtaining responses. Respondents were selected based on their knowledge and experience with regard to the implementation of conflict prevention programs by CEWS. As a result, non-probability quota sampling was deemed the most suitable option for obtaining high-quality data, potentially equivalent to or better than that obtained through probability sampling.

3.5.2 Study Sample Size

The sample size to be selected needed to be representative of the given population. To this end, the current research has used the small sampling technique as referenced in the work of Krejcie & Morgan (1970).

The Small Sample Techniques formula used by Krejcie & Morgan to develop their table used in the current research to obtain the sample size is given below.

$$s = X^2NP(1-P) \div d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)$$

Where: s = required sample size

X^2= 1.96^2= 3.841 (the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (95% confidence level)

N = Population size

P = the population proportion (assumed to be .50 since this would provide the maximum sample size)

d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (.05)

Using the Krejcie & Morgan table, the researcher was able to determine the sample size of the study as being 95.

Table 3. 2: Sample Size

Description of Responders	**Population**	**Sample Size**
CEWS	26	20
CMD Project Management Team	6	5
Staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs of the CMD	43	33
Staff from GCPD	10	8
Staff of the observation and monitoring units of the RECs/RMs	40	29
Total	**125**	**95**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

3.6 Data Collection

The following section will outline the methods and procedures used to gather the necessary information to undertake the current research, the purpose being to ensure transparency, reliability, and validity of the research findings.

3.6.1 Data Collection Instruments

Data for the current research has been collected by the use of structured questionnaires. Questionnaire is cited as one of the main methods of collecting quantitative primary data (Roopa & Menta, 2012). Structured questionnaires are said to be simple to administer and relatively inexpensive to analyze (Kothari, 2004). The current study has made use of structured questionnaire in order to collect first-hand information from respondents.

3.6.2 Pilot Testing of Research Instruments

According to Kothari (2004), there is a need to do a pilot test of questionnaire so that it can bring light on the weaknesses of the questionnaires as well as the technique employed. Hence, a Pilot test has been implemented to test the accuracy of the questions used, to remove duplicate questions that lead to the same responses, and to see if the questions will allow the researcher to acquire data needed to conduct the research. The pilot testing is also essential for assessing the reliability of the instruments in identifying any inconsistencies or ambiguities as well as the validity by assessing whether the

instrument is accurately capturing the intended information and whether the questions align with the research objectives.

For the pilot test, the researcher engaged staff of the Institute for Peace and Security Studies (IPSS), based at Addis Ababa University in Ethiopia, a premier institution that focuses on peace, security, and governance in Africa, and staff members of the West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP), based in Accra, Ghana, who work on the ground to prevent and resolve conflicts in the West Africa Region. By conducting the pilot test, the researcher was able to obtain constructive feedback on the research instrument.

The pilot test was undertaken by taking 9 individuals comprising 10% of the study sample. The questionnaire was administered to the pilot sample, and their feedback was collected and analysed. Subsequently, the questionnaires were revised based on the feedback received. As significant changes have not been made, the pilot test was not repeated. Once satisfied with the clarity and effectiveness of the revised questionnaire, the final questionnaire was administered to the respondents.

3.6.3 Instrument Reliability

Reliability is a measure that indicates the stability and consistency in which the tool utilized measures the concepts under study (Kothari, 2004). Reliability refers to the stability and consistency of the measurement tool used throughout time. To test the reliability of the measure used in the current research, intending to correct inconsistencies, the researcher has made use of Cronbach's alpha (Saunders *et al*., 2007) to calculate internal consistency and reliability. To obtain the data for calculating Cronbach's alpha, responses have been collected to a set of questions from a sample of participants. Then the

responses were used to calculate the alpha coefficient. The result of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the current study was 0.801 which is considered fairly high and commonly accepted as it is above the threshold of 0.70. This shows that the scale used is reliable in measuring the construct of interest. This level of internal consistency suggests that the items or variables in the scale are reasonably interrelated and consistent in measuring the underlying construct.

3.6.4 Instrument Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a test measures what we actually wish to measure (Kothari, 2004). To this end, the researcher measured the degree to which the measurement offers sufficient coverage of the studied subject. For this, the researcher used experts who assessed the degree to which the measurement satisfied the requirements. The instrument has also been reviewed in terms of its relevance, freedom from bias, reliability, and availability of the information required. The feedback obtained from the pilot testing is believed to have enhanced the validity of the study.

3.6.5 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher has acquired approval from the Conflict Management Directorate of the African Union Commission and sought approval from the School of Business, Monitoring, and Evaluation program to conduct the study. Once approvals have been obtained, data was collected by the use of questionnaires. The questionnaires were delivered in two methods. First is the Drop-Off and Pick-Up (DOPU) method for those respondents the researcher can access so as to reduce potential nonresponse rate (Allred &

Ross-Davis, 2011). The second is the mailed survey in order to reach respondents from the RECs/RMs spread across the African continent. The researcher has employed measures like personalizing emails and sending follow-up reminders in order to avoid a low response rate for the mailed surveys.

