REPUBLIC OF TURKEY
ISTANBUL GELISIM UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES

Department of Business Administration

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM IN NGOS OPERATING ON THE SYRIAN RESPONSE

Master Thesis

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Supervisor
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Istanbul – 2023

THESIS INTRODUCTION FORM

Name and Surname	**:** Fuad Mahdi
Language of the Thesis	**:** English
Name of the Thesis	**:** The Effectiveness of the Monitoring and Evaluation System in NGOs Operating on the Syrian Response
Institute	**:** Istanbul Gelisim University Institute of Graduate Studies
Department	**:** Business Administration
Thesis Type	**:** Master
Date of the Thesis	**:** 21/06/2023
Page Number	**:** 70
Thesis Supervisors	**:** Asst. Prof. Dr. EDMUND UDEMBA
Index Terms	**: Keywords:** Effectiveness, Monitoring, Evaluation, Systems, NGOs, Syria refugees, Donors.
Turkish Anstract	**:** Bu tez, Suriye'ye müdahale konusunda çalışan sivil toplum kuruluşlarında izleme ve değerlendirme sisteminin etkinliğini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır.
Distribution List	**:** 1. To the Institute of Graduate Studies of Istanbul Gelisim University 2. To the National Thesis Center of YÖK (Higher Education Council)

Signature

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that in the preparation of this thesis, scientific ethical rules have been followed, the works of other persons have been referenced in accordance with the scientific norms if used, there is no falsification in the used data, any part of the thesis has not been submitted to this university or any other university as another thesis.

Fuad Faisal Abdullah Mahdi

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SUMMARY

This thesis addresses the crucial need for consistent and systematic information on the institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) involved in humanitarian projects in Syria since 2012. M&E systems play a vital role in improving accountability and performance within the humanitarian aid system. The Syrian crisis, also known as the Syrian refugee crisis, has created a severe humanitarian emergency, impacting hundreds of thousands of children and families. The primary objective of this research is to examine the importance of effectively utilizing development cooperation funds allocated to humanitarian projects and to assess the specific effects of monitoring and evaluation systems. Previous studies have shown that although effective M&E systems have been developed, not all designs are equally successful in practice. Despite their utilization, many M&E systems have faced challenges in their full implementation. This study aims to explore the underlying factors contributing to the partial implementation and evaluate the overall effectiveness of M&E systems in ensuring the efficient allocation of development cooperation funds. Several significant challenges have prompted the exploration of monitoring and evaluation system effectiveness within the context of humanitarian projects in Syria. Limited resources pose a major obstacle for NGOs seeking to establish comprehensive M&E systems. Adequate funding, technological infrastructure, and skilled personnel are essential for successful implementation. Additionally, reaching beneficiaries located in remote and inaccessible areas poses logistical difficulties, hindering data collection and effective monitoring and evaluation. The lack of usable data collected by M&E experts is another significant challenge, as it limits the ability to accurately assess the impact and outcomes of humanitarian projects. Moreover, operating M&E systems in conflict zones raises security concerns and adds further complexities to their implementation. To gather empirical evidence and insights, the research methodology involves administering detailed questionnaires to 30 NGOs operating in Syria. The questionnaires target donors, monitoring and evaluation experts, and NGO representatives actively involved in humanitarian efforts. Through the responses received, the study aims to rigorously evaluate and measure the effectiveness of

existing M&E systems. The questionnaires will also facilitate the identification and examination of specific challenges encountered in operating and maintaining these systems, providing a comprehensive understanding of the factors impacting their effectiveness. The anticipated findings of this research endeavor are expected to yield valuable insights that can inform future strategies for the institutionalization of monitoring and evaluation systems in humanitarian projects conducted in Syria. By effectively addressing the challenges and enhancing the effectiveness of M&E systems, the aim is to promote transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the allocation of development cooperation funds. Ultimately, these efforts will contribute to improving humanitarian aid outcomes and facilitating a more effective response to the ongoing Syrian crisis. By conducting a thorough analysis of the challenges faced and the effectiveness of existing M&E systems, the research aims to strengthen accountability, optimize performance, and maximize the positive impact of humanitarian aid in addressing the multifaceted needs arising from the Syrian crisis. In conclusion, this thesis focuses on the imperative need to effectively utilize development cooperation funds and examines the specific effects of monitoring and evaluation systems in humanitarian projects implemented in Syria. As per this research, NGOs involved in the Syrian response have implemented a moderately effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, with a mean value of 3.83. Challenges identified include a lack of competent personnel, insufficient funding, and inadequate documentation for verification. Other obstacles include limited access and knowledge of the M&E system, remote management difficulties, beneficiary displacement, organizational culture issues, and a lack of understanding regarding the role of M&E. The donor/INGO/M&E NGO's system approach supports the Syrian humanitarian program by providing accurate information, classifying needs, sharing experiences, offering training, and implementing robust M&E systems. To improve the humanitarian response, recommended actions include close project monitoring, refined selection criteria for vulnerable populations, enhanced reporting tools and quality, strengthened CRM systems, and improved program quality, and evidence.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Monitoring, Evaluation, Systems, NGOs, Syria refugees, Donors.

ÖZET

Bu tez, 2012'den bu yana Suriye'deki insani projelerde yer alan Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları (STK'lar) tarafından izleme ve değerlendirme (M&E) sistemlerinin kurumsallaştırılması konusunda tutarlı ve sistemli bilgi ihtiyacını ele almaktadır. M&E sistemleri, insani yardım sistemlerinde sorumluluk ve performansı iyileştirmede hayati bir rol oynamaktadır. Suriye krizi, Suriye mülteci krizi olarak da bilinir, yüz binlerce çocuk ve aileyi etkileyen ciddi bir insani acil durum yaratmıştır. Bu araştırmanın temel amacı, insani projelere tahsis edilen kalkınma işbirliği fonlarının etkin bir şekilde kullanımının önemini incelemek ve izleme ve değerlendirme sistemlerinin belirli etkilerini değerlendirmektir. Daha önceki çalışmalar, etkili M&E sistemlerinin geliştirildiğini göstermiştir, ancak tüm tasarımların uygulamada eşit derecede başarılı olmadığı ortaya çıkmıştır. Kullanımlarına rağmen, birçok M&E sistemi tam uygulamada zorluklarla karşılaşmıştır. Bu çalışma, kısmi uygulamaya katkıda bulunan temel faktörleri araştırmayı ve gelişim işbirliği fonlarının verimli tahsisini sağlamada M&E sistemlerinin genel etkinliğini değerlendirmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Suriye'deki insani projelerin bağlamında, izleme ve değerlendirme sistemi etkinliğinin keşfedilmesine yol açan birkaç önemli zorluk bulunmaktadır. Sınırlı kaynaklar, kapsamlı M&E sistemleri kurmaya çalışan STK'lar için önemli bir engel oluşturmaktadır. Yeterli finansman, teknolojik altyapı ve yetenekli personel başarılı uygulama için gereklidir. Ayrıca, uzak ve ulaşılamayan bölgelerdeki yararlanıcılara ulaşmak lojistik zorluklar yaratır ve veri toplama ile etkili izleme ve değerlendirmeyi engeller. M&E uzmanları tarafından toplanan kullanılabilir verilerin eksikliği, insani projelerin etkisini ve sonuçlarını doğru bir şekilde değerlendirme yeteneğini sınırlayan başka bir önemli zorluktur. Ayrıca, çatışma bölgelerinde M&E sistemlerinin işletilmesi güvenlik endişelerini artırır ve uygulamaya daha fazla karmaşıklık ekler. Ampirik kanıtlar ve içgörüler elde etmek için araştırma metodolojisi, Suriye'de faaliyet gösteren 30 STK'ya detaylı anketlerin uygulanmasını içermektedir.

Anketler, bağışçıları, izleme ve değerlendirme uzmanlarını ve insani çabalarda aktif olarak yer alan STK temsilcilerini hedeflemektedir. Elde edilen yanıtlar aracılığıyla, çalışma mevcut M&E sistemlerinin etkinliğini titizlikle değerlendirmeyi ve ölçmeyi amaçlamaktadır. Anketler ayrıca, bu sistemlerin işletilmesi ve sürdürülmesi sırasında

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ABBREDIVATIONS

NGOs	**:**	Non-Governmental Orgisinaztion
INGOs	**:**	International non-Governmental Orgisinaztion
LNGOs	**:**	Local non-Governmental Orgisinaztion
M&E	**:**	Monitoring and evaluation
DAC	**:**	Development Assistance Committee
WASH	**:**	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
IFRC	**:**	The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies
STK	**:**	Sivil Toplum Kuruluşları
CRM	**:**	Customer Relationship Management
CSOs	**:**	Civil Society Organizations
OCHA	**:**	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
MDF	**:**	Monitoring and Evaluation Development Framework
SPSS	**:**	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
Q.R.	**:**	Quick Response- code reader

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PREFACE

I am Fuad from Yemen, driven by a profound inspiration to study at an esteemed university in Turkey. I am privileged to have been admitted to the master’s in business administration program at Gelisim University, where my academic journey has been nothing short of exceptional. The faculty's dedication and support have significantly contributed to my personal and educational growth. The plight of those affected by the ongoing crisis in Syria has deeply moved me, and I am keen to make a positive impact in the region. With Turkey being actively involved in humanitarian efforts, I am particularly drawn to the NGOs working for Syria's response. As such, I have undertaken this research with the aim of contributing to the improvement of monitoring and evaluation systems within these NGOs. The humanitarian sector in Syria faces numerous challenges, and the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation processes plays a crucial role in ensuring the efficiency and impact of the aid provided. By delving into this area of study, I hope to shed light on ways to enhance these practices, ultimately assisting organizations in their endeavors to better serve the affected communities. I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to embark on this academic pursuit, and I hope that the findings of my research will contribute meaningfully to the advancement of the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems in NGOs working for Syria's response. Together, we can strive for a more effective and compassionate response to the needs of the people affected by the crisis.

