

# Role of Effective Monitoring and Evaluation in Promoting Good Governance in Public Institutions

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## Abstract

This study examined the impact of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) on the promotion of good governance in public institutions. The main objectives were to evaluate how accountability, management decision-making, and organizational learning contribute to good governance. The research design used for this study was correlational, with data collected through a questionnaire administered to 115 respondents from the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Reconciliation. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS software, revealing that accountability, management decision-making, and organizational learning as M&E tools play a significant role in advancing good governance within public institutions. However, these three M&E elements only demonstrate a moderate positive correlation with good governance. In conclusion, it is evident that M&E can serve as a crucial catalyst for promoting effective practices of good governance within public institutions. Moreover, this text underscores the imperative for the institutionalization, financing, and strategic placement of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in order to fully capitalize on its capabilities. The investigation proposes that M&E should transcend being a mere tool for meeting regulatory obligations and should instead be integrated into policy formulation, planning procedures, and service provision. By doing so, organizations can acquire valuable perspectives into their endeavors and achievements that will inform judicious decision-making based on solid evidence.

**Keywords:** monitoring, evaluation, accountability, organizational learning, decision making, good governance, public institutions, Somalia

## 1. Introduction

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a new discipline as a branch of knowledge that has been practiced for a long time and has gained the attention of researchers and professional practitioners (Ojok, 2016; Scriven, 2004). With the advent of globalization, M&E became essential in the era of public administration due to civil society (Ojok, 2016). Measuring the effectiveness of civil servants' work, M&E has become a very important tool for service delivery, not only for inputs and activities, but also for improving the lives of citizens (Sithomola & Auriacombe 2019). M&E s have gained significant interest from organizations and financial auditing firms (Abrahams, 2015). However, there is a greater need for effective monitoring and evaluation of projects, programs and policies in the public institutions (Kusek & Rist, 2004). Many studies conducted in many countries have indicated that M&E is an important tool for the effective performance of projects (Omar, 2022). According to Kariuki and Reddy (2017), M&E supports the intergovernmental relationship of the main branches of the government to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery. There is huge pressure from civil society and other stakeholders to improve service delivery of governments and organizations (Kusek & Rist, 2004). Monitoring and evaluation contribute to good governance by creating accountability and transparency mechanisms. However, governments and private business industries in Africa have realized the need for M&E practices and results (Abrahams, 2019). It has many influences on the public sector, including democratization as an effective tool of community participation, de-bureaucratization as promoting accountability, organizational learning as transparency, and better decision marking (Nelson, 2016).

According to Annan (2011), good governance is essential factor in eliminating poverty and advancing development. Many African countries have recognized the importance of good governance and established frameworks for governance (Schoeberlein, 2020). M&E, in some cases, does not seem to be an administrative tool but it appears as a donor required (Babbie and Mouton, 2006) which may go against national interests. Having strong and specialized team that helps senior management is fundamental element of good governance (Chege & Bowa, 2020) and creates sound environment. The need for M&E in the public sector is rapidly growing in both developed and undeveloped countries. In Africa, several countries, including South Africa, Uganda, Ghana, and Kenya, have established an official institution mandated to monitor and evaluate activities in the public sector (Abrahams, 2015). However, some countries have no sole institution for this responsibility, while others have ineffective monitoring and evaluation systems. The notion behind the establishment of an effective M&E system is that it is vital in promoting good governance, eliminating poverty, and delivering quality services to citizens (Annan, 2011; Sithomola and Auriacombe, 2019). Governments such as Malaysia have adopted M&E as a strategic framework to achieve greater accountability, transparency, and global competitiveness (Kusek & Rist, 2004). In Somalia, the main challenge is poverty, with half of the population living below the poverty line, caused by weak governance, absence of rule of law, conflicts, and political instability (Kulmie, 2023, kulime, et al.2023). Broadly speaking, the absence of effective institutions, systems, regulations, and historical clan conflicts caused competition over resources and power (Ronan & Jenkins, 2017), which ultimately deters public service delivery and socioeconomic development. Thus, the focus of this research was to investigate how Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) can contribute to enhancing good governance within the public sector. The specific objectives were to assess the role of accountability, management decision-making, and organizational learning in promoting good governance practices in public sector institutions.

