

## Effect of Strategic Scanning on Performance of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya

<sup>1</sup>Kelvin Saruni Lalampaa, <sup>2</sup>Dr. Nancy Rintari, PhD, <sup>3</sup>Adel Kanyiri  
<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Business Administration, Kenya Methodist University  
Corresponding Email: lalampaakelvin@gmail.com

**How to cite this article:** Lalampaa, K. S., Rintari, N., & Kanyiri, A. (2024). Effect of Strategic Scanning on Performance of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya. *Journal of Strategic Management*, 4(2), 13-21.

### Abstract

Strategic scanning is a key influencer that enhanced an organizational ability to deliver services and programs effectively. Despite the NGOs in Samburu County adopting various strategic planning processes such as strategic scanning, there have been deteriorating performance in recent years. Therefore, the purpose of the study was to establish the effect of strategic scanning on performance of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research design, encompassing all 31 NGOs within the county. Notably, 262 employees within these organizations were involved in the study. A sample size of 158 employees were selected using stratified random sampling where structured questionnaires were used to gather insights from these employees. Further, the study undertook a pre-testing and selected a pilot sample of 16 employees from three NGOs in Isiolo County to ensure the questionnaire's clarity and relevance. The correlation coefficient for strategic scanning  $r=0.505$  at  $\alpha < 0.009$  and 99% significance level. Therefore, since the correlation coefficient was less than 1 and p-value was less than 0.05, the study rejected the null hypothesis. The study concluded that majority of NGOs wasted a lot of resources on strategies that they would have benchmarked with their competitors. This was attributed to poor strategic scanning of the environment to note what was working and what was not among different stakeholders such as their competitors. A continued non-benchmarked strategy would be a recipe for failure and reduced performance. The recommendation is that NGO management should liaise with operations staff for information on what their competitors were doing in regard to strategic plan implementation. In the same line of thought the management should set policies that allow flexibility on strategy changes to facilitate benchmarking practices. This would improve resonance of established strategic plans that were impactful, time-bound, and realistic in implantation stage.

**Keywords:** *Strategic Scanning, Performance of NGOs, Samburu County, Kenya*

### 1.0 Introduction

Strategic scanning involves assessment of the environment to identify the organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Kian & Yousefi, 2021). This could be achieved in terms of the formal and informal structure that the organization operates, the economic status of the community at large, the organization's culture towards addressing the needs of the society, and the various competitors in the sector (Kigenza & Irechukwu, 2023). When such information is keenly put into perspective, an NGO can conduct a concise analysis

of how many resources will be used for a specific project to avoid wastage and increase efficiency. Therefore, utilizing and having knowledge of patterns, connections, events, and trends in a company's internal and external environments that affect its current and future strategies is known as strategic scanning (Madume et al., 2024).

Organizational performance is described as the capability of an organization to creatively use scarce resources with a target of attaining its set objectives (George et al., 2019). The performance of NGOs is critical in dictating their growth patterns and existence over vast economic cycles (Obaid, 2022). This calls for dept strategic planning by its leadership to attain its vision and mission consistently. However, NGOs have experienced a range of leadership challenges that keep them from realizing their strategic goals leading to poor performance.

Globally, in Asian nations such as South Korea, there have been reported cases of excessive bureaucracy by the NGOs' management and not providing opportunities to junior employees to contribute to strategic plans (BertelsmannStiftung, 2022). In India, there has been low funding for the rolled-out strategic plans and poor environment scanning techniques to eliminate threats to strategic plans.

Regionally, In South Sudan, there has been a lack of motivation for the established strategic plans and a shortage of qualified staff that can implement strategic plans (WFP, 2022). This is in terms of experience and academic qualifications, In Somalia, NGOs have been experiencing a disconnect between the established strategic plans and adequate monitoring and evaluation techniques to eliminate the less effective policies (Van Zyl et al., 2019). Locally in Kenya, there have been unfavorable government policies such as those that increase cost of doing business making established strategic plans unrealistic to be achieved (Maina, 2021). NGOs also experience a rift between the management and junior staff making it hard for succession training on strategic planning unattainable tasks to be achieved (Kariuki et al., 2023).

### **1.1 Problem Statement**

Strategic scanning is a key influencer that leads to improved performance by enhancing the organizational ability to deliver services and programs effectively (Foster et al., 2019). Therefore, it enables organizations to be better equipped so as to grasp the needs and priorities of the customers they serve, making them come up with informed decisions aligned with their strategic goals and objectives (Foster et al., 2019).