INTRODUCTION

After a decade of war, the Syria crisis is categorized by humanitarian needs resulting from unparalleled suffering. About 6.7 million Syrians are displaced, while 5.6 million are displaced as refugees abroad (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2021). Despite a ceasefire agreed upon in 2020, hostilities in Syria continue to be a fundamental issue. The E.U., among other non-governmental institutions, continues to be a significant humanitarian donor for Syrians in need across the area. Before the onset of the Syrian civil war and the humanitarian crisis, Syria had a few local civil society organizations (CSOs) which provided funds for humanitarian projects and almost no international non-governmental organizations (INGOs). After the onset of the crisis, INGOs began to unfold in the country, forming relationships with the local organizations to deliver humanitarian aid. The Syrian crisis had been marked by the unstable political environment, which has created a high-risk operating ground for humanitarian projects. As much as aid delivery is a priority for the region, there has been an increase in dependent on emerging Syrian organizations located in restricted areas or areas with limited access. These organizations are mainly the INGOs because they tend to receive more or bulk of the funding for humanitarian response and partner with local organizations to support any humanitarian needs in the region. According to the latest humanitarian needs overview, there is a total of 14 million people who require humanitarian assistance inside Syria, and nearly 60 of the Syrian population faces issues such as food shortages, and this noted clearly by the World Food Programme (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2021).

Monitoring and evaluation systems have been developed both locally and internationally in governmental and non-governmental organizations to enhance humanitarian project planning, implementation, accountability and management. These systems are an integral part of any implementation projects taken on by any organization as part and parcel of every phase of the projects, starting from design to management (World Bank Group, 2016). Monitoring and evaluation aim to assess and measure the projects' performance to obtain development results. Monitoring and evaluation have become a core to developing humanitarian projects of NGOs. Given the lack of information, communication, and access, international non-governmental organizations are concerned that their funds may fall into the wrong hands or be mishandled. Therefore, they rely on monitoring and evaluation systems to confirm if the funds have been received effectively and study the data on the actual allocation of those funds. Monitoring and evaluation systems do not show the efficiency of the aid. Since donors are all over the place, the systems keep receiving donations from various regions worldwide. On delivery, organizational monitoring and evaluation experts provide monitoring reports weekly, monthly, and quarterly to ensure that donors beneficially stay clear of where and how the aid has been distributed.

CHAPTER ONE

STUDY OVERVIEW

1.1 Problem of Study

The purpose of the international humanitarian aid system is to deliver prompt relief during crises, with the objective of saving lives and mitigating the suffering of affected individuals through humanitarian assistance. Humanitarian projects rely on voluntary contributions and therefore profess a moral imperative to act in the event of a crisis to assist in accordance with the principles of the specific non-governmental organizations involved, all originating from the common principles that include independence, humanity, impartiality, and neutrality. The reason why non-governmental organizations are primarily relied on in the event of a crisis is because the government may be involved as perpetrators of violence and oppression against their citizens. Conflict stands as the primary driver behind humanitarian needs Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA, 2018). 2020 marked one of the highest numbers of people who required humanitarian assistance globally, such as people living in poverty, vulnerable people as a result of the impact of Covid-19, and protracted crisis and fragile states, including women and girls (Development Initiatives 2021). NGOs play a vital role in the international humanitarian landscape and serve as crucial recipients of aid. In 2020, international humanitarian assistance flatlined at $30.9 billion, including finance from multilateral development banks, which became active in lending more to countries experiencing a crisis (Development Initiatives, 2021).

1.1.1. Problem statement

Despite the widespread use of M&E systems by NGOs operating on the Syrian response, there is limited empirical evidence on the effectiveness of these systems in improving program outcomes and informing decision-making. Furthermore, there are challenges related to the implementation of M&E systems, such as the lack of standardized indicators and data collection methods, as well as the limited capacity of local staff in using M&E tools (Al-Khalil, M. I., & Elhassan, E. A. 2018:7(2), 21-32).

1.1.2. Research question

What is the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system in improving the quality and accountability of NGOs' interventions on the Syrian response, and what are the challenges faced in implementing these systems?

1.2. Purpose of Study

NGOs' monitoring and evaluation systems effectively implement Humanitarian projects globally. According to MDF (2011), many informal and formal organizations have developed and used information systems for monitoring and evaluation purposes over the years. These organizations have generally referred to the development and implementation of these systems as monitoring and evaluation systems.

1.3. Objectives of Study

The effective implementation of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems is crucial for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) operating in the Syrian response. These systems play a vital role in ensuring accountability, improving the quality of interventions, and maximizing the impact of humanitarian efforts. Therefore, this study aims to examine the integration, impact, and challenges of M&E systems within NGOs involved in the Syrian response. The specific objectives of this research are as follows:

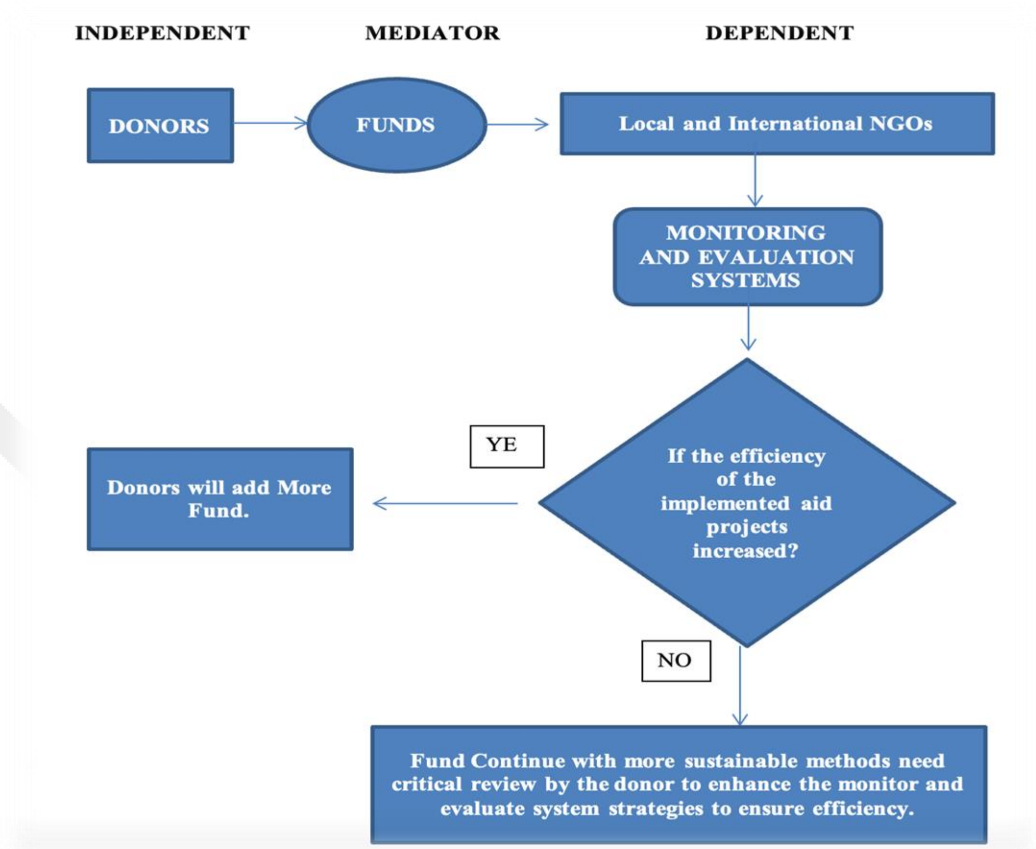
1. The objective of this study is to assess the integration of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems within the program cycle of NGOs operating in the Syrian response.
2. The study aims to evaluate the impact of M&E systems on the quality and accountability of NGOs' interventions in the Syrian context.