3.7 Data Analysis

Once the data required for the current study has been collected, the researcher cleaned the data and keyed it into Excel. The data from Excel was exported into the SPSS statistical software version 29, to draw results, that's frequencies and percentages to achieve comparative analysis and data visualization.

3.8 Legal and Ethical Considerations

In undertaking the study, the researcher required approval from the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD), and all participants were asked for their consent prior to their involvement in the study. Additionally, the researcher has ensured that all the collected data are kept confidential. The study also adhered to the principles of impartiality and fairness in handling respondents and reporting findings.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

The chapter comprehensively examines the collected data to address the research questions and objectives. The first section presents the response rate followed by the characteristics of the respondents and the presentations and analysis of the study findings in relation to the three objectives that were set. This chapter serves as a critical component of the research process, offering a detailed exploration of the data and highlighting key findings that support the research hypothesis.

4.2 Characteristics of the Respondents

The researcher gathered data on the characteristics of the respondents through the questionnaire distributed. The demographic information included gender, age, institution they belong to, the directorate, program, or unit they work in, and the number of years of experience. The following sections capture the corresponding responses, which are presented in a table format.

4.2.1 Population Response Rate

In the present study, the sample size consisted of 95 respondents who were staff members of the African Union, Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department and the RECs/RMs. The questionnaire was distributed to respondents via mail and hand deliveries.

Upon receiving the completed questionnaires, a review and data-cleaning process was conducted.

After assessing the completeness, consistency, and legibility of the responses, 86 out of 95 (90.53%) were deemed suitable for further analysis. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the response rates. The study also showed an almost equal representation of males and females, with 46.5% being male and 53.5% female. This highlights nearly equal involvement from both genders, eliminating the potential for biased results favoring one gender over the other.

Table 4. 1: Response Rate

Description of Responders	**Target**	**f (%)**	**Responders Gender**		**Non-Response & Incomplete responses f(%)**
			M (f)	**F (f)**	
• CEWS	20	20 (100)	7	13	0 (0)
• CMD Project Management Team	5	5 (100)	3	2	0 (0)
• Staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs of the CMD	33	30 (90.9)	14	16	3 (9.1)
• Staff from GCPD	8	5 (62.5)	4	1	3 (37.5)
• Staff of the observation and monitoring units of the RECs/RMs	29	26 (89.65)	12	14	3 (10.35)
Total	**95**	**86 (90.53)**	**40 (46.5%)**	**46 (53.5 %)**	**9 (9.47)**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

4.2.2 Age of Respondents

The age of the respondents was examined to primarily identify the age groups represented in the study. The analysis revealed that 10 respondents (11.6%) fell within the 25-34 age bracket, 41 (47.7%) were aged 35-44, 31 (36 %) were in the 45-54 age group, and 4(4.7%) were 55 years and older. The target population predominantly comprised a younger to middle-aged demographic, with a notable prevalence of individuals aged 35 to 44 followed by those in the range of 45 to 54 and a smaller representation of those aged 55 and above. Table 4.3 below presents the findings.

Table 4. 2: Age Group

Age Group of Respondents	Responders					f	%	Cumulative Percentage
	CEWS	PMT	CMD	GCPD	RECs/ RMs			
25-34	1	1	0	2	6	10	11.6	11.6
35-44	5	2	22	2	10	41	47.7	59.3
45-54	14	2	7	0	8	31	36	95.3
55 & above	0	0	1	1	2	4	4.7	100
Total						**86**	**100**	

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

PMT: CMD Project Management Team
CMD: Staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs of the CMD
GCP: Staff from GCPD
RECs/RMs: Staff of the observation and monitoring units of the RECs/RMs

4.2.3 Years of Experience of Respondents

The respondents were asked to indicate their experience in conflict prevention. This assessed their ability to offer valuable information for thorough analysis. The results revealed that 32 individuals (37.3%) have more than 15 years of experience, and 23 (26.7%) have 10 to 14 years of experience in conflict prevention, with a greater proportion

of respondents (88.4%) having more than 5 years of experience. The results show that the respondents are better equipped to address the research inquiries. The responses are outlined in Table 4.6.

Table 4. 3: Years of Experience

Age Group of Respondents	Responders					f	%	Cumulative Percentage
	CEWS	PMT	CMD	GCPD	RECs/ RMs			
15 years and above	10	4	12	1	5	32	37.3	37.3
10 14 years	8	0	4	2	9	23	26.7	64
5 -9 years	2	0	12	1	6	21	24.4	88.4
Less than 5 years	0	1	2	1	6	10	11.6	100
Total						**86**	**100**	

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

PMT: CMD Project Management Team
CMD: Staff from the three units and cross-cutting programs of the CMD
GCP: Staff from GCPD
RECs/RMs: Staff of the observation and monitoring units of the RECs/RMs

4.3 Presentation of Research Analysis, Findings and Interpretation

The research investigated the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa while looking at the African Union Continental Early Warning System (CEWS). More specifically, the study aimed to assess how key performance indicators, stakeholder engagement, and conflict-sensitive M&E in monitoring and evaluation practices affect the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Participants were asked to evaluate the extent of this impact and to express their

agreement or disagreement using a Likert scale for specific questions. A thorough examination of the responses is presented in the subsequent sections.