Despite the NGOs in Samburu County adopting various strategic planning processes such as strategic scanning, there have been deteriorating performance in recent years. For example, in recent years, NGOs in Samburu have shown a reduction in donations and donors towards funding their projects (NGO Board, 2021). The number of donors reduced by 10% in 2023 compared to 2022 with the donations reducing by 7.5% within the same period (NGO Board, 2021).

The NGOs have also shown increased stakeholder dissatisfaction as well as the number of beneficiaries benefiting from the projects implemented by the NGOs. For example, more than 30% of the projects implemented by the NGOs in Samburu have not provided the services they targeted within communities (NGO Board, 2021).

### **1.2 Purpose of the Study**

To establish the effect of strategic scanning on performance of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya.

### **1.3 Research Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: There was no significant effect of strategic scanning on performance of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

Resource-Based View (RBV) was developed by Penrose (1959) and it stated that organizations possess diverse and valuable resources and capabilities that are not readily transferable or imitable by competitors. These resources took various forms, such as tangible assets (physical infrastructure, financial capital), intangible assets (brand reputation, intellectual property), and organizational capabilities (efficient processes, skilled workforce). This theory informed strategic scanning on the basis that NGOs had a responsibility to assess their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Therefore, considering its internal resources, an NGO was able to get a clear picture of its economic status, policy structure, and organization culture to be in a position to provide quality humanitarian services (Aborass, 2021). Further, through examination of external resources such as their goodwill, they were able to analyze their competitors to have an upper hand in donor seeking for extensive periods of humanitarian services. The application of the RBV was in guiding strategic decision-making processes (Bhandari et al., 2022). This was whereby the organizations analyzed their internal resources to identify strengths and weaknesses. By conducting a thorough resource audit, NGOs could identify valuable, rare, and difficult-to-imitate resources (Hasselskog, 2023).

### **2.2 Empirical Review**

Alosani and Yusoff (2020) evaluated how Dubai Police institutional performance was affected by planning of strategies and innovation applied to its operations. One hundred and fifty survey questionnaires were used with a response rate of 95(63%) returned questionnaires. The results pointed out that the performance was positively affected when the implementation of strategic plans and innovation was made a reality. Therefore, in relation to strategic scanning, there was a clear synopsis of various aspects considered before the strategic plans that support innovation were implemented. This included the availability of finances to support an agreed innovation. The senior management had to establish whether indeed the police department had the financial muscle to fund the purchasing of innovative equipment, patents, and training of the staff. Additionally, the culture of the organization also played a critical role in adopting the suggested innovations. This was in the perspective of Dubai being an Islamic region, the strategic plans adopted to incorporate innovation had to be legal and acceptable within the society. Regrettably, Alosani and Yusoff (2020) did not address other aspects such as the threat of competitor analysis from international security firms in Dubai nor did they assess the various methods of strategic scanning adopted by NGOs in Dubai.

Further, Okwuse (2023) studied how Nigeria's health establishments' performance was affected by the planning of strategies. Using a descriptive survey design, the investigation included 300 randomly picked healthcare providers from three senatorial districts in Delta State. Questionnaires acted as the main data-gathering tool. The study conducted both descriptive and inferential analysis while hypothesis testing was done through the OLS regression method. The findings noted that the performance of organization was significantly affected by the scanning method of strategies used.

Notably, in Samburu County, Kenya, Nyaboga and Mutua (2023) studied strategic scanning and organizational resilience of NGOs. This study focused on the importance of strategic

scanning for NGOs in Samburu County to enhance their organizational resilience. Through qualitative case studies, the research revealed that NGOs that actively engaged in strategic scanning were better equipped to identify and adapt to emerging opportunities and threats. These organizations demonstrated a higher level of flexibility and responsiveness, leading to improved overall performance and sustainability.

### 3.0 Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive research design, encompassing all 31 NGOs within the county. Notably, 262 employees within these organizations were involved in the study. A sample size of 158 employees was selected using stratified random sampling where structured questionnaires were used to gather insights from these employees. Further, the study undertook a pre-test and selected a pilot sample of 16 employees from three NGOs in Isiolo County to ensure the questionnaire's clarity and relevance. To assess reliability, the researcher examined the consistency of the responses to the questions through Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. PSS software version 25 was used and various analyses such as descriptive and inferential statistics were done.