3. Another objective is to identify the challenges faced by NGOs in implementing M&E systems and propose effective solutions to address these challenges, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of M&E practices.
4. Additionally, the study aims to examine the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems in donor-funded humanitarian projects, where donations from various regions worldwide are received. Organizational monitoring and evaluation experts provide regular reports to ensure transparent and accountable distribution of aid.

1.4. Timeline and Resources

A timeline for conducting the research will be developed, outlining the major milestones and estimated durations for each phase, including data collection, analysis, and report writing. Required resources, such as access to survey tools, relevant literature, and statistical software, will be secured to support the research process.

1.5. Conceptual Framework



1.6. Limitations of the Study

The study has a few limitations, which might be experienced during analysis. Since the case study design used in the research methodology required studies of past cases or events on the same topic, it might be challenging to find an orderly and logical way to handle the data obtained through research. The study will involve making theoretical assumptions in areas that cannot be proven technically. These drawbacks can be avoided by gaining some theoretical framework on monitoring and evaluation systems before beginning the literature review to ensure that the contexts referenced while collecting study materials are accurate and true to the topic of study.

1.7. Hypotheses of Study

- The effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems significantly affects the delivery and sustainability of humanitarian projects aid.

- Monitoring and evaluations experts’ skills affect the working of the systems significantly.
- Responsiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems is affected in remote and non-accessible areas significantly.
- Challenges such as security issues and loss of funds affect humanitarian trust significantly.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Previous Research

This chapter provides a summary of previous research on the subject by defining humanitarianism and provides an overview of what it entails. Monitoring and evaluation used data to measure and assess the performance of a program to enhance the outcomes. Monitoring and evaluation systems utilize data collected and submitted without the physical presence of donors, information system experts, and other beneficiaries from the organizations involved in implementing the program. Insecurity and barriers inside Syria make an effective monitoring and effective system process extremely challenging, and the coordination among local and international NGOs is critical. There have been many initiatives to improve monitoring and evaluation systems using innovative approaches such as satellite imagery, Q.R. codes, technology, and mobile phone surveys to capture reports and feed the data in the system. Some of the challenges experienced by local and international humanitarian actors are influenced by security challenges and the lack of data in various regions to which the funds have been donated.

The Syrian crisis is one of the most significant humanitarian crises of the 21st century, with millions of people displaced and in need of assistance. As a result, NGOs have played a crucial role in responding to the crisis (Al-Momani & Alshurideh, 2019). However, NGOs operating in the Syrian response face various challenges, including limited resources and security risks. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are essential tools for NGOs to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of their programs in this complex and ever-changing context. The absence of a political solution led to massive flee of refugees in neighboring countries. According to estimates from many Syrian refugee households, approximately 75% of them live below the poverty line, indicating a significant economic hardship (UNICEF et al., 2017, 60). Moreover, it is reported that over half of the refugee population is experiencing extreme poverty (Odiaspora, 2016). These statistics highlight the dire socioeconomic conditions faced by a substantial portion of Syrian refugees, underscoring the urgent need for targeted assistance and support to improve their living conditions and alleviate poverty. Humanitarian actors, including NGOs, both local and international, and the United Nations are currently active in implementing monitoring and evaluation systems for implemented humanitarian projects in Syria (United Nations, 2013), (United Nations, 2012).

A study conducted by Alhakim and Dajani (2020) on the effectiveness of the M&E systems in NGOs operating on the Syrian response found that there are several challenges that hinder the effectiveness of these systems. The authors identified that the lack of standardization of M&E systems across different NGOs, limited funding, and a lack of technical capacity are the main obstacles faced by NGOs in implementing effective M&E systems. Moreover, OCHA (2018) reported that the lack of coordination between NGOs and other stakeholders in the Syrian response has resulted in duplication of efforts, inefficient use of resources, and a lack of effective M&E systems.

This highlights the need for improved coordination between NGOs and other stakeholders in the response. On the other hand, a study conducted by Karam and Hanafi (2018) found that NGOs that have effective M&E systems in place are able to better target their interventions, respond to the needs of the affected populations, and demonstrate their impact to donors and stakeholders. The authors emphasized the importance of investing in building the capacity of NGOs to implement effective M&E systems. Therefore, it is crucial for NGOs operating on the Syrian response to invest in building effective M&E systems that are standardized, well-coordinated, and technically sound. This will enable NGOs to deliver quality services and demonstrate their impact to donors and stakeholders. However, NGOs operating in the Syrian response face various challenges, including limited resources and security risks. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems are essential tools for NGOs to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of their programs in this complex and ever-changing context.

Effectiveness of M&E systems in NGOs: M&E systems are critical for NGOs operating in the Syrian response, as they help measure the impact of their interventions and identify areas that need improvement (Jandrić, 2018:5(3),131-142). A robust M&E system can help NGOs demonstrate their accountability to donors and stakeholders, ensure that resources are being used efficiently, and improve program outcomes. However, implementing an effective M&E system is a complex and resource-intensive process that requires skilled staff, reliable data, and appropriate technology.

Challenges to implementing effective M&E systems: NGOs operating on the Syrian response face several challenges when implementing effective M&E systems. One of the major challenges is access to reliable data, as conflict and displacement can make it difficult to collect and verify data (Hossain & Ahmed, 2018). Additionally, the lack of skilled staff and appropriate technology can hinder the implementation of M&E systems. Furthermore, NGOs may face security risks when collecting data in conflict-affected areas, which can further complicate the implementation of M&E systems.

Strategies to improve M&E systems in NGOs: Despite the challenges, several strategies can be used to improve M&E systems in NGOs operating on the Syrian response. For example, NGOs can invest in staff training and capacity building to ensure that their M&E systems are implemented effectively (Alissa & Abdelnour, 2019). Additionally, they can leverage technology, such as mobile data collection tools, to improve data collection and management. Furthermore, partnerships and collaborations with other NGOs and local communities can help improve access to reliable data.

Corruption is widespread in the Syrian humanitarian response, and it is having a significant impact on the delivery of aid. The most common forms of corruption identified in the case study were diversion of aid, overcharging, and bribery. The case study found that corruption was facilitated by a lack of transparency and accountability, a weak rule of law, and a lack of capacity of humanitarian organizations (Center for Civilians in Conflict, 2017).

M&E systems are essential for NGOs operating on the Syrian response to ensure that their programs are effective and efficient. Despite the challenges faced by NGOs, there are strategies that can be employed to improve the implementation of M&E systems.

However, the effectiveness of these strategies is dependent on various factors, including access to resources, security risks, and the political context. Therefore, it is crucial for NGOs to continually adapt and refine their M&E systems to ensure that they are meeting the needs of their beneficiaries and stakeholders (Araya & Fink, 2016).

2.2. Evolution of Humanitarian Assistance

Humanity includes all people, and all human suffering must be alleviated, regardless of where it occurs. During periods of crisis, the neutrality of a humanitarian organization is of utmost importance as it signifies the organization's impartiality and its commitment to not taking sides. Assistance is provided to individuals in need irrespective of their nationality, race, religion, gender, or political beliefs, aligning with the principle of impartiality. To be called autonomous, humanitarian aid must be free of any political, economic, military, or other objectives that its participants may have in relation to the locations where it is carried out (Massari, 2021). Humanitarian aid, humanitarian protection, and humanitarian advocacy are all terms that refer to different types of "humanitarian action." The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) defines humanitarian assistance as "help aimed at saving lives and reducing the suffering of people affected by a crisis" (OCHA-IASC 2015).

Humanitarian aid is designed to be a temporary measure and is built upon the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality, and independence as outlined in the Geneva Conventions. These principles guarantee that assistance is provided solely based on the needs of individuals, without any consideration of their religion, race, or ethnicity (Rysaback-Smith, 2015). By adhering to these principles, humanitarian aid remains apolitical and distinct from the actions and objectives of other actors (Barnett, 2011). People in need should receive assistance regardless of who they are, where they are, or what the state's goals are. This is a kind gesture that shows solidarity with those in need.

Long-term development assistance seeks to improve socioeconomic conditions by collaborating directly with governments and state institutions to address systemic issues such as poverty, illiteracy and etc. When a crisis occurs, humanitarian aid focuses on providing services that save lives and can be provided by the government or not at all (Bennett, 2015). Humanitarian aid makes no attempt to address the root causes of an emergency. Instead, it tries to meet the needs of those affected by the crisis through quick relief operations "on the ground." As a result, humanitarian aid is more like treating the symptoms of a crisis than solving its underlying causes. "Humanitarian action is reactive and carried out by people with limited power in places where political responsibility is compromised, practical challenges are enormous, and need and suffering are severe" (Deloffre, 2016).