4.3.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

Respondents were asked to indicate how important they think Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E are for assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs. The result indicates that a great majority of 56 individuals (65.1%) stated that KPIs are very important, while 30 (34.9%) indicated that they think they are important. None of the respondents believed that KPIs are not important. Table 4.7 below presents the findings.

Table 4. 4: Importance of KPIs

Description	f	(%)
Important	30	34.9
Very Important	56	65.1
Total	**86**	**100**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

In order to measure the extent Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. This was done using a numerical scale ranging from one to five, where 1 signified Strongly Disagree, 2 indicated Disagree, 3 denoted Neutral, 4 represented Agree, and 5 stood for Strongly Agree. The

study findings are presented in Table 4.8, showing frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Table 4. 5: Analysis of KPIs influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs

Statement	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Agree f (%)	Strongly Agree f (%)	Mean f (%)	STD f (%)
A1. Identified KPIs are aligned with the conflict prevention program strategic goals	0 (0)	6 (7)	15 (17.4)	39 (45.3)	26 (30.2)	3.99	0.874
A2. KPIs detailed analysis is undertaken before engaging in conflict prevention programs	4 (4.7)	16 (18.6)	19 (22.1)	28 (32.6)	19 (22.1)	3.49	1.166
A3. KPIs have been communicated to all stakeholders involved in the conflict prevention program	2 (2.3)	21(24.4)	22 (25.6)	25 (29.1)	16 (18.6)	3.37	1.117
A4. KPI baseline and anticipated target were set in advance as they provide a basis for measuring progress and demonstrating the impact of the program	2 (2.3)	7 (8.1)	17 (19.8)	38 (44.2)	22 (25.6)	3.83	0.984
Composite Mean and STD						**3.67**	**1.022**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

Statement (A1) Identified KPIs are aligned with the conflict prevention program's strategic goals. According to the study results, the majority of respondents 39 (45.3%) agree with the statement and 26 (30.2%) strongly agree. The mean rating of this item is 3.99 and a standard deviation of 0.874 which is higher than the composite mean 3.67 and

standard deviation 1.022. This implies that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (A2) KPIs detailed analysis is undertaken before engaging in conflict prevention programs. A total of 28 (32.6%) respondents agreed with this statement. On the other hand, 19 (22.1%) strongly agreed and the same number of people were neutral. The item had a mean of 3.49 and a standard deviation of 1.166 which is slightly lower than the composite mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.022 implying that the statement has a slightly lower impact on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (A3) KPIs have been communicated to all stakeholders involved in the conflict prevention program. The study found that 25 (29.1%) agreed with the statement while 22 (25.6%) remained neutral. The item had a mean of 3.37 and a standard deviation of 1.117 which is lower than the composite mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.022, implying that the statement does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (A4) KPI baseline and anticipated target were set in advance as they provide a basis for measuring progress and demonstrating the impact of the program. A large number of respondents 38 (44.2%) agreed with the statement, and 22 (25.6%) strongly agreed. This item had a mean of 3.83 and standard deviation 0.984 which is higher than the composite mean of 3.67 and standard deviation of 1.022 implying that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

4.3.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

Respondents were requested to highlight if in their opinion the importance of stakeholder engagement in M&E is for assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Most respondents 66 (76.7%) returned that it was very important while the remaining found it important. None of the respondents disagreed with the statement. Table 4.9 highlights the responses.

Table 4. 6: Importance of Stakeholder Engagement

Description	**f**	**(%)**
Important	20	23.3
Very Important	66	76.7
Total	**86**	**100**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

To measure the extent stakeholder engagement influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, respondents were requested to express their level of agreement or disagreement with various statements. This was done using a numerical scale ranging from one to five, where 1 indicated Strongly Disagree, 2 denoted Disagree, 3 represented Neutral, 4 signified Agree, and 5 stood for Strongly Agree.