### 4.0 Results and Discussion

#### 4.1 Response Rate

The study sampled 65 employees working in International NGOs and 93 employees working in local NGOs making a total of 158 employees who were proficient in strategic planning. Project managers, project officers, and heads of departments were issued with questionnaires the results are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1: Response Rate**

Respondents	Sampled	Response	Percentage
Employees working in International NGOs	65	45	69%
Employees working in Local NGOs	93	88	95%
Total	158	133	84%

Table 1 indicates that there were 45(69%) employees working in the international NGOs and 88(95%) employees were working in local NGOs in Samburu. They comprised the population that returned the filled questionnaires. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of more than 70% implies a highly positive outcome of a study. Thus, the current study's response rate was satisfactory.

#### 4.2 Reliability Results

The study carried out a pilot test in the nearby Isiolo County. Table 2 provides results.

**Table 2: Reliability Results**

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Strategic Scanning	0.796	5
Performance of NGOs	0.874	6
Average	0.835	6

According to Table 2, average Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.835, which exceeded 0.7. According to Ullah et al. (2023), a coefficient between 0.7 and 1 suggests that the instruments are reliable, whilst a value less than 0.7 indicates that they are unreliable. As a result, the questionnaires utilized in this study had a coefficient of 0.835, indicating their reliability. This

means that the questionnaires could be used more than once and any clarifications/further elaboration of the questions were done, to improve the reliability even more.

### 4.3 Descriptive Results of Performance of NGOs

Performance of NGOs was the dependent variable and it had indicators such as number of beneficiaries, projects implemented, and level of funding. The table had an ordinal Likert scale whereby 1 represented strongly disagree; 2- disagree;3-neutral;4-agree and 5 strongly agree. Table 3 provides the results.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics of Performance of NGOs**

Statements N=133	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
NGO reaches a high number of people	9 (7%)	29 (22%)	52 (39%)	30 (23%)	13 (9%)	3.18
NGO's efforts impact a wide range of beneficiaries	15 (11%)	10 (8%)	13 (10%)	52 (39%)	43 (32%)	4.08
NGO executes a diverse range of projects	16 (12%)	15 (11%)	52 (39%)	29 (22%)	21 (16%)	3.26
Projects implemented by NGOs are impactful	13 (10%)	12 (9%)	10 (8%)	58 (44%)	40 (30%)	4.16
NGO secures sufficient funding	53 (40%)	44 (33%)	12 (9%)	15 (11%)	9 (7%)	2.12

As per Table 3, majority of the respondents 40(30%) strongly agreed and 58(44%) agreed on a mean of 4.16 that the projects implemented by NGOs created a positive and lasting impact on the community. Additionally,43(32%) strongly agreed and 52(39%) agreed on a mean of 4.08 that the NGO's efforts positively impact a wide range of beneficiaries. The results mean that the strategic plans that the NGOs management was making had positively impacted the community members. This is an encouraging move towards sustainability of humanitarian projects and proficient management of donations to improve the performance of NGOs. Comparatively, Kigenza and Irechukwu (2023) noted that Rwanda's NGO performance towards changing the lives of rural community members improved significantly due to the strategic plans they had instigated.

However, 53(40%) strongly disagreed and 44(33%) disagreed on a mean of 2.12 that NGOs secured sufficient funding to support their operations and initiatives. The results imply that NGOs were undergoing tough times in securing consistent funding that would support their strategic planning processes. This meant that strategic plans were derailed hence negatively affecting the number of projects implemented which had a direct consequence to the



beneficiaries reached. According to Sadq et al., (2020), the harder it was for NGOs to secure funding, the tougher it became to widen the scope of their strategic plans.

#### 4.4 Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Scanning

Strategic scanning was an independent variable and had indicators such as organization structure, economic status, organization culture, and competitor analysis. Table 4 provides the results. Table 4 indicates a majority of the respondents 43(32%) strongly agreed and 52(39%) agreed on a mean of 4.25 that NGOs regularly undertook strategic scanning of the environment. Additionally, the table also indicates that 47(35%) strongly agreed and 33(25%) agreed on a mean of 3.11 that the NGO enjoyed a structure that fits the strategies adopted by the organization.

The results mean that NGOs were keen on identifying their strengths, reducing their weaknesses, taking advantage of the opportunities around them, and demystifying the threats in their line of business. In the same line of thought Nkemchor and Ezeanolue (2021) revealed that the easier it was to scan for opportunities reduce threats, to manage weaknesses, and to capitalize on organizational strengths improved performance.