The relationship between development assistance and humanitarian assistance has become more complicated as a result of politicians' and relief workers' efforts to meet every human need (Audet, 2015). In the context of long-term crises, where a significant number of people are confronted with the prospect of prolonged suffering, including the risk of death, disease, or loss of livelihoods, the significance of connecting short-term relief efforts with long-term development programs becomes evident (Bennett, 2015). It is noteworthy that more than eighty percent of refugee situations persist for over ten years, underscoring the need to address both immediate humanitarian needs and long-term development challenges (Weishaupt, 2020). This dynamic is exemplified in the response to refugees in Turkey, as discussed in Chapter 4, where a comprehensive approach combines emergency relief measures and development initiatives to support both refugees and the host population (Bennett, 2015). By employing a range of strategies, including emergency aid and sustainable development interventions, assistance is effectively provided to meet the diverse needs of both populations.

Humanitarianism is a concept deeply rooted in history, transcending centuries and cultures. It encompasses the Islamic tradition of zakat, a fundamental pillar of

Islam, as well as the Christian principle of charity, both of which have greatly influenced humanitarian efforts (Davey et al., 2013). The Enlightenment era, which flourished in the 18th century, played a pivotal role in fostering compassion among individuals. It heightened awareness of human suffering, instilled a moral duty to aid those in need, and fostered a belief in the power of individual agency to effect positive change. Thus, humanitarianism has evolved over time, drawing from diverse traditions and ideologies, and inspiring people worldwide to embrace the responsibility of making a difference through their actions (Barnett, 2011; Nowlan, 2016). The term "humanitarianism" first appeared in the Western world in the early 1800s. It meant fighting to protect and improve humanity while also assisting people beyond national borders. Humanitarian was a derogatory term at the time. Humanitarians were viewed as both "bleeding-heart liberalism" and moralizers because they advocated for the well-being of others (Barnett, 2011). In the early 1800s, the term "humanitarianism" was first used in the Western world. It meant assisting people across borders, having meaning beyond borders, and working to protect and improve humanity. Being referred to as a humanitarian was not a compliment at the time. It was viewed as a hybrid of "bleeding heart liberal" and "moralizer," with humanitarians advising others on how to live their lives (Barnett, 2011).

Barnett (2011) identifies three distinct historical periods in the development of humanitarianism, namely imperial humanitarianism, neo-humanitarianism, and liberal humanitarianism. These eras emerged following the Cold War and each represents a progression in the nature of humanitarian aid, characterized by increasing public visibility, hierarchical structures, and institutionalization. Imperial humanitarianism was rooted in a Christian and European-centric worldview. The neo-humanitarian era witnessed global superpowers leveraging humanitarian issues to advance their own interests, while also giving rise to new frameworks for global governance

In the liberal humanitarian age, a great emphasis is placed on human rights, and the activities of humanitarian actors have expanded to include post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building in addition to supporting the political aims of the government.

In the 1800s, humanitarian assistance targeted indigenous populations and utilized colonial practices as a means to address issues such as famine, medical care, and financial support (Davey et al., 2013). Many conflicts and natural disasters in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries compelled both states and new organizations to assist those in need. On this day in 1863, the International Committee of Red Cross was founded to assist those who have been harmed by war (ICRC). It is one of the most well-known instances of international humanitarian assistance. The Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement currently has branches all over the world that serve people in conflict and peace. The Save the Children Fund was established after World War I to help malnourished children. Despite the fact that it was not known as such at the time, its services have expanded over the years, and it is now an international NGOs. In 1942, Oxfam was established in the United Kingdom as a response to a famine that occurred in Nazi-occupied Greece. While other aid organizations refused to assist Germans, this one used the principle of impartiality to justify assisting anyone in need (Barnett, 2011). International humanitarian assistance is now available to those displaced by natural or man-made disasters, as well as those forced to flee their homes due to war or persecution.

2.3. NGOs and Humanitarian Assistance

Following World War I, the League of Nations was established in 1919 as the first international organization whose primary goal was to maintain global peace. The United Nations was established in 1945 as a result of the end of World War II. Many United Nations agencies were founded in this manner to assist those in need. UNHCR, WFP, UNICEF, and WHO are a few examples. The ratification of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948 was one of several normative transformations that occurred concurrently with the formation of new organizations and institutions. This treaty established every individual's economic, social, and political rights. International participation in times of crisis was established, and humanitarian assistance was justified as a result (Rysaback-Smith, 2015). The following year, the United Nations General Assembly approved additional Geneva Conventions, enhancing civilian rights. As a result, international humanitarian law has been strengthened.

After World War II and the process of decolonization, there was an emergence of humanitarian aid flowing from Europe to less developed countries, particularly post-colonial governments in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The role of global NGOs in humanitarian aid became increasingly significant, with their growth accelerating since the 1980s. The United States alone witnessed the establishment of over 200 NGOs between 1945 and 1949 (Barnett, 2011). These NGOs acted as non-state entities or "petty sovereign authorities" occupying the "liminal gap" between the Western countries, the Soviet bloc, and newly independent Third World states that were emerging from colonialism (Davey et al., 2013). In 2014, a total of 4,278 NGOs were involved in providing humanitarian relief, with the majority being local and national NGOs (Warner, 2017). NGOs are recognized for their crucial role in humanitarian response due to their perceived lower corruption levels, cost-effectiveness compared to governments, better access to vulnerable communities, and greater innovation compared to the UN (Van Zyl et al., 2019).

2.4. The Humanitarian Needs in Syria

According to the latest humanitarian overview from the monitoring and evaluation system, there is a total of 14 million people who require assistance inside Syria. In North-west Syria, most displaced people of about 2.7 million have fled numerous times, and 3.5 million people require humanitarian assistance. International non-governmental organizations continue to monitor and evaluate the needs through the provided funds to aid the people. Syria suffers from a deteriorating economy with human capital, loss of life, and widespread distraction. This results from the population's struggle with earning income and the difficulties they experience accessing essential goods and services. The Covid-19 pandemic has worsened the living conditions with such a high number of people who need humanitarian aid, and the number of families vulnerable in terms of insecurity caused by lack of food is an additional 1.4 million individuals. The Syrian crisis remains a specifically complicated protection crisis. Humanitarian need is critical even through difficulties such as restrictions and bureaucratic impediments caused by the monitoring and evaluation systems on the donations received to aid the crisis. 14 million people are in need in Syria in 2022, of which more than 6.7 of that population is internally displaced. Over 5.6 million of the population comprises registered refugees in different regions, such as 3.7 million in Turkey, 855,000 in Lebanon, 666,000 in Jordan, 247,000 in Iraq, and 132,000 in Egypt. The total sum of the funds received, for instance, by the E.U. and its member states to Syria is €24.9 billion since 2011 (European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, 2021). The E.U. humanitarian funding inside of Syria in 2021 totaled over €141 million. The funds contributed towards humanitarian needs are always a huge number that needs to the monitored using the monitoring and evaluation system to track the budget of the aid delivered to people in the area both remotely and in urban areas. It is hard for monitoring and evaluation experts to monitor such large sums of money as it requires a data entry in the systems to track the expenditure of the contributed donations and provide feedback on the budget to the donors and beneficiaries.

2.5. Decisive Factors behind Humanitarian Funding

The term "humanitarian" often evokes ideals such as selflessness and the importance of protecting human life. This immediate association reflects the core principles of humanitarianism. However, the increasing demand for humanitarian relief surpasses the capacity to fulfill those needs, leading to several challenges in aid distribution. In theory, humanitarian assistance could be allocated based on an individual's ability to pay. For instance, Kosovo received $207 per person in 1999, while Sierra Leone received $16 per person and the Democratic Republic of the Congo received only $8 (Clough, 2018:1-138). The distribution of humanitarian aid has been a significant concern since the Russian withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989, resulting in a drastic reduction in aid despite the country's dire circumstances (Hassan, 2013:12). Multiple competing interests contribute to these challenges.

Even within the context of humanitarianism, an organization that upholds the principles of equal human rights and universal humanity, individual lives and bodies possess unique value and significance (Mognieh, 2015). Humanitarian assistance plays a critical role in "resolving conflicts, preventing violence, and establishing a framework for progressive development" (Hassan, 2013). During a crisis, numerous factors come into play, including domestic political and economic issues, as well as relationships with neighboring countries. Donors' financial contributions are influenced by various factors, such as their foreign policy perspectives, connections to specific countries or regions, the likelihood of a swift resolution to the crisis, end-of-fiscal-year spending, and media exposure (Porter, 2002). While donors are often slow to respond to new crises, Cambell & Knox Clarke (2018) found that bilateral humanitarian aid is influenced by trade with the recipient country, indicating a "follower effect" by the US and a general delay in donor response to new crises. Demand-side variables related to humanitarian needs often take precedence over strategic concerns following a conflict (Bahadory et al., 2019). Media coverage, known as the "CNN effect," also influences humanitarian aid distribution (Olsen et al., 2003). Factors such as geography, language, colonial history (particularly), and cultural affinities further shape the distribution of emergency aid in response to a country's crisis.