## **2. Conceptual Review**

### *2.1 Monitoring and Evaluation*

The concept of monitoring and evaluation have been approached from a variety of angles. A considerable portion of these viewpoints regards monitoring E as a mechanism for accountability, typically viewed as an assessment conducted by both internal and external stakeholders, as highlighted by (Naidoo in 2011). Monitoring is a global phenomenon (Kanyamuna, 2019), and tracking process against set targets and involves collecting data in a timely and correct manner (Govender & Reddy, 2014). Monitoring is a constant cycle of data gathering and analysis, and the information gained is used to sustain successful strategies during the decision-making process (Bengwi 2017). Monitoring can be viewed as a continuous function used to collect data systematically, with specific indicators to provide reliable information to the administration and main stakeholders in development interventions (OECD, 2002). Thus, monitoring and evaluation links the performance to the management to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the processes according to the plan, and it provides useful information to determine the performance of the activities (Nasution, Darmayunata, & Wahyuni 2022). In short, monitoring process reports on actual performance against planned activities.

Evaluation is a rigorous, independent and unbiased evaluation and of either finished or continuing activities to determine the degree to which they are attaining predetermined goals and objectives (Chege & Bowa, 2020; Bengnwi, 2016; Menon et al., 2009). It is a selective exercise that attempts to objectively review progress towards the achievement of an outcome (UNDP, 2002). However, the aim of strategic evaluation is to determine the significance and satisfaction of objectives, productivity improvement as well and sustainability (Nkurunziza, at el., 2022 and Aid, 2012). Therefore, it presents a chance to comprehend the reasons behind a particular phenomenon rather than merely describing it (Engela and Ajam, 2010). In this regard, evaluation involves establishing a cause-and-effect relationship between inputs, processes, outputs, outcomes, and impacts within a clearly defined conceptual or theoretical framework. Monitoring and evaluation can be considered as management tool that improves the performance of the public sector and other development spaces (Kanyamuna, 2019) and functionally have become a new era of development contributing to the advancement of public service delivery and supporting for attaining good governance and sustainable development (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

### *2.2 Good Governance*

The term good governance is always used in the development literature; it is the process of making effective decisions and implementing them accordingly, and it can be used in several contexts, ranging from international governance and national and local governance to corporate governance (Naidoo, 2011). It is difficult to define due to its multifaceted nature, therefore good governance does not have a common definition, but most scholars have added similar elements (Nelson, 2016). Some experts including Ali (2015) define it as the art of government in which public decisions are transparent, public officials are accountable, and the government connects to citizens.

Good governance as noted by the Independent Evaluation Group (2007), pertains to the manner in which power is employed in managing a nation's economic and social assets with the aim of realizing of sustainable development. This is regarded as being in place when resources are adequately managed and distributed. According to the OECD, good governance exists when the management or the system is really free of corruption and all kinds of abuse, and with due regard for the rule of law. Ali (2015) outlines several essential components of good governance. These include the presence of political freedom, constitutional and judicial safeguards to protect individual rights, a stable currency, provisions for universal education and healthcare, free and fair elections, and administrative accountability. In short, good governance is the existence of the rule of law (Landell-Mills & Serageldin, 1991).

### **3. Theoretical Framework**

#### *3.1 Theory of Change*

The term "theory of change" refers to several techniques for creating a causal model that connects program inputs and activities to a series of desired or observed outcomes (Kanyamuna & Phiri, 2019). Theory of change theoretically demonstrates how change is expected to occur (planning and implementing processes) and how change has occurred (evaluation and adoption processes) (Douthwaite et al., 2020; Mayne, 2015). It provides a clear step towards the required change by considering many levels of change and learning from the intervention it involves (Rice, et al., 2020). This theory (ToC) is a leading contemporary theory-directing phenomena in seeking the effectiveness of such endeavors. It denotes a systematic visual approach to understanding the prospective relationship between available resources and desired goals (UNESCO, 2015). In this regard, the monitoring and evaluation system should ensure that resources are well-managed to achieve the desired results. Therefore, independent monitoring and evaluation institutions and sound managerial practices are the cornerstones of good governance (Naidoo 2011). Based on this theory, monitoring and evaluation can be employed to bring about desired changes in how public officers plan and manage public resources. The idea of ToC as stated by Weiss (1995) was unfolded by the United States in the 1990s in the context of enhancing evaluation theory and practice in the field of community initiatives. It describes causal link between a program and its intended goals (Belcher et al., 2019).

#### *3.2 Results Based Management*

Results-based management is based on the concept of cause-and-effect relationships in which inputs and actions logically bring in higher results (Kanyamuna, 2019). From its inception, this approach has contributed to the effectiveness and efficiency of service delivery in the public sector, as it is a management approach that is characterized by a specific and unambiguous framework for organizational strategic planning, performance monitoring and evaluation, and risk management intended to assess and achieve major changes in how public institutions work (Ahmed, 2023; Ile, et al., 2012; Hauge, 2001). The RBM's primary objectives are to enhance the institution's learning function and complete accountability duties through performance reporting (Kanyamuna, 2019; Bamberger, 2006).