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of Strategic Scanning**

Statements N=133	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
NGO undertakes strategic scanning of the environment	12 (9%)	15 (12%)	11 (8%)	52 (39%)	43 (32%)	4.25
NGO enjoys an organizational structure	5 (4%)	25 (19%)	23 (17%)	33 (25%)	47 (35%)	3.11
NGO frequently scans the economic status of the community and the organization	44 (33%)	25 (19%)	18 (14%)	25 (19%)	21 (15%)	2.65
Organizational culture of an organization is good	12 (9%)	22 (17%)	24 (18%)	49 (36%)	26 (20%)	3.01
Competitor analysis is frequently done	49 (37%)	43 (32%)	16 (12%)	14 (11%)	11 (8%)	2.35

However, Table 4 indicates that 49(37%) strongly disagreed and 43(32%) disagreed on a mean of 2.35 that competitor analysis was frequently done within their organization. This means that most NGOs underestimate their competitors to a point that they do not take note of the obvious signs of improved strategic plans that their competitors are adopting. This left out a gap between the strategic plans that worked and those that did not work on the applicability of the

scope they operated within. According to Kebede (2020), since most NGOs served similar purposes in the community, their strategic plans were more of the same hence what did not work in one institution had a high chance of not working in the other especially when they were in the same locality.

#### 4.5 Pearson Correlation of Strategic Scanning

The study had a research hypothesis that states that there was no significant effect of strategic scanning on performance of NGOs. Table 5 provides the results of correlation analysis.

**Table 5: Pearson Correlation of Strategic Scanning**

		Performance of NGOs	Strategic Scanning
Performance of NGOs	Pearson Correlation	1	.505
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.009
	N	133	133
Strategic Scanning	Pearson Correlation	.505	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.009	
	N	133	133

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

As per Table 5, correlation coefficient  $r=0.505$  at  $\alpha < 0.009$  and 99% significance level. Therefore, since the correlation coefficient was less than 1 and p-value was less than 0.05, the study rejected the null hypothesis. Therefore, this means that strategic scanning had a significant effect on the performance of NGOs. This means that most NGOs had ensured that their structures had high quality and supported decision-making that was fair, reasonable, and well-informed. Additionally, it was noted that the organizational culture was accommodative to incorporate competitor analysis and improve the economic status. Comparatively, Aborass, (2021) also established a positive correlation between NGOs performance and scanning as part of strategic planning.

#### 4.6 Summary

The findings of the questionnaire revealed that majority of the respondents 43(32%) strongly agreed and 52(39%) agreed on a mean of 4.25 that NGOs regularly undertake strategic scanning of the environment. Additionally, the table also indicates that 47(35%) strongly agreed and 33(25%) agreed on a mean of 3.11 that the NGO enjoyed a structure that fits the strategies adopted by the organization. However, 49(37%) strongly disagreed and 43(32%) disagreed on a mean of 2.35 that competitor analysis was frequently done within their organization.

#### 5.0 Conclusion

Majority of NGOs wasted a lot of resources on strategies that they would have benchmarked with their competitors. This was attributed to poor strategic scanning of the environment to note what was working and what was not among different stakeholders such as their competitors. A continued non-benchmarked strategy would be a recipe for failure and reduced performance.

## 6.0 Recommendations

The recommendation on strategic scanning is that NGO management should liaise with operations staff for information on what their competitors were doing in regard to strategic plan implementation. In the same line of thought the management should set policies that allow flexibility on strategy changes to facilitate benchmarking practices. This would improve resonance of established strategic plans that were impactful, time-bound, and realistic in implantation stage.