When it comes to funding for the Syrian response, humanitarian efforts are highly politicized and function as a "marketing machine," with contractual considerations overshadowing collaborative coordination efforts (Mansour, 2017). Humanitarianism in Syria is deeply entangled with politics, as each donor government has its own agenda, perspectives, beliefs, and priorities. While the same actors have been involved in the refugee response since Lebanon's civil war, the nature of the response has evolved based on the specific circumstances. Humanitarian parties include Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Iran, the United States, Western funders, UN agencies, and international and national NGOs (Clough, 2018).

2.6. NGOs as Primary Source of Humanitarian Support

The field of humanitarian assistance has transformed into a thriving industry, encompassing a multitude of organizations with different missions and objectives. NGOs play a crucial role when governments are unable or unwilling to provide aid to those in need. In fact, the majority of assistance is delivered by these NGOs (OCHA-IASC, 2015). NGOs receive humanitarian assistance because they are thought to be more efficient and cost-effective at providing services than governments (Koch et al., 2009). They have a less hierarchical and bureaucratic structure than the free market and are more benevolent than the government because the public holds them in high regard (Abidi et al., 2014). Because of their small size and ability to respond quickly to emergencies, (NGOs) are often referred to as the "voluntary" or "third" sector. In contrast, the UN system is much larger and more cumbersome than this one. Most communities that could be affected by a crisis are currently served by local and national NGOs. They have a lot of expertise and awareness of the issue, so they can respond quickly in a crisis (Clough, 2018).

NGOs are major forces in humanitarian work and civil society. They are mission-driven organizations that seek to fill a gap left by the private or public sectors. The government and private sector must fail in order for a non-profit to be credible (Parks, 2008). NGOs work to help those who have been marginalized or ignored, such as women, the elderly, people with disabilities, people living in rural areas, and the poor. NGO's are thought to be more capable of assisting these vulnerable people, and donors regard them as critical to the democratization of society (Ebrahim, 2003).

Over the last several decades, the number of (NGOs) has established in every region of the world. These organizations assist individuals in a variety of settings, particularly during crisis time. Humanitarian crises allowed nongovernmental organizations to grow (Devetak, 2010) at the end of the Cold War. There are approximately 4,278 NGOs dedicated to assisting people all over the world. There are 3,495 national NGOs, accounting for 81% of the total (Warner, 2017). Approximately 200 NGOs provided assistance in the aftermath of the Rwandan Genocide in 1994, approximately 180 NGOs provided assistance in the aftermath of the tsunami that struck Indonesia in 2004; approximately 250 NGOs provided assistance in the aftermath of the Kosovo War in 1999, and nearly 900 NGOs registered with the United Nations to provide assistance in the aftermath of the Haiti earthquake in 2010 (Barnett, 2011) These figures exclude contributions from private volunteer organizations and the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Nongovernmental organizations have been extremely helpful in advancing global causes. During the 1990s, NGOs exerted significant pressure on governments to endorse the International Treaty to Ban Landmines. Notably, the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN), comprising NGOs from numerous countries, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2017 for its dedicated efforts in eliminating nuclear weapons. Their advocacy also played a pivotal role in securing government signatures for the International Treaty to Ban Landmines (Mekata, 2018).

The efforts of NGOs have contributed to significant improvements in various humanitarian situations. However, it is important to acknowledge that response efforts have also led to unexpected outcomes and disasters. For instance, during the Rwandan genocide, approximately 50,500 refugees lost their lives to cholera within the first month of the response. Inadequate training of humanitarian aid workers in hygiene and health practices played a role in this tragedy (Parabavathi, 2019). While the Bilateral Evaluation of Immediate Assistance to Rwanda recognized the exceptional performance of many NGOs in providing high-quality care and services, it also revealed instances of unprofessionalism and irresponsibility among certain organizations, resulting in resource wastage and potentially avoidable deaths. These experiences have prompted a collective realization that NGOs need to enhance their commitment to serving communities more effectively. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have failed throughout the humanitarian sector, not just in Rwanda (Fisher, 2017).

People are now paying more attention to how well NGOs perform their duties. Being busy and having good intentions is no longer enough. "There is frequently little evidence to support the notion that INGOs are the "magic bullet" for solving global problems" (Manurung, 2017). Some NGOs have faced challenges regarding their credibility, with instances of exaggerated legitimacy claims and high-profile scandals (Chen, 2016). Therefore, it is crucial for NGOs to demonstrate tangible improvements in people's lives. However, measuring such results is often more challenging than anticipated. Factors such as the complexity of the environment, the absence of baseline data, and the interpretation of project data can hinder the assessment of social change, including improvements in health or quality of life. Donors are increasingly prioritizing the professionalization of the humanitarian sector by enhancing monitoring and evaluation practices (Abidi et al., 2014). This emphasis on accountability aims to ensure that NGOs can effectively demonstrate the positive impact of their initiatives.

2.7. Challenges Faced by NGOs in Implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

NGOs encounter limitations and challenges in the monitoring and evaluation system they implement for humanitarian projects. Like any other information system, most of these challenges are issues that arise around timing, resources, attribution, and methodology. Some of the challenges that NGOs have experienced hinder the practical functions of the monitoring and evaluation systems. These include; issues with data and information where incurrent data can lead to monitoring and evaluation being rendered useless. Second, institutional problems whereby logistical and coordination issues between the NGOs involved prevent the flow of information (Jansury et al., 2015). Third, resource constraints where human resource obstacles such as lack of skill and knowledge required operating and conducting an evaluation can cause delays with results (Rzeszut, 2015). Fourth, the monitoring and evaluation system design problems are unable to research the appropriate required quality levels. The beneficiaries located in remote areas also face security issues, making it difficult for monitoring and evaluation experts to collect the data.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Methodology of Study

The research aims to contribute to the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems in NGOs to implement humanitarian projects in Syria. The study will adopt the case study methodology as the research design for the thesis to answer the defined problem statement. This method will ensure that the research meets its objectives by conducting an in-depth study of a few cases or events to comprehend the investigated phenomenon (Henning et al. (2004), Muzinda (2007). This will ensure that the thesis is explored through a diverse lens rather than one lens to allow for several aspects related to the study topic to be understood and revealed Zucker (, 2009). This study is explanatory research on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems in overseeing the funds donated by donors connected to humanitarian projects. The study will use quantitate data collection and analysis techniques. The sample will consist of NGOs operating on the Syrian response. Data will be collected through surveys. The study will also draw on existing literature and guidelines on M&E systems in humanitarian contexts. OCHA. (2019). Significance: The findings of this study will contribute to the understanding of the effectiveness of M&E systems in improving the quality and accountability of NGOs' interventions in the Syrian response and provide recommendations for improving the implementation of these systems. This can inform the design and implementation of future programs and policies in the humanitarian sector (Amjad, R., & Mazurana, D. (2017).

Research methods encompass a wide range of techniques and methods used to conduct research, while research methodology refers to the approach employed to systematically address research problems. It is a scientific discipline that focuses on studying the systematic conduct of research (Mishra and Alok, 2017:24). Methodology, in turn, represents the scientific approach utilized in conducting research.

In this chapter, the researcher examines the research problem, scope of the study, research objectives, research design, data collection methods, population and sample, and statistical techniques. These aspects are elaborated upon in detail in the subsequent sub-sections.

3.2. Research philosophy

Research philosophy refers to some theories and assumptions about information development and the ideologies that researchers have for the social world they are studying. Several schools follow different ideologies, depending on whether this school approaches the phenomena on a subjective or objective way. There are four major philosophies: positivism, interpretivism, realism and pragmatism. They are defined in detail in the following lines.

1. Positivism: Positivism relies on the hypothetico-deductive method to test a priori hypotheses, which are often expressed quantitatively. This approach aims to establish functional relationships between causal and explanatory factors (independent variables) and outcomes (dependent variables). However, it is important to note that positivist research is not exclusively limited to quantitative methods. For instance, an experimental study investigating the impact of an intervention through qualitative analysis can still align with the positivist paradigm (Park et al., 2020).

   A basic objective of positivist inquiry is to develop explanatory associations or causal relationships that ultimately lead to prediction and control of the phenomena in question. As per (Saunders et al., 2009,), in positivism studies, the role of the researcher is restricted to data collection and interpretation in an objective way. In these types of studies, research findings are usually observable and quantifiable.

2. Interpretivism: Interpretivism is based on that reality is subjective and changing; there is no one ultimate truth. Furthermore, knowledge is subjective and multiple, and diverse interpretations of reality. There is no one ultimate or ‘correct’ way of knowing. It focusses on understanding and uses inductive reasoning; the meaning

is constructed in the researcher participant interaction in the natural environment (Bunniss & Kelly 2010,).

The Researchers adopting this philosophy collect these data, which is subject to their interpretations and experiences. Accordingly, it is possible that different researchers may view the phenomenon from different aspects. Consequently, there could be several interpretations for a specific phenomenon, but they see this is useful for better understanding (Thanh et al., 2015).