Table 4. 7: Analysis of the influence of stakeholder engagement on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa

Statement	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Agree f (%)	Strongly Agree f (%)	Mean f (%)	STD f (%)
B1. Prior to undertaking conflict prevention programs, detailed stakeholder analysis in M&E was conducted of all internal and external stakeholders	3 (3.5)	14 (16.3)	14 (16.3)	33 (38.4)	22 (25.6)	3.66	1.134
B2. Detailed strategies of the engagement of stakeholders in M&E were developed in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders	0 (0)	19 (22.1)	37 (43.0)	23 (26.7)	7 (8.1)	3.21	0.883
B3. Stakeholder engagement in M&E with clearly defined roles and responsibilities leads to increased performance of conflict prevention programs	0 (0)	5 (5.8)	16 (18.6)	39 (45.3)	26 (30.2)	4.0	0.854
Composite Mean and STD						**3.62**	**0.957**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

Statement (B1) detailed strategies for the engagement of stakeholders in M&E were developed in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders. 37 (43%) were neutral and 23 (26.7%) agreed with this statement. This item had a mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.883, which is lower than the composite mean of 3.62 and a standard deviation of 0.957. This implies that the statement does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (B2) prior to undertaking conflict prevention programs, a detailed stakeholder analysis in M&E was conducted of all internal and external stakeholders. The study results show that 33 (38.4%) agreed with the statement and 22 (25.6%) strongly agreed with the statement. The item had a mean of 3.66 and a standard deviation of 1.134, which is higher than the composite mean of 3.64 and a standard deviation of 0.957. This implies that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (B3) stakeholder engagement in M&E with clearly defined roles and responsibilities leads to increased performance of conflict prevention programs. 39 (45.3%) agreed with this statement, while 26 (30.2%) strongly agreed, and 16 (18.6%) remained neutral. This item had a mean of 4 and a standard deviation of 0.854, which is higher than the composite mean of 3.64 and standard deviation of 0.957. This implies that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

4.3.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

The study asked respondents how important they considered the integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E for conflict prevention programs in Africa. 65 (75.6%) of the respondents indicated that it is very important, while 19 (22.1%) stated it was important. Overall, 97.7% of the respondents indicated that integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E is important.

Table 4. 8: Respondents' opinion- Importance of Conflict-Sensitive M&E

Description	f	(%)	Cumulative Percentage
Very Important	65	75.6	75.6
Important	19	22.1	97.7
Neutral	2	2.3	1000
Total	**86**	**100**	

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

4.3.3.1 Integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

The respondents were asked if they have ever integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs. The study findings indicated that 47 (54.7%) of the respondents noted that they have not integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs while a lesser number 39 (45.3%) indicated that they have.

Table 4. 9: Respondents' opinion- Importance of Conflict-Sensitive M&E practice

Description	f	(%)
No	47	54.7
Yes	39	45.3
Total	**86**	**100**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

The study sought to also determine from the respondents who have integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practices their opinion on how the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practices influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study results showed that the influence is very positive 4 (10.2%), positive 23 (59%), and 12 (30.78%) neutral. Overall 69.2 % have responded that the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practice influences positively or very positively the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Table 4. 10: Respondents' opinion – influence of integrating conflict-sensitive M&E practice

Description	f	(%)	Cumulative Percentage
Very Positively	4	10.2	10.2
Positively	23	59	69.2
Neutral	12	30.8	100
Total	**39**	**100**	

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

The study sought to also determine from the respondents who indicated they have not integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practices in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa the reason why they have not. The study results showed that 27 (57.4%) have indicated that there is a lack of resources, 14 (29.8%) lack of knowledge, and 3 (6.4%) each have indicated a lack of interest and the practice not being mandatory as the reasons.

Table 4. 11:Respondents' opinion – Reasons for not integrating conflict-sensitive M&E practices

Description	f	(%)
Lack of Interest	3	6.4
Lack of knowledge	14	29.8
Lack of resources	27	57.4
Not Mandatory practice	3	6.4
Total	**47**	**100**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

Three statements were formulated to assess the extent to which the integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Statement (C1) context Analysis in M&E influences the overall performance of conflict prevention programs. The study results indicated that 50 (58.1%) of the respondents agreed with the statement and 27 (31.4%) have strongly agreed with the statement. The item had a mean of 4.19 and a standard deviation of 0.678 which is high than the composite mean 4.067 and standard deviation 0.791. This implies that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (C2) Conflict prevention programs success depends on conflict-sensitive M&E practice integration. 43 (50%) of respondents agreed with this statement and 27 (31.4%) strongly agreed while 11 (12.8%) remained neutral. The item had a mean of 4.07 and a standard deviation of 0.823 which is very close to the composite mean and standard deviation (4.067 and 0.791). This statement is in line with the overall perceptions of respondents and does not significantly deviate from the consensus reflected in the

composite data. Therefore, this implies that the statement positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Statement (C3) Adaptability and flexibility of conflict-sensitive M&E practices can have a significant influence on the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs. 33 (38.4%) agreed with the statement, 26 (30.2%) strongly agreed and 23 (26.7%) stayed neutral. The item had a mean of 3.94 and a standard deviation of 0.873, implying that the statement does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Table 4. 12: Analysis of influence of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa

Statement	Strongly Disagree f (%)	Disagree f (%)	Neutral f (%)	Agree f (%)	Strongly Agree f (%)	Mean f (%)	STD f (%)
C1. Context Analysis in M&E influences the overall performance of conflict prevention programs	0 (0)	2 (2.3)	7 (8.1)	50 (58.1)	27 (31.4)	4.19	0.678
C2. Conflict prevention programs success depends on conflict-sensitive M&E practice integration	0 (0)	5 (5.8)	11 (12.8)	43 (50.0)	27 (31.4)	4.07	0.823
C3. Adaptability and flexibility of conflict-sensitive M&E practices can have a significant influence on the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs	0 (0)	4 (4.7)	23 (26.7)	33 (38.4)	26 (30.2)	3.94	0.873
Composite Mean and STD						**4.067**	**0.791**

SOURCE: RESEARCHER (2024)

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter delves into a thorough examination of the findings outlined in chapter four of the study. It also includes the conclusions and recommendations derived from interpreting the results. The discussion encompasses a review of prior studies, comparing them to the current study. The conclusions drawn from the study findings are discussed, and recommendations are formulated based on the findings.

5.2 Discussion

The following section elaborates on the findings regarding the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Subsequent subsections are structured according to specific research objectives and draw connections between the findings and previous studies.

5.2.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

The first objective of the study was to establish the importance of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E for assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The respondents agreed that KPIs in M&E are important in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The findings are in line with those of Ofori-Kuragu et al. (2016), who highlighted that performance measurements are important. Ngqumeya (2012), while studying the effect of KPIs on state-owned enterprises'

performance in South Africa, also asserts that KPIs have a positive influence on performance but that certain criteria have to be met.

Further analysis showed that KPIs that are aligned with the conflict prevention programs' strategic goals positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. This agrees with a study by Ngqumeya (2012), who asserts that KPIs should be clearly linked to the mandates and objectives of programs.

A detailed analysis showed that undertaking KPIs detailed analysis before engaging in conflict prevention programs revealed a slightly lower impact on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The current study contradicts with a study by Ali (2022) who indicated that establishing quality indicators and standards has a positive influence on performance.

The study also revealed that communicating KPIs to all stakeholders involved in the program does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Dimitrijevska-Markoski (2019) supports these findings, highlighting that if performance measurement is not adequate, management will not use it, and the focus should not be on the performance measurement or its communication but on the use of performance measurements.

Establishing KPIs baseline and anticipated targets in advance positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. This study is supported by Ngqumeya (2012) who highlighted the significance of setting target to improve

performance, while Hubert & Mulyungi (2018) and Mercy (2022) emphasized that setting target values for indicators is a crucial step in enhancing project performance.

5.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement and performance of conflict prevention programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

The study's second objective was to assess the effect of stakeholder engagement in M&E on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. All respondents agreed that stakeholder engagement in M&E is important, if not very important, and none disagreed. This is supported by Leonida (2022) and Kinjanjui (2020) who indicated that stakeholder participation in M&E is essential for a positive project performance.

The study revealed that developing detailed strategies for engaging stakeholders in M&E in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study findings are in line with Yu et al. (2022), who indicated that priority should be given to stakeholder engagement rather than human resource management capabilities to boost performance. This contradicts the findings of Karimi (2020).

Undertaking detailed stakeholder analysis in M&E of all internal and external stakeholders positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study agreed with the findings of Karimi (2020), who indicated that there exists a strong linear correlation between stakeholder engagement for M&E and performance, and one important component cited is the identification of stakeholders.

According to the study findings, stakeholder engagement in M&E with clearly defined roles and responsibilities positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study concedes with the findings of Letsolo (2022) where detailed stakeholder engagement plan positively influences performance. While this finding is in line with that of Karimi et al. (2020) it is important to note that the issue of the level of how stakeholders are engaged needs careful attention in order to achieve positive performance.

5.2.3 Conflict-sensitive M&E and Performance of Conflict Prevention Programs at the African Union Continental Early Warning System

The third objective of the study was to investigate the effect of conflict-sensitive M&E on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The majority of the respondents agreed that integrating conflict-sensitive practice in M&E was important. However, a large number of the respondents noted that they have not integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs. Lack of resources, lack of knowledge, lack of interest and the practice not being mandatory are cited as the reasons. For those that already integrating conflict-sensitive M&E practices have indicated the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practice influences positively or very positively the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

The study findings on context Analysis in M&E influencing the overall performance of conflict prevention programs showed that it positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study results are supported by Ndirangu (2020) who in the study indicated that undertaking a thorough context analysis can mitigate any negative impacts on performance.

Conflict prevention programs success depends on conflict-sensitive M&E practice integration. The findings indicated that conflict-sensitive M&E practice integration positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The study results are in line with that of Alert (2004) where in an M&E there is a need to involve a systematic study of the profiles, root causes, actors involved, and conflict dynamics to ensure the success of programs.

