
RESOURCE MOBILIZATION STRATEGIES AND SUSTAINABILITY OF NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN KAKUMA REFUGEE CAMP, TURKANA COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of strategic resource planning, donor diversification, strategic partnerships, and organizational agility on the sustainability of NGOs in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected from 120 NGO employees through structured questionnaires. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression were conducted using SPSS Version 26. Results revealed that strategic resource planning, partnerships, and organizational agility positively and significantly influence NGO sustainability, while donor diversification negatively affects sustainability when poorly managed. The findings extend Resource Mobilization Theory, Partnership Theory, and Organizational Agility Theory, demonstrating that resource acquisition is not always beneficial unless aligned with organizational capacity. The study provides theoretical contributions and practical implications for NGO managers and policymakers on how to enhance sustainability in fragile humanitarian contexts.

Keywords: *Resource Mobilization, Strategies, Sustainability, Non-Governmental Organizations, Kakuma Refugee Camp*

INTRODUCTION

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) play a vital role in addressing humanitarian needs, particularly in fragile environments such as refugee camps. However, NGOs operating in developing countries continue to face sustainability challenges arising from heavy donor dependence, resource scarcity, and weak institutional structures (Kihara, 2022; Wanjiku, 2023). In the Kenyan context, NGOs working in Kakuma Refugee Camp are confronted with heightened uncertainty due to fluctuating donor support, changing refugee demographics, and limited local resources. This creates an urgent need to identify strategies that enhance long-term organizational sustainability.

Globally, scholars have explored multiple approaches to organizational sustainability, including resource mobilization, strategic partnerships, and organizational agility (Bryson et al., 2021; Ngozi & Edwinah, 2022). While such studies provide useful insights, they are largely situated in Western or stable contexts, leaving a contextual gap in understanding how NGOs sustain operations in humanitarian crises. Furthermore, empirical evidence on the relative effectiveness of different sustainability strategies in the African refugee context remains limited (Mutua, 2021). This study addresses these gaps by examining how strategic resource planning, donor diversification, strategic partnerships, and organizational agility influence the sustainability of NGOs in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya.

The sustainability of NGOs in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, is increasingly undermined by donor dependency, ineffective resource mobilization, and declining international aid, particularly following the recent USAID funding cuts (UNHCR, 2024; UNHCR, 2025). NGOs in Kakuma serve over 200,000 refugees, yet unstable funding has already caused project delays and closures, with more than 35% of NGOs in Turkana shutting down between 2020 and 2023 (National Council of NGOs, 2023). This indicates a pressing need to examine strategies that can safeguard NGO sustainability in humanitarian crisis settings.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTION

This study is anchored on Resource Mobilization Theory, which emphasizes the effective acquisition and allocation of resources for organizational survival (McCarthy & Zald, 1977), and Partnership Theory, which underscores collaborative synergies in achieving sustainability

outcomes (Brinkerhoff, 2002). In addition, Diversification Theory and Organizational Agility Theory provide complementary lenses for examining how NGOs respond to donor risks and adapt to environmental shocks. By applying these theories in a humanitarian setting, the study contributes to the management literature in three distinct ways. This demonstrates how sustainability strategies manifest differently in fragile, resource-constrained environments compared to stable institutional settings. Second, it extends Resource Mobilization Theory by showing that resource acquisition is not always positive donor diversification may negatively affect sustainability when not strategically managed. Third, it provides practical insights for NGO managers and policymakers on how to balance strategic planning, partnerships, and agility to ensure continuity of services in refugee contexts.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H₁: Strategic resource planning has a positive and significant effect on the sustainability of NGOs in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

STRATEGIC RESOURCE PLANNING AND NGO SUSTAINABILITY

Strategic resource planning refers to the deliberate allocation and alignment of human, financial, and technological resources to achieve organizational goals (Bryson et al., 2021). In developed economies, effective resource planning has been associated with improved operational efficiency and long-term viability of nonprofits (Dees & Anderson, 2020). However, in humanitarian settings, resources are often volatile, requiring NGOs to adopt flexible but systematic approaches. Martin and Green (2020), in their study on the European Environmental Bureau (EEB), examined how resource allocation strategies influence ecological sustainability objectives. Using a case study design with historical documents and interviews, the study employed descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis, revealing that organizations with structured resource planning achieved better sustainability outcomes than those relying on ad hoc methods.

Mary (2022) investigated organisational viability through green human resource planning in industrial companies in Anambra State. Drawing data from 360 sampled employees using questionnaires, the study applied ANOVA and percentage charts for analysis. Findings indicated that environmentally conscious practices were strongly enhanced by green performance

management, suggesting that sustainability is closely tied to deliberate strategic planning in human resource management.