3. Realism: Realism is another philosophical position related to scientific enquiry. The essence of realism is that what the senses show us as reality is the truth; the objects have an existence independent of the human mind. The philosophy of realism is that there is a reality quite independent of the mind. In this regard, realism is opposed to idealism, the theory stating that only the mind and its contents exist. Realism is considered a branch of epistemology which is similar to positivism in that it assumes a scientific approach to the development of knowledge.

   The first type of realism is the direct realism. Direct realism states that what you see is what you get: What we experience through our senses portrays the world accurately. The second kind of realism is called critical realism. Critical realists argue that what we experience is sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not the things directly.

4. Pragmatism: It is a philosophy realizing quite well that there is no one single way to interpret a phenomenon. The world can be interpreted in different ways to give a complete full picture of the reality. Pragmatism starts with a problem and aims to solve it in a practical way. This does not mean that pragmatism uses multiple methods; rather it uses the appropriate method or methods to perfectly and completely interpret the phenomenon (Saunders et al., 2009).

   In this research, according to the research aim to assess the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by non-governmental organizations (NGOs operating on the Syrian response, the researcher adopts positivism philosophy.

3.3. Research Approach

According to the research philosophy, the researcher chooses the appropriate Approach which suits the research objectives and the research problem. There are three types of main approaches; deductive, inductive and adductive approach.

Deduction is usually used to test a theory. In deductive approach, it goes from the general to the more specific. It begins with a general theory and afterwards narrows it down into particular theories that require being checked. Whenever we gather more observations to test our theories, it can narrow down even further. This usually allows the researcher even to accept or refute the original theory. Positivists usually use deductive reasoning to develop theories they can test through a specified, predefined research design and objective methods (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

While inductive approach begins with definition of problem, then explain the phenomenon hypothetically and afterwards it continues with assessment of cases. If the case is not consistent with the hypothesis, then the researcher would either redefine the hypothesis or ignores a case of "deviation" which does not support the research hypothesis. Induction usually permits modifications in the hypothetical interpretation of the phenomenon as the research go on. Since induction is a method which observe a specific phenomenon and then arrive to a general findings and conclusion, so it goes from specific to general unlike the deductive approach (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This research uses deductive reasoning method which is relevant to this study with positivistic paradigm and quantitative data.

3.3.1. Sampling Design

For this study, a simple random sampling was used, and the information collected was available for donors, beneficiaries, refugees, and any other party involved in the humanitarian projects. Data was collected using questionnaires that included 30 NGOs in which we targeted the donors, monitoring & evaluation experts and representatives of NGOs. The gathered information studded and measured the systems' effectiveness and the challenges involved in operating and maintaining the systems

3.3.2. The Population and Sample

The scope of this study encompasses both local and international NGOs operating in Syria. Syria was chosen as the research context for several reasons:

- Syria Crisis: The ongoing crisis in Syria has resulted in a significant humanitarian disaster, causing widespread displacement of people. The magnitude of this crisis makes it a compelling area of research to understand and address the challenges faced by NGOs operating in this context.
- Performance Evaluation: The study aims to evaluate the performance of local and international NGOs involved in implementing humanitarian projects in Syria. This evaluation is crucial to assess the effectiveness and impact of their efforts in providing assistance to affected populations.
- Funding Accountability: The study also aims to examine the management and utilization of funds allocated to humanitarian projects in Syria. By evaluating the monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by NGOs, it seeks to ensure transparency and accountability in the use of funds provided by donors.

3.4. Research design

The study adopts a positivist philosophy and utilizes quantitative data analysis as the primary research approach. This design enables the researcher to collect and analyze empirical data, providing a structured and objective assessment of the M&E system's effectiveness in NGOs operating in the Syrian response. The research philosophies contain the fundamental philosophical ideas and principles of reality existence and scientific understanding pursuit. Basically, there are science and knowledge schools of thought-positivism (quantitative) and phenomenology (qualitative). Each has different viewpoints on the research process and the design of the research.

In quantitative research, specifically positivist research, analysis is predominantly focused on numerical calculation and statistical analysis to examine and measure social phenomena. This approach views reality as an observable and measurable phenomenon. The advantages of adopting a quantitative approach include prioritizing objectivity and result reliability, as well as supporting replication of findings. However, positivism may not always be suitable for studying social sciences and business studies, as not all social phenomena can be precisely and consistently quantified. This limitation can potentially reduce the validity of the results. Examples of quantitative strategies include experimental design and the use of closed-ended questionnaires (Antw & Hamza, 2015). In qualitative research, specifically phenomenological research, scholars argue that the world is socially constructed and that science is influenced by human values. They acknowledge that researchers are subjective beings who are part of the world they study, making complete objectivity unattainable. This qualitative, interpretive approach offers several advantages, including higher validity and reduced artificiality in the findings. By observing phenomena in natural, real-life settings, researchers can gain a more accurate understanding of these phenomena. Moreover, effective qualitative research demonstrates a deep understanding and extensive knowledge of the subject matter. Nevertheless, work motivated by phenomenological philosophy is often compromised by the researcher's subjectivity and the poor reliability of the results in that, relying on their observations of the same phenomenon at the same time, two researchers may arrive at different interpretation. The most popular forms to collect qualitative data are focus group discussions and in-depth interviews (Antw & Hamza, 2015).

Researchers often employ a mixed design approach that combines both positivist and phenomenological perspectives in order to address the advantages and disadvantages associated with each. This approach allows for a more comprehensive exploration of the research topic by incorporating both objective data analysis and subjective experiences. Therefore, several studies show a mixture of methods of quantitative and qualitative analysis. Using different methods of study helps the researcher to improve the results ' reliability and validity. One method's shortcomings are offset by the strong points of other methods in the same research (Antw & Hamza, 2015).

This research study adopts positivism philosophy which mainly adopts quantitative data in its analysis. The researcher developed survey tool to collect the primary data necessary for analyzing examines to assess the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by NGOs operating on the Syrian response, the researcher adopts positivism philosophy.

3.4.1. Population

Population refers to the entire group of individuals or objects that the research is interested in studying. In this case, the population consists of all NGOs staff (program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers) who are working in Turkey for the Syria crisis.

In this study, the population is defined as the total group of individuals who meet specific criteria and are of interest to the researcher. It includes all staff members of NGOs (program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers) working in Turkey for the Syria crisis (Rudhumbu & Maphos, 2015). However, due to practical constraints related to resources and time, it is not feasible to study the entire population. Therefore, the researcher opts for a purposive sampling approach to select a representative sample from this population. This method is chosen for its ability to save time and effort while ensuring the accuracy of data statistics.

3.4.2. Sample Selection

The sample selected through a stratified random sampling technique. The first step involved dividing the population into subgroups or strata based on the type of organization (international, local, and LNGOs) and the staff position (program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers). In this case, NGOs were selected based on their involvement in responding to the Syrian crisis in Turkey. The sample size determined using the appropriate formula for stratified random sampling. A total of 30 sample size of NGOs were selected for this study using a purposive sampling technique. The selection criteria were based on the following: (1) NGOs actively working on the

Syria crisis in Turkey; (2) NGOs registered with the Turkish government; (3) NGOs willing to participate in the study. The data collected from the respondents were analyzed using SPSS statistical analysis program.

The sample size was (30) NGOs and the sample determined using the appropriate formula for stratified random sampling. In total, 24 respondents from NGOs completed the online Google questionnaire.

Sampling is a vital process in scientific research that involves selecting a specific group of individuals from a larger study population. It is considered the most effective method for sample selection, offering advantages such as cost reduction, time efficiency, data accuracy, and comprehensive data collection (Taherdoost, 2016). However, due to the limited number of responses received, the generalizability of the findings may be restricted. The study tool may have faced challenges in its application across the entire study community, affecting the ability to include a broader range of participants. As a result, the researcher identified a sample of 30 respondents from various NGOs staff, including program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers. This sample provides insights into the organizations in which the respondents are employed.

Table 1. Shows the organizations in which the respondents work.

Workplace/Organization	No.	%
Dunyadoktorlari Derneği	1	4.2%
GOAL GLOBAL	2	8.3%
İHH İnsani Yardım Vakfı (IHH)	1	4.2%
Ihsan for Relief and development	8	33.3%
Islamic Relief Worldwide	4	16.7%
Open Platform Communications (OPC)	2	8.3%
Private Consultancy Company – (CPCD)	2	8.3%

Qatar Red Crescent (QRCS)	1	4.2%
M&E Expert Self-employed	1	4.2%
UN OCHA	1	4.2%
Welthungerhilfe (WHH)	1	4.2%
Total	**24**	**100%**

3.4.3. Time Horizon

In this study, the time horizon encompasses three primary types of data: time series data, cross-sectional data, and panel data. Time series data or longitudinal data is the observation of an individual or a specific agent through time intervals. It indicates that every participant is observed at successive time points. It is collected at equal time spacing; it could be monthly, semi-annually or annually. On the other hand, the researcher may want to study phenomena at a specific time. This is called Cross-sectional data in which data is collected in a point of time but on various objects or agents, for example individuals, firms, countries … While panel data is combination of both cross-sectional and time series. It is studying a phenomenon on different agents through different time intervals (Sedgwick, 2014).