The study findings on the adaptability and flexibility of conflict-sensitive M&E practices influencing the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs indicated that it does not positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The findings contradict with that of USAID (2004) where flexibility was identified as important as the context under which the programs are to be undertaken might have changed.

5.3 Summary of Main Findings

This section outlines the conclusion of the study of the effect of M&E practice on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, namely the AU CEWS.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E are critical in assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa and they need to be aligned with the conflict prevention programs strategic goals. However, KPIs detailed analysis and communication of KPIs to all stakeholders have a slightly lower impact on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Setting in advance KPIs baseline and anticipated targets positively influences the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

The study's findings revealed that stakeholder engagement and conducting detailed stakeholder analysis in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) involving both internal and external stakeholders has a positive influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs. A detailed analysis of defining roles and responsibilities of stakeholders revealed a positive influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs. However, conducting detailed stakeholder for stakeholder engagement in M&E did not show a positive influence on conflict prevention program performance.

According to the study's findings while not implemented widely conflict-sensitive M&E practices have a positive influence on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Lack of resources, knowledge, interest, and the non-mandatory nature of the practice were cited as being for the reasons for the non-implementation of these

practices. Furthermore, the study found that the integration of context analysis in M&E positively influences conflict prevention programs performance in Africa. A detailed analysis revealed that integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practices have a positive impact on program performance while adaptability and flexibility of conflict-sensitive practices did not significantly impact the performance of conflict prevention programs.

5.4 Conclusion

This section presents the study's conclusion on the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa, namely the African Union Continental Early Warning System. The study findings were based on the following independent variables: Key Performance Indicators, stakeholder engagement, and conflict-sensitive M&E. The dependent variable of the study is the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

Most respondents agreed that KPIs positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The alignment of KPIs to strategic goals communicated to all stakeholders involved also influences program performance. The study findings show that most respondents have noted that KPIs positively influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The alignment of KPIs to the strategic goals communicated to all stakeholders involved was also identified as one of the factors influencing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. Further, it provides a basis for undertaking a measurement of the process and demonstration of effectiveness by setting baselines and anticipated targets in advance. However, the study revealed that undertaking a detailed analysis of KPIs before engaging in conflict prevention programs and

communicating KPIs to stakeholders did not positively influence conflict prevention programs' performance.

The findings indicate that stakeholder engagement plays an important role in the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. The respondents acknowledged unanimously the importance of stakeholder engagement in monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Although the study has highlighted that developing detailed strategies for stakeholder engagement in M&E in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders did not have a positive influence on conflict prevention programs' performance in Africa, undertaking detailed stakeholder analysis in M&E of all internal and external stakeholders was found to have a positive impact. However, stakeholder engagement in M&E with clearly defined roles and responsibilities was identified as a key factor in positively influencing program performance.

The study's findings provided some relevant insights into the effect of conflict-sensitive Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) on conflict prevention program performance in Africa. To begin with, most respondents acknowledge the importance of conflict-sensitive practices in M&E. However, a large number of respondents indicated that they had never integrated the practices in their M&E work. Key challenges to implement were cited as being a lack of resources, knowledge, interest and the fact that it was not mandatory practice. Nevertheless, the study recorded the positive effects of context analysis in M&E with respect to the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. In addition, the results showed that the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practice was related to positive effects on the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa.

5.5 Recommendation

The following recommendations are proposed, drawing from the study's findings, discussions, and conclusions presented in earlier sections.

Based on the study's results, the following recommendations can be addressed to organizations engaged in conflict prevention efforts in Africa. First, the importance of focusing on developing clear and measurable KPIs, including setting baseline and expected values, should be acknowledged. Additionally, it is necessary to actively involve stakeholders in the process of the creation of KPIs and understanding in order to ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, future research can investigate the reasons for the lower effect of detailed KPI analysis prior to the program's implementation. Further research can also be undertaken to identify strategies to enhance the communication and application of KPIs by stakeholders in an optimal way.

According to the study, organizations working on conflict prevention programs in Africa should prioritize conducting thorough stakeholder analysis in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). This should involve engaging both internal and external stakeholders who are actively engaged in developing and understanding KPIs to promote accountability and transparency. For conflict prevention programs in Africa to perform better, it is also critical to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of stakeholders, which promotes accountability and teamwork. Future research could delve into understanding why a thorough analysis of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) has a limited impact before initiating a program. By identifying these reasons, we can develop strategies to enhance

communication and the use of KPIs among all stakeholders involved in conflict prevention efforts in Africa.