## References

- Aborass, N. (2021). The impact of strategic planning on the performance of non-governmental organizations in the new century: A review. *European Journal of Digital Economy Research*, 2(1), 33-41. <https://ejderhub.com/index.php/ejder/article/download/26/37/149>
- Alosani, M.S., & Yusoff, R. (2020). The effect of innovation and strategic planning on enhancing organizational performance of Dubai Police. *Innovation & Management Review*, 17(1), 1-24. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/INMR-06-2018-0039>
- BertelsmannStiftung (2022). *South Korea report: Sustainable governance indicators*. [https://www.sgi-network.org/docs/2022/country/SGI2022\\_South\\_Korea.pdf](https://www.sgi-network.org/docs/2022/country/SGI2022_South_Korea.pdf)
- Bhandari, K. R., Ranta, M., & Salo, J. (2022). The resource-based view, stakeholder capitalism, ESG, and sustainable competitive advantage: The firm's embeddedness into ecology, society, and governance. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 31(4), 1525-1537. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/bse.2967>
- Foster, D. L., Yandle, B., & Bhattarai, M. (2019). *Strategic planning for nonprofits: A practical guide and workbook*. Springer.
- George, B., Walker, R. M., & Monster, J. (2019). Does strategic planning improve organizational performance? A meta-analysis. *Public Administration Review*, 79(6), 810-819. <https://doi.org/10.1111/puar.13104>
- Hasselskog, M. (2023). Exploiting international development ideals. The Rwandan government's approach to local participation in light of its exercise of national ownership. *Forum for Development Studies*, 50(3), 371-395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08039410.2023.2230203>
- Kariuki, D.N., Kitonga, D.M, & Arasa, R. (2023). Influence of strategy formulation on the performance of catholic parishes in Kenya. *Journal of African Studies and Development*, 15(1), 1-13, <http://dx.doi.org/10.5897/JASD2022.0668>
- Kebede, K. (2020). *The effect of strategic planning on organizational performance in the case of NIB insurance share company* [Doctoral dissertation, St. Mary's University]. Ethiopia. <http://repository.smuc.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/5622/1/Kalkidan%20Kebede.pdf>
- Kigenza, B. & Irechukwu, E., N. (2023). Strategic planning and organizational performance in non-profit organizations in Rwanda: A case of World Vision, Kigali, Rwanda. *Journal of Strategic Management*, 7(2), 90-110. <https://doi.org/10.53819/81018102t3081>
- Madume, W.C., Okereke, E.J., & Omojefe, G.O. (2024). Strategic planning and organizational performance of manufacturing firms in Rivers State, Nigeria. *Asian Journal of*



- Economics, Finance and Management*, 6(1), 63-73.  
<https://globalpresshub.com/index.php/AJEFM/article/view/1943>
- Maina, J. (2021). *The role of non-governmental organizations in humanitarian development in Africa. A case study Kenya Red Cross in Kenya* [Master's Thesis, University of Nairobi]. Kenya.  
[http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/160157/Maina\\_The%20Role%20of%20Non-governmental%20Organizations%20in%20Humanitarian%20Development%20in%20Africa.pdf?sequence=1](http://erepository.uonbi.ac.ke/bitstream/handle/11295/160157/Maina_The%20Role%20of%20Non-governmental%20Organizations%20in%20Humanitarian%20Development%20in%20Africa.pdf?sequence=1)
- Mugenda, O.M., & Mugenda, A.G. (2003). *Research methods: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. ACT
- NGO Board (2021). *Annual NGO sector report 2021/2022*. <http://ngobureau.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/AR-Booklet.pdf>
- Nkemchor, E. M., & Ezeanolue, E. T. (2021). Effect of Strategic Management on organizational performance in Tertiary institutions in Delta State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Innovative Social Sciences & Humanities Research*, 9(3), 75-87. <https://seahipaj.org/journals-ci/sept-2021/IJISSHR/full/IJISSHR-S-8-2021.pdf>
- Nyaboga, P., & Mutua, E. (2023). Strategic scanning and organizational resilience: A study of NGOs in Samburu County, Kenya. *Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 52(1), 134-147. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/08997640221070599>.
- Obaid, N. (2022). Impact of strategic planning and direction on organizational performance in private Higher Education institutions in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. *International Journal of Research Publications (IJRP. ORG)*, 93(1), 372-389. <http://dx.doi.org/10.47119/IJRP100931120222749>
- Okwuse, U. Y. (2023). Strategic planning and performance of health establishments in delta state: Moderating role of organizational culture. *International Journal of Management & Entrepreneurship Research*, 5(2), 99-114. <http://dx.doi.org/10.51594/ijmer.v5i2.434>
- Sadq, Z. M., Ahmad, B. S., Faeq, D. K., & Muhammed, H. O. (2020). The effect of strategic planning on entrepreneurship strategy requirements (The case of private Hospitals in Iraqi Erbil City). *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding*, 7(10), 147-164. <https://ijmmu.com/index.php/ijmmu/article/download/2134/2458>
- Van Zyl, W. H., Claeyé, F., & Flambard, V. (2019). Money, people, or mission? Accountability in local and non-local NGOs. *Third World Quarterly*, 40(1), 53-73. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2018.1535893>
- World Food Programme (2022). *South Sudan country strategic plan (2023–2025)*. [https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document\\_download/WFP-0000142938](https://executiveboard.wfp.org/document_download/WFP-0000142938)