In the current research study, the research aim is to analyze The Effectiveness of the Monitoring and Evaluation System in NGOs Operating on the Syrian Response. As a result, the researcher developed a survey tool and distributed it to NGOs staff And, monitoring and evaluation companies, and MEAL experts; hence we can conclude that the researcher adopted cross-sectional data technique.

3.4.4. Extent of researcher interference

The study implementation involves a moderate level of researcher intervention as it is conducted as a field experiment. The researcher distributes an electronic questionnaire to a sample of NGOs staff, including program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers.

In the event of any difficulties in comprehending the questions or navigating the electronic questionnaire, the researcher will provide simplified and unbiased explanations, while refraining from providing any guidance or influencing respondents' selections in a particular direction.

3.5. Data Collection Method

The research data was implemented through a stratified random sampling technique was mployed to select a representative sample of 30 NGOs involved in humanitarian projects in Syria usging quantitative data method. The sample includes international, local, and LNGOs, as well as program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies, and project managers. Data collection involves distributing an online Google questionnaire and 24 responded and they represented the selected NGOs. The questionnaire is designed to gather insights into the effectiveness of the M&E system, donor satisfaction, and funding levels. The collected data analyzed using the SPSS statistical analysis program. This approach allows for a standardized data collection process from a diverse group of stakeholders, providing valuable insights into the effectiveness of the M&E system in the context of humanitarian projects in Syria. The questionnaires will consist of three sections; the first section will use the Likert Scale, which monitors the attitude of the involved participants on their take of monitoring and evaluation systems. The second section will be demographic, where the question will involve remote areas and international NGOs located in the cities. The third section will include the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by NGOs by questioning the information systems experts.

3.5.1. Data Collection

Since the aim of this study is to collect data and information from the researcher identified the sample in (30) respondents of NGOs staff and monitoring and evaluation companies, and MEAL experts (program managers, MEAL experts, and monitoring and evaluation companies and projects managers). about analyzing the impact of monitoring and evaluation systems in enhancing the performance of

NGOs operating on the Syrian response. And in this regard, the current study uses primary and secondary data:

1- Secondary data: The study relied on secondary data, which refers to information collected from existing sources. Reference books, recent journals, and reputable internet websites were utilized to gather relevant information about the research topic.
2- Primary data: The study also collected primary data, which refers to data collected firsthand from the original source. In this case, the researcher employed a questionnaire as a research tool to assess the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by NGOs involved in the Syrian response.

The questionnaire is divided into two main parts:

- Personal information: where demographic information about the respondents is collected, which is likely to have an impact on the variables of the study, and these data include (age, gender, job title, income level, education level).
- Questions and Measures: These are measures about the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation systems implemented by NGOs operating on the Syrian response.

3.5.2. Research Instruments

A pre-existing structured questionnaire established by previous researchers (Antw & Hamza, 2015 is used for data collection. Likert scale will be used for our questionnaire to get the data from the respondents.

3.5.3. Data Analysis

The study utilized an electronic questionnaire, offering participants the convenience of responding using any device and at their preferred time. This electronic format allowed for response restriction, ensuring that each respondent could only complete the questionnaire once. Additionally, the electronic questionnaire facilitated easy data extraction in table formats, eliminating the need for manual data entry associated with paper questionnaires. The researcher then encoded the collected data and performed the necessary statistical analyses program through the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) to fulfill the study's objectives.

3.5.4. Validity and Reliability

3.5.4.1. Validity

To assess the validity of the research instrument and its ability to measure the intended constructs, a comprehensive approach was followed. Firstly, a thorough literature review was conducted to identify relevant items for inclusion in the questionnaire. This ensured that the questionnaire captured the key aspects and dimensions related to the research objectives. Furthermore, the expertise of subject matter experts was sought to ensure content validity. These experts, with their deep knowledge and experience in the field, provided valuable insights and suggestions for refining the questionnaire. Their input helped ensure that the questionnaire covered the necessary areas and accurately assessed the constructs of interest.

A pilot study was then conducted to evaluate the clarity, comprehension, and relevance of the questionnaire items. The pilot study involved administering the questionnaire to a small sample of participants who were representative of the target population. The participants' feedback was carefully analyzed, and necessary modifications were made to enhance the questionnaire's quality, improve item clarity, and ensure its relevance to the study context.

In addition to the pilot study, internal consistency measures, such as Cronbach's alpha, were calculated to assess the reliability of the questionnaire. This statistical analysis helped determine the consistency and stability of the questionnaire items in measuring the intended constructs.

Throughout the validation process, the primary focus was on ensuring that the questionnaire effectively measured the intended constructs and provided valid data for analysis. By incorporating feedback from subject matter experts, conducting a pilot study, and applying reliability analysis techniques, the questionnaire was refined to optimize its effectiveness in capturing the required information and aligning with the study objectives.

3.5.4.2. Reliability

The questionnaire was applied to (30) of respondents of NGOs staff and monitoring and evaluation companies, and MEAL experts. And this step is useful in identifying the extent of the tool's ability to measure what it was prepared to measure, in addition to identifying the most important obstacles encountered when actually applying to the original sample.

The following table present Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the stability of the study tools.

Table 2. Presents the results of Cronbach's Alpha coefficient for the research instrument.

Number of phrases	Cronbach's alpha coeffici
22	**0.91**

The table presented above demonstrates the questionnaire's reliability, indicating the consistency and stability of its results when administered to the sample participants multiple times over a specific period.

Cronbach's Alpha coefficient is a measure of internal consistency reliability, which assesses how closely related a set of items or questions in a research instrument are to each other. It quantifies the extent to which all the items in the instrument are measuring the same underlying construct or dimension.

In the context of the study, the Alpha-Cronbach coefficient of 0.91 indicates a high level of internal consistency. This means that the items in your questionnaire, which were designed to measure a specific construct or dimension related to your research, are highly correlated with each other. In other words, the responses to the questions in your instrument are consistently capturing the same underlying concept.

A higher Cronbach's Alpha coefficient suggests that the items in the instrument are measuring the intended construct more reliably. It indicates that the questionnaire items are internally coherent and consistently measure the same phenomenon. A coefficient value of 0.91 is considered very good and demonstrates a high level of reliability for your research instrument.

By having a high level of internal consistency in your questionnaire, you can have more confidence in the results obtained from the responses. It provides assurance that the data collected is reliable and that the instrument is effectively measuring the construct of interest in a consistent manner.

In summary, the high Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.91 for your research instrument indicates that the questionnaire has strong internal consistency and can be considered a reliable tool for measuring the specific construct or dimension in your study.

3.5.5. Data Entry Steps and Results Extraction

- Data collection stage: In this stage, data was collected from the specified sample using the questionnaire tool.
- The data entry stage: commenced following the completion of data collection for the study. At this stage, the researcher diligently entered the collected data into the computer using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) statistical analysis program.
- Data run stage: It is the stage of inventorying data related to all study variables, and then carrying out appropriate statistical analyzes of the data.
- The stage of converting data into information: During this stage, information that contributes to answering the study's questions and verifying its hypotheses are extracted.
- Interpretation and converting information into results: During this stage, the facts and results that have been reached through data analysis are linked with indicators, which lead to valuable scientific results and facts.

3.5.6. The Statistical Methods Used

Upon completion of data collection for the study, the gathered information was meticulously encoded into a computer system. Subsequently, the data underwent processing and analysis, and statistical results were derived using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Various statistical procedures and treatments were applied to facilitate this analysis.

1. Simple frequencies and percentages.
2. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation.
3. Relative and percentage weight: which is calculated from the following equation:
4. Arithmetic mean x 100 ÷ maximum score for the answer to the statement.

3.6. Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a comprehensive overview of the research methodology employed in this study. It encompasses the identification of the research problem, formulation of hypotheses from various domains, and the devised approach to address the research objectives. Furthermore, it elucidates the research design, delineates the questionnaire statements, outlines the research sample, expounds upon the data collection methods, and details the selected tools for data analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this part, we explain the characteristics of the sample to which the study tool was applied, then the results of the respondents' answers to the study's questions are reviewed, then we present the key findings of the study, followed by a set of recommendations.

4.1. List of Variables

There are a lot of scales that are used to measure information system efficiency.

In this study, the researchers used a scale to measure the attitudes of representatives from local and international NGOs, as well as donors, regarding their perception of the ease of use of the systems. The scale is based on a 5-point Likert scale, which is a commonly used method for measuring attitudes and opinions.

1 Strongly disagree – 2 Disagree – 3 Neither Agree nor Dis agree – 4 Agree – 5 Strongly Agree

Each point on the scale represents a different level of agreement or disagreement. Here is a breakdown of the scale used in this study:

Strongly Disagree: This indicates a strong negative opinion or disagreement with the statement regarding the ease of use of the systems.