### **4. Related Studies**

Naidoo (2011) argues that monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential components in the quest for good governance, which should lead to noticeable improvements in the government's operations and the services provided to citizens. Ojok (2016) examined the role of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in promoting good governance in the public sector in Uganda found that M&E accountability, management decisions, and organizational learning play a significant role in the promotion of good governance and recommended that monitoring and evaluation support evidence-based decision making. In order to enhance good governance practices in the public institutions, public officials should make evidence-based decisions and be accountable for their behavior. According to Ali (2016), good governance is relevant to all public or private institutions and is fundamental for humanity and sustainability. Since the government is the most important player in successful governance, it is responsible for creating monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to improve the effectiveness of government services and fight against obstacles through good governance. Nelson (2016) assessed the relationship between monitoring and evaluation and good governance and found that M&E increases transparency and promote democracy. This study strongly supports that monitoring and evaluation contribute to good governance.

Researchers and practitioners argue that monitoring and evaluation supplies reliable information to decision makers to analyze what works and what does not work, allocate resources effectively, and assess the performance of the staff (Kanyamuna, 2019 and Hauge, 2003). Therefore, information obtained from monitoring and evaluation systems can enable management to make informed decisions that can increase their effectiveness and efficiency, which ultimately promote good governance. In this regard, the number of countries willing to create monitoring and evaluation systems has increased (Mackay, 2006) with the aim of enhancing effectiveness, efficiency,

transparency, and ethical compliance in responding to their citizens' needs and priorities. Monitoring and evaluation studies can be viewed as micro and macro level. For instance, Kanyamuna (2019) analyzed the monitoring and evaluation system of the Zambia government and found it to be weak in many aspects. Based on the research findings, Kanyamuna (2019) recommended that the government establish a formal M&E institution since it is essential for good governance. Effective monitoring and evaluation offer many benefits, including capacity enhancement, community involvement, and employee motivation, which ultimately improve quality service delivery, increased transparency, and accountability (Govender & Reddy, 2014).

A study conducted by Chabane (2013) on the role of monitoring and evaluation in public service stated that governments' commitment to create and sustain monitoring and evaluation systems as an instrument of good governance should be top on the national development agenda in order to achieve the desired results across African countries. This study revealed that monitoring and evaluation systems provide evidence-based information to support sound decision making, policy development, and implementation. From this perspective, the government uses it as core functions that support the delivery of quality services to the community (Mulonda, 2020). Therefore, the quality of governance of public institutions can be assessed by looking at the quality of services the government delivers, and this can be achieved by using monitoring and evaluation systems that produce reports on performances. In the context of public management, accountability is an interesting area of study because it lies at the center of government administration (Frederickson, 1997). Accountability is considered an evaluation activity (Khotami, 2017) that allows the government to be free from corruption, nepotism, and collusion (Kulmie, 2023; Kulmie, et al. 2023; Agere, 2000). According to Taufiqi & Ariani (2022), accountability is essential for enhancing public trust in government institutions. Therefore, developing countries have the opportunity to use acceptable accountability standards and procedures to enhance transparency, system effectiveness, efficiency, and legal, policy, and ethical compliance. In the last three decades, good governance has become a fundamental element in several African countries and unions as a transformation strategy agenda (Schoeberle, 2020; Mbaku, 2020). For instance, countries such as South Africa, Kenya, Ghana, and Ethiopia have established governance reforms, particularly financial governance reform, open government, and anti-corruption reforms, whereas others have implemented institutional reforms (Mbaku 2020; Transparency International, 2020). The ultimate goal of these governments is to achieve economic and social development, stability, security, and inclusive growth (ADB 2013; Mbaku 2020).

According to Culligan and Leslie Sherriff (2020), every institution has a unique system that reflects the culture extracted from their policies and program activities; however, there is a fundamental principle that states that success depends on the effectiveness of the monitoring, evaluation, accountability, and learning (MEAL) system of the institution. Monitoring and evaluation can only be effective when collected and analyzed is used in decisions making process, which in turn, promotes institutional learning to do better in the future (Culligan and Leslie Sherriff, 2020; Schick, 2001). Experts have urged that there is no substitute for learning-by-doing. Learning has a culture and processes that aid intentional reflection to make smarter decisions in the future (Kanyuuru, 2020). Effective monitoring and evaluation systems at the country level can be used as a mechanism for tracking performance for feedback and learning to enhance current and future development interventions (Kanyamuna et al., 2019). This feedback and other valuable information provided by monitoring and evaluation feeds institutional learning (Goldman et al., 2012). Learning and feedback constitute an important component of M&E processes through the provision of linkages between past and future activities (Mackay 2006). As a result, the lessons learned throughout the monitoring and evaluation process will be used to future initiatives.