Findings from this study suggest that organizations and stakeholders in conflict prevention programs in Africa should consider prioritizing the integration of conflict-sensitive M&E practices for better program performance. In particular, efforts should be directed to address the identified challenges, such as providing necessary resources, capacity development, and designing incentives for enforcing conflict-sensitive practices. By focusing on the need for contextual analysis in M&E and integration of conflict-sensitive practices, organizations and stakeholders can contribute to improved conflict prevention that has a positive outcome. While the findings from this study revealed that the flexibility and adaptability of conflict-sensitive M&E practices did not positively influence program performance, further research could be carried out to establish ways of improving the effectiveness of the practice for conflict prevention efforts in Africa.

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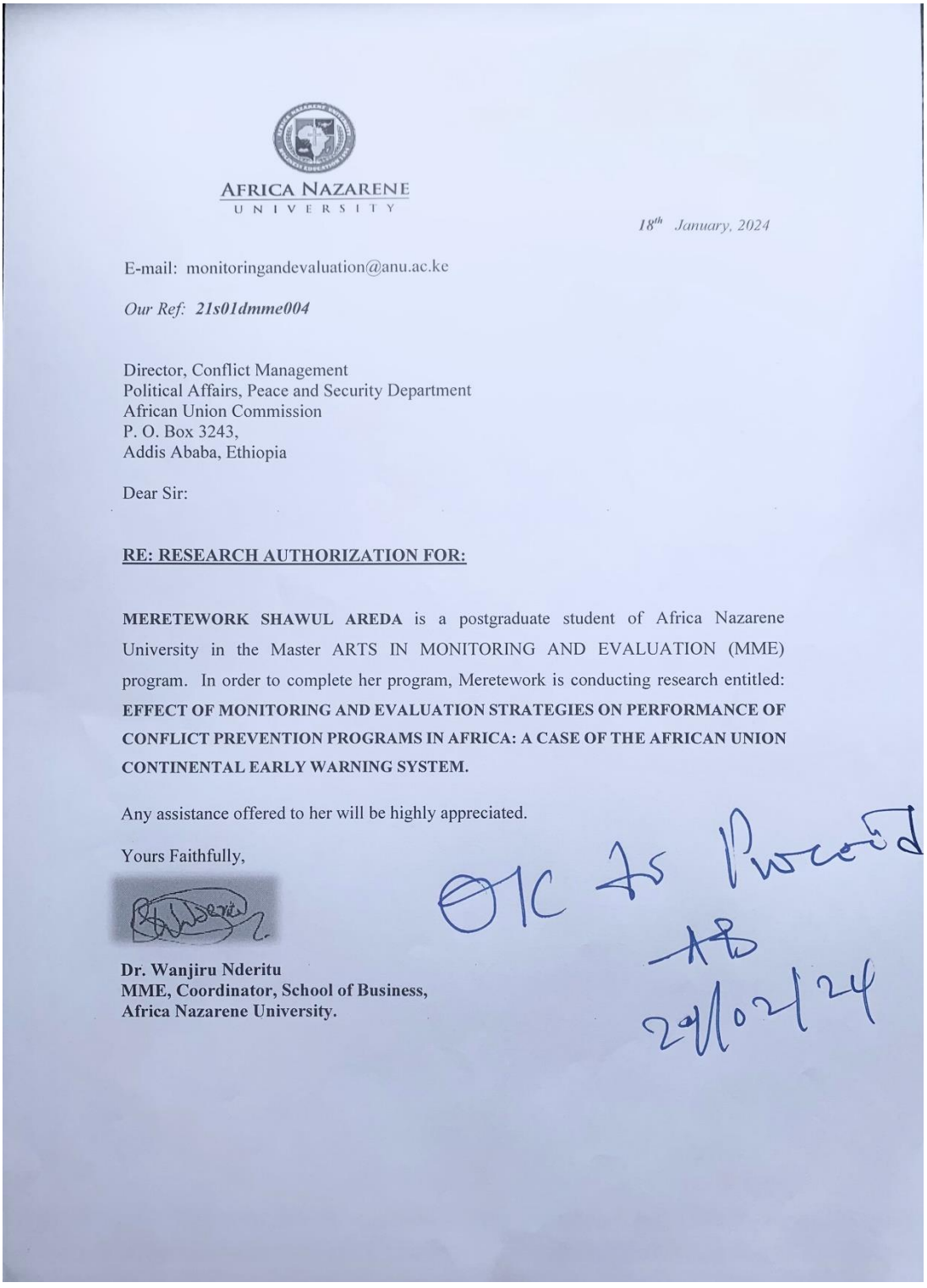
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APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1 – RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION LETTER



AFRICA NAZARENE
UNIVERSITY

18th January, 2024

E-mail: monitoringandevaluation@anu.ac.ke

Our Ref: ***21s01dmme004***

Director, Conflict Management
Political Affairs, Peace and Security Department
African Union Commission
P. O. Box 3243,
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Dear Sir:

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION FOR:

MERETEWORK SHAWUL AREDA is a postgraduate student of Africa Nazarene University in the Master ARTS IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION (MME) program. In order to complete her program, Meretework is conducting research entitled: **EFFECT OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES ON PERFORMANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AFRICA: A CASE OF THE AFRICAN UNION CONTINENTAL EARLY WARNING SYSTEM.**

Any assistance offered to her will be highly appreciated.