Disagree: This suggests a moderate level of disagreement with the statement.

Neither Agree nor Disagree: This signifies a neutral stance or no strong opinion either way regarding the ease of use of the systems.

Agree: This reflects a moderate level of agreement with the statement.

Strongly Agree: This indicates a strong positive opinion or agreement with the statement regarding the ease of use of the systems.

Participants in the study were asked to indicate their level of agreement by selecting the corresponding number on the scale for each statement related to the ease of use of the systems. The scale provides a structured framework for respondents to express their opinions and allows for quantifiable data analysis. By using the same scale consistently, the researchers were able to compare and analyze the attitudes of different stakeholders toward the usability of the information systems in a standardized manner.

4.2. Personal and Occupational Characteristics of the Study's Sample

The sample of the study was identified in the personnel all NGOs staff and, monitoring and evaluation companies, and MEAL experts (program managers, MEAL experts, monitoring and evaluation companies and projects managers). The following table presents the sample's characteristics in relation to the (gender, age, Marital Status, Place of Residence, Educational level, Employment Status, Organization Type, Position).

Table 3. Shows Characteristics of the Study's Sample

Variable	Categorization	No.	%
Gender	Male	5	20.8
	Female	19	79.2
Age	Blew 30	1	4.2
	From 30 – 40 years	16	66.7
	From 41 – 50 years	6	25.0
	Above 50	1	4.2
Marital Status	Married	20	83.3

	Unmarried	4	16.7
Place of Residence country	Turkey	22	100
Educational level	Above	10	41.7
	Tertiary	1	4.2
	University	13	54.2
Employment Status	Consultant	2	8.3
	Employed	22	91.7
Organization Type	Freelance M&E Consultant	1	4.2
	INGO	11	45.8
	LNGO	10	41.7
	private consultancy company	1	4.2
	TPM	1	4.2
Position	Finance Manager	1	4.2
	Head of program/Program Manager	1	4.2
	Head of program/Program Manager/program officer	5	20.8
	MEAL expert	9	37.5
	Operational Expert	4	16.7
	Other	4	16.7
Total		**24**	**100**

The following section provides a detailed breakdown and analysis of the demographic characteristics of the participants in the study. The information presented in the table sheds light on various aspects such as gender, age, marital status, place of residence, educational level, employment status, organization type, and position held. This data is essential for understanding the profile of the respondents and gaining insights into their backgrounds and roles within the humanitarian projects in Syria.

Gender: The table indicates that 79.2% of the respondents were female, while 20.8% were male. This suggests that the majority of the participants surveyed in the study were women.

Age: The data shows that 66.7% of the respondents fell within the age range of 30-40 years. Additionally, 25% of the participants were between 41-50 years old. There were 4.2% of respondents below 30 years old and another 4.2% above 50 years old.

Marital Status: According to the table, 83.3% of the respondents were married, while 16.7% were unmarried. This gives an insight into the marital status distribution among the participants.

Place of residence: The table reveals that all the feedback received was from respondents residing in Turkey. This indicates that the study participants were located in Turkey at the time of data collection.

Educational level: The previous table displays that 54.2% of the employees had a university education, while 41.7% had education levels above university. Additionally, 4.2% of the respondents had tertiary education qualifications.

Employment Status: According to the previous table, 91.7% of the respondents were employed, indicating that the majority of participants were actively working. Furthermore, 8.3% of the respondents identified themselves as consultants.

Organization Type: The data reveals that 45.8% of the respondents belonged to INGOs (International Non-Governmental Organizations), 41.7% belonged to LNGOs (Local Non-Governmental Organizations), and 4.2% each were freelance M&E consultants, employed in private consultancy companies, or working in TPM (Third Party Monitoring).

Position: The previous table shows the distribution of positions held by the respondents. Among the respondents, 37.5% were MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning) experts, 20.8% were Head of program/Program Manager/program officers, 16.7% were Operational Experts, 4.2% were Finance Managers, and 4.2% were Head of program/Program Manager. This information provides insights into the roles and responsibilities of the participants within their respective organizations.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics of Study's Variables

To analyze and interpret the results related to the efficacy of monitoring and evaluation systems adopted by NGOs operating on the Syrian response. The researcher used both of the mean, standard deviation, importance of item, and importance of level as the next:

(1) Strongly disagree – (2) Disagree – (3) Neither agree nor disagree – (4) Agree – (5) Strongly Agree

Table 4. Shows the Descriptive Statistics.

No.	Phrases	Mean	Std. D	Rank item
1	You are familiar and have knowledge about the Humanitarian Assistance NGOs/INGOs in Syria.	4.63	0.576	1
2	Your organization is a contributor to partner INGOs/NGOs that provide humanitarian aid in Syria or to Syrian refugees.	4.38	1.056	2
3	You have a fundamental understanding of the various types of Monitoring and Evaluation systems used by NGOs.	4.13	1.100	5

4	You are knowledgeable with the Paris Declaration Agreement on Enhanced Donor Effectiveness	2.71	1.301	16
5	You or your donor organization is familiar with the International Agreement for Improving the Utilization of Donations / Funds.	3.75	1.422	10
6	Your organization as a donor/NGO/INGO may use any type of monitoring and evaluation system.	3.83	1.193	9
7	You or your organization as a donor/NGO/INGO adopting an effective M&E system in quality assurance while delivering Humanitarian Assistance.	3.96	0.955	7
8	You or your organisation assist partner NGOs with M&E implementation in Humanitarian Aid.	4.13	0.850	5
9	M&E systems contribute to the international community's understanding of the Syrian crisis.	4.00	0.780	6
10	The existing monitoring and evaluation systems takes gender equality into consideration	4.21	0.779	4
11	Local employees hired by NGOs are capable of operating M&E systems.	3.50	0.978	13
12	The local comminutes are able to use the M&E systems to voice their concerns or complains.	3.63	0.970	11

13	You or your company are aware of the difficulties in implementing M&E while delivering Humanitarian Assistance.	4.35	0.714	3
14	Local NGOs use M&E system reports as learning experiences and retain them for future learning enhancement?	3.63	1.013	11
15	TPM companies engaged by the donors produce M&E reports of varying quality compared to the internal M&E reports of local NGOs.	3.58	1.018	12
16	Your NGO's M&E reports are important for enhancing the performance of your programmes.	4.00	1.103	6
17	The effective M&E system promotes donor confidence and continuous funding, which is beneficial for improving Humanitarian Aid in Syria or for Syrian Refugees.	4.00	1.142	6
18	Third-party monitoring and evaluation companies working in Syria play a significant role in enabling donors and the international community to enhance the quality and accountability of programmes.	3.88	0.850	8
19	local NGO M&E Systems provide high-quality outcomes for communities and donors	3.48	0.898	`4
20	The local organisations in Syria have adequate monitoring and evaluation systems to guarantee positive community results.	3.63	0.875	11

21	Local Syrian organisations have the essential monitoring and evaluation system capabilities to replace international organisations.	3.25	0.989	15
22	Currently, the M&E evidence on the Syrian crisis context is used to enhance the quality of the programme.	3.63	0.924	11
	N = 24	**3.83**	**0.19**	**-**

The descriptive statistics provide further insights into the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation system in NGOs operating on the Syrian response. Based on the data presented in the above table, the average rating of 3.83 indicates that, on average, the respondents perceived the system to be moderately effective.

The standard deviation of 0.19 suggests that there is relatively low variability in the participants' perception of the system's effectiveness. In other words, the participants generally had a consistent opinion about the level of effectiveness.

Digging deeper into the analysis, we find that the phrase "You are familiar and have knowledge about the Humanitarian Assistance NGOs/INGOs in Syria" received the highest mean rating of 4.63. This indicates that the respondents, on average, strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, suggesting that they possess a good understanding of the NGOs operating in the Syrian response.

On the other hand, the phrase "You are knowledgeable with the Paris Declaration Agreement on Enhanced Donor Effectiveness" obtained the lowest mean rating of 2.71. This suggests that, on average, the respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, indicating a lack of familiarity or knowledge about the Paris Declaration of Agreement on Enhanced Donor Effectiveness.

Furthermore, the standard deviation of 0.576 for the phrase "You are familiar and have knowledge about the Humanitarian Assistance NGOs/INGOs in Syria" suggests that there is relatively low variability in the participants' opinions about this statement. On the other hand, the phrase "You are knowledgeable with the Paris

Declaration Agreement on Enhanced Donor Effectiveness" had a higher standard deviation of 1.301, indicating greater variability in the participants' responses to this statement.

Overall, these descriptive statistics provide a detailed understanding of the participants' perceptions and highlight the areas where the monitoring and evaluation system in NGOs operating on the Syrian response is perceived to be effective or lacking.

Table 5. Present the Ensuring the Effectiveness of the Humanitarian Assistance Project

Workplace/Organization	