## 5. Methodology

This study employed a correlational research design to investigate the association between effective monitoring and evaluation and good governance. Correlational research aims to determine the direction of the relationship between two variables, which can either be positive or negative (Ojok, 2016). The study employed both qualitative and quantitative methods to collect and analyze the data, and the results were integrated. The population of the study was the total number of employees of the Ministry of Interior, Federal Affairs, and Reconciliation. The study utilized a questionnaire adapted from Ojok (2016) to collect data from the respondents. The sample size of this study was 115 respondents, and a simple random sampling technique was used to ensure unbiased selection of participants. The collected data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, which is widely used in social science research (Creswell, 2014). The software provides various statistical tools and techniques, including the ability to generate descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations, and correlations. The methodology employed in this study was carefully designed to ensure the reliability and validity of the data collected and analyzed and to establish a robust framework for investigating the research problem.

## 6. Results and Discussion

### 6.1 Demographic Information

All the distributed questionnaires were collected from the respondents, resulting in a 100% response rate. Out of the 115 respondents, 90 were male, which represents 78.3% of the total respondents. The remaining 25 respondents (21.7%) were female. The results in table 1 indicated that out of the 115 respondents, 68 (59.1%) had a bachelor's degree, 31 (27%) had a master's degree, 10 (8.7%) had a diploma, 4 (3.5%) had a PhD, and 2 (1.7%) had no educational degree. In addition, the respondents had different titles and positions in the ministry. According to the results, 35 (30.4%) were heads of sections, 26 (22.6%) were officers, 25 (21.7%) were advisers, 15 (13%) were secretaries, and 14 (12.2%) were ministry directors.

Table 1. Demographic information

		Frequency	Percent
<b>Gender</b>	Male	90	78.3
	Female	25	21.7
	Total	115	100.0
<b>Age</b>	Above 50	4	3.5
	41 — 50	8	7.0
	31 — 40	46	40.0
	20 — 30	57	49.6
	Total	115	100.0
<b>Education</b>	Diploma	10	8.7
	Bachelor's degree	68	59.1
	Master Degree	31	27.0
	PhD	4	3.5
	Others	2	1.7
	Total	115	100.0
<b>Position</b>	Director	14	12.2
	Advisor	25	21.7
	Head Section	35	30.4
	Officer	26	22.6
	Secretary	15	13.0
	Total	115	100.0

*Primary Source (2023)*

### 6.2 Role of Effective Monitoring and Evaluation in Promoting Good Governance

The primary objective of this research was to investigate how monitoring and evaluation (M&E) can promote good governance in the public sector. The study aims to accomplish three specific goals. First, it aims to examine how M&E accountability affects the promotion of good governance. Second, it aims to assess the importance of M&E management decisions in promoting good governance. And finally, it aims to evaluate the role of M&E organizational learning in promoting good governance. The results of the empirical analysis show that there is a moderate correlation between the M&E accountability and good governance ( $p = 0.480$ ). This indicates that M&E accountability has a statistically positive correlation on good governance practices, as shown in table 2. This was based on the majority of respondents who agreed with the idea that M&E Accountability can increase the level of good governance. Thus, implementing M&E accountability in public institutions can significantly increase the level of good governance practices in the public institutions.

Table 2. Correlation between accountability and good governance

	M&E Accountability	Good Governance
M&E Accountability	Pearson Correlation 1	.480**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115
Good Governance	Pearson Correlation .480**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115

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

Furthermore, as shown in table 3, the M&E accountability beta rating was 0.480. The findings of the study indicate that a 100% increase in M&E accountability is anticipated to lead to a 48% increase in good governance in the public sector. This improvement can only be realized when there is an established accountability function, procedures, and effective information system used for accountability purposes.

Table 3. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t
1 (Constant)	1.809	.297		6.083
M&E Accountability	0.489	.084	.480	5.811

*a. Dependent Variable: Good Governance*

In addition to exploring the role of M&E accountability and organizational learning in promoting good governance within the public sector, this study also investigated the role of M&E management decision-making. The study found that there was a positive moderate correlation ( $p=0.504$ ) between M&E management decision-making and good governance. This indicates that any change in M&E management decision-making will result in a change in the good governance. The significance level was set at 0.000, which means that the correlation between M&E management decision-making and good governance was statistically significant. These findings suggest that effective M&E management decision-making can contribute to promoting good governance within the public sector.