Yours Faithfully,

Dr. Wanjiru Nderitu
MME, Coordinator, School of Business,
Africa Nazarene University.

OIC to Proceed
AB
29/02/24

APPENDIX 2 – RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire seeks to assess the **effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies and performance of conflict prevention programs, taking the African Union Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)**. Your input is essential for gaining valuable insights into the study topic. Please take a few moments to answer the following questions as accurately and honestly as possible. Your responses will remain confidential and will be used for academic purposes only.

Thank you for participating in this study.

** Indicates required question*

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC AND BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This section seeks to establish demographic details of the individual respondents as well as their experience with conflict prevention programs.

1. Gender*

   (a) Male ☐

   (b) Female ☐

2. Age group*

   (a) 18-24 ☐ (b) 25-34 ☐

   (c) 35-44 ☐ (d) 45-54 ☐

   (e) 55 and above ☐

3. Which institution do you work for? *

(a) African Union (AU) ☐

(b) Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD) ☐

(c) Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) ☐

(d) East African Community (EAC) ☐

(e) Eastern Africa Standby Force (EASF) ☐

(f) Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) ☐

(g) Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) ☐

(h) Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) ☐

(i) North African Regional Capacity (NARC) ☐

(j) Southern African Development Community (SADC) ☐

(k) Arab Maghreb Union (UMA) ☐

4. If your answer to question 3 is AU, which Directorate, Unit or Program?

(a) Continental Early Warning System (CEWS)/CMD ☐

(b) Project Management Team (PMT) ☐

(c) Other Units and Programs from the Conflict Management Directorate (CMD) ☐

(d) Staff from the Governance and Conflict Prevention Directorate (GCPD) ☐

5. Years of experience in conflict prevention programs: *

(e) Less than 5 years ☐

(f) 5-9 years ☐

(g) 10-14 years ☐

(h) 15 years and over ☐

SECTION B: EXTENT TO WHICH KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (KPIS) INFLUENCE THE PERFORMANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

6. How important do you think Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in M&E are for assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa? *

a. Very Important	b. Important	c. Neutral	d. Not important	e. Not sure
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

7. To what extent does Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) influence performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa? Please rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5. 1-5 scale as per the guide outlined below:*

1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly Agree

Nb	Description	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Identified KPIs are aligned with the conflict prevention program strategic goals	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	KPIs detailed analysis is undertaken before engaging in conflict prevention programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	KPIs have been communicated to all stakeholders involved in the conflict prevention program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4.	KPI baseline and anticipated target were set in advance as they provide a basis for measuring progress and demonstrating the impact of the program	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION C: INFLUENCE OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ON PERFORMANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

8. How important do you think stakeholder engagement in M&E is for assessing the performance of conflict prevention programs? *

a. Very Important	b. Important	c. Neutral	d. Not important	e. Not sure
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

9. To what extent does stakeholder engagement influence the performance of conflict prevention programs? Please rate the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5. 1-5 scale guide is outlined below:*

1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly Agree

Nb	Description	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Prior to undertaking conflict prevention programs, detailed stakeholder analysis in M&E was conducted of all internal and external stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Detailed strategies of engagement of stakeholders in M&E were developed in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Stakeholder engagement in M&E with clearly defined roles and responsibilities leads to increased performance of conflict prevention programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

SECTION D: INTEGRATION OF CONFLICT-SENSITIVE PRACTICE IN M&E INFLUENCES THE PERFORMANCE OF CONFLICT PREVENTION PROGRAMS IN AFRICA

10. In your opinion, how important is the integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E for conflict prevention programs?*

a. Very Important	b. Somewhat Important	c. Neutral	d. Not important	e. Not Sure
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

11. Have you ever integrated conflict-sensitive M&E practice in assessing the performance of conflict prevention program?*

a. Yes	b. No
☐	☐

12. If yes, how did it influence the performance of the program?

a. Very Positively	b. Negatively	c. Neutral	d. Positively	e. Very Positively
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

13. If your answer to question 11 is no, why not?

a. Lack of knowledge ☐

b. Lack of resources ☐

c. Lack of interest ☐

d. Not Mandatory Practice ☐

14. How does the integration of conflict-sensitive practice in M&E influence the performance of conflict prevention programs in Africa. On a scale of 1-5 kindly provide your rating in line with the outline statement. 1-5 scale guide is outlined below:

1- Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, and 5 – Strongly Agree

Nb	Description	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Context analysis in M&E influences the overall performance of conflict prevention programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2.	Conflict prevention programs success depends on conflict-sensitive M&E practice integration	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3.	Adaptability and flexibility of conflict-sensitive M&E practices can have a significant influence on the effectiveness of conflict prevention programs	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