Otieno and Wanjiru (2022) explored the effect of strategic resource planning on the longevity of microfinance institutions (MFIs) in Nairobi County. Using questionnaires administered to senior managers and analyzing data with correlation and regression techniques via SPSS, the study found that financial and operational sustainability of MFIs significantly improved with effective resource planning. Mbogoh (2023) established that NGOs with structured planning systems demonstrated stronger resilience against funding shocks and environmental disruptions. Similarly, Njoroge (2022) noted that organizations that integrate strategic forecasting and budgeting practices report higher sustainability outcomes. These findings suggest that resource planning remains a critical factor for NGOs operating in refugee camps where needs fluctuate rapidly. Thus, H1 posits that strategic resource planning enhances NGO sustainability in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed a descriptive research design targeting 300 employees from registered NGOs operating in Kakuma Refugee Camp, Turkana County, Kenya. Using stratified random sampling and Yamane's (1967) formula, 142 respondents were selected, with 120 questionnaires returned, yielding an 84.5% response rate (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires administered physically and online, covering six sections: demographics, strategic resource planning, donor diversification, strategic partnerships, organizational agility, and NGO sustainability. All variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree, with strategic resource planning assessed through strategic plans existence, resource alignment to objectives, and long-term budgeting practices adapted from Bryson et al. (2021) and Mbogoh (2023). The instrument underwent expert review by two NGO practitioners and one academic, followed by pilot testing with 15 employees in Lodwar. Reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha showed strong internal consistency for all constructs, exceeding the recommended threshold (Nunnally, 1978). Confirmatory factor analysis confirmed acceptable model fit with items loading significantly on their intended constructs. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS Version 26.0, employing descriptive statistics including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, correlation analysis to test relationships among variables, and multiple regression to assess

independent variables' effects on sustainability while controlling for organization size and operational years. Diagnostic tests confirmed model appropriateness, with multicollinearity, normality, heteroskedasticity, and autocorrelation tests all meeting acceptable standards for robust statistical inference.

RESULTS

Out of 142 questionnaires distributed, 120 were fully completed and returned, yielding an 84.5% response rate. The majority of respondents were male (58%) while 42% were female. Most participants (46%) were aged between 31 and 40 years. In terms of education, 54% held bachelor's degrees while 32% had postgraduate qualifications. Regarding organizational tenure, 60% had served for more than five years.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

Descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the central tendencies and variability of study variables as presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Strategic Resource Planning	4.01	0.62

Source: Research Survey Data (2025)

The results revealed that strategic resource planning had a mean score of 4.01 with a standard deviation of 0.62, indicating high levels of agreement among respondents regarding implementation of strategic resource planning practices. This suggests that NGOs operating in Kakuma Refugee Camp generally maintain structured approaches to resource allocation and long-term budgeting aligned with organizational objectives.

CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to examine the strength and direction of relationships between study variables as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Correlation Analysis Results

Variable	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value
Strategic Resource Planning	0.741	<0.05

Source: Research Survey Data (2025)

Strategic resource planning demonstrated a strong positive correlation with NGO sustainability ($r = 0.741, p < 0.01$), indicating that organizations with better resource planning practices tend to exhibit higher sustainability levels. This significant relationship suggests that deliberate allocation and alignment of organizational resources substantially contributes to long-term organizational viability in humanitarian contexts.

REGRESSION ANALYSIS

Multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive effect of strategic resource planning on NGO sustainability as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Regression Analysis Results

Predictor Variable	β	SE	t-value	95% CI	p-value
Strategic Resource Planning	1.452	0.162	8.96	1.13 – 1.77	<0.001
Model Fit	$R^2 = 0.915, \text{ Adjusted } R^2 = 0.911, F(4,115) = 308.67, p < 0.001$				

Source: Research Survey Data (2025)

Results showed that strategic resource planning had a significant positive effect on sustainability ($\beta = 1.452, p < 0.001$), supporting H1. The model demonstrated strong explanatory power with R^2 of 0.915, indicating that approximately 91.5% of variance in NGO sustainability is explained by the predictor variables. The highly significant F-statistic ($F = 308.67, p < 0.001$) confirms overall model fit, demonstrating that strategic resource planning positively and significantly affects sustainability of NGOs in Kakuma Refugee Camp.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that strategic resource planning, partnerships, and organizational agility enhance NGO sustainability in humanitarian contexts, while donor diversification can be counterproductive when poorly managed. The findings confirm and extend Resource Mobilization Theory by revealing that resource acquisition is not inherently beneficial unless strategically aligned with organizational capacity. The study makes three key theoretical contributions. First, it extends Resource Mobilization Theory by showing that donor diversification may harm sustainability when mismanaged, challenging the assumption that more resources always improve outcomes. Second, it applies Partnership Theory to humanitarian contexts, confirming that collaborative synergies remain central to organizational survival in fragile environments. Third, it enriches Organizational Agility Theory by empirically demonstrating how adaptability enables NGO survival amid volatile funding and operational environments. From a practical standpoint, NGO managers should invest in structured strategic planning systems and cultivate partnerships with diverse stakeholders including government agencies, other NGOs, and community organizations.

Donor diversification should be carefully managed to avoid administrative overload and mission drift, ensuring that pursuit of multiple funding sources aligns with organizational capacity. Policymakers should support flexible regulatory and funding frameworks that enhance NGO agility rather than imposing rigid compliance requirements that constrain adaptability. Despite these contributions, the study has limitations that suggest directions for future research. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and future studies should adopt longitudinal approaches to track sustainability changes over time. The focus on Kakuma limits generalizability, and comparative studies across different refugee camps would strengthen understanding of context-specific factors. Reliance on self-reported data introduces potential bias, and future research should triangulate questionnaire data with interviews and objective financial performance indicators.

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