Table 4. Correlation between management decision making and good governance.

	M&E Management Decision Making	Good Governance
M&E Management Decision Making	Pearson Correlation 1	.504**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115
Good Governance	Pearson Correlation .504**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115

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

According to table 5, the beta coefficient for M&E management decision making was 0.504. Based on the findings of the study, this suggests that a 100% increase in M&E management decision-making is expected to result in a 50.4% increase in good governance in the public sector, while controlling for the effects of other variables in the model. This improvement in governance can be achieved by making management decisions based on prevailing policies, monitoring reports, and using M&E as a critical management tool. A clear policy statement articulating governance decisions can also contribute to this improvement. However, it is important to note that the study results reflect a statistical relationship and should be interpreted with caution.

Table 5. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.719	.293		5.857	.000
M&E Management Decision Making	0.515	.083	.504	6.202	.000

*a. Dependent Variable: Good Governance*

The study also examined how M&E organizational learning contributes to good governance in the public sector. The findings revealed a noteworthy positive connection between M&E organizational learning and good governance, with a correlation coefficient of  $p = 0.477$ . This means that there is a moderately positive relationship between the two factors, suggesting that a change in one factor is likely to cause a change in the other. The significance level of 0.00 indicates that this correlation is statistically significant, providing evidence to support the notion that M&E organizational learning plays a vital role in promoting good governance in the public sector.

Table 6. Correlation between M&amp;E organizational learning and good governance

	M&E Organizational Learning	Good Governance
M&E Organizational Learning	Pearson Correlation 1	.477**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115
Good Governance	Pearson Correlation .477**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	115

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

According to the data shown in table 6, we found that the beta coefficient for M&E organizational learning is  $p = 0.504$ . What this means is that if M&E organizational learning increases by 100%, we can expect a 50.4 % increase in good governance within the public sector. These positive changes are more likely to happen when monitoring information is useful for learning, M&E contributes value to the work, new knowledge is gained through the M&E process, the M&E component is well-integrated into the institution, and staff are consistently engaged in monitoring and supervision.

Table 7. Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1 (Constant)	1.770	.306		5.781	.000
M&E Organizational Learning	0,491	.085	.477	5,764	.000

*a. Dependent Variable: Good Governance*

This study's findings are consistent with those of previous research, such as Tuckerman's (2007), which claimed that managers and decision-makers who value M&E are more likely to incorporate it in the decision-making process, improving its capacity to promote good governance. In a similar way, the study supports Ojok's (2016) findings that monitoring, and evaluation greatly assist accountable decision-making, transparency, and good governance in Uganda. The results of this study confirm earlier findings by Nelson (2016) and Ali (2016) that M&E increases transparency and democracy while also improving the effectiveness of government services. This study asserts that accountability is at the core of governance and is viewed as a form of review that enables the government to be free from collusion, nepotism, and corruption, which ultimately increases public trust in the institutions of government. This is in addition to what Kulmie, (2023), Taufiqi & Ariani (2022), Khotami (2017), and Frederickson (1997) have previously documented. Furthermore, this study supports the findings of Mackay (2006), Goldman et al., (2012) Learning and feedback are crucial in M&E processes which links past and future activities.

## 7. Conclusions and Recommendation

The main objective of this investigation was to assess the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) in enhancing good governance within the public sector. Three distinct aims were outlined, including an examination of accountability's role, decision-making processes, and organizational learning in promoting good governance. A correlational research design was employed to investigate the relationship between effective M&E and good governance in the public sector. The findings of the study revealed that M&E accountability, management decision-making, and organizational learning significantly contributed to the promotion of good governance in the public sector. M&E accountability played a crucial role in enhancing transparency and reducing corruption. M&E management decision-making improved evidence-based decision-making and policy formulation. Furthermore, M&E organizational learning enhanced the capacity of public sector institutions to adapt to changing circumstances and improve service delivery. The study recommended that M&E should be viewed as a valuable tool beyond mere compliance. By integrating M&E into policy processes, planning, and service delivery, organizations can gain valuable insights into their operations and performance, which can inform evidence-based decision-making. This, in turn, can lead to more efficient resource allocation, improved service delivery, and enhanced governance. Additionally, integrating M&E into policy processes, planning, and service delivery can assist organizations in identifying areas that require improvement, enabling them to make necessary changes and continually enhance their performance. In general, the recommendations of the study emphasize the significance of employing monitoring and evaluation (M&E) as a mechanism for ongoing enhancement and as an avenue to foster effective governance within the public sector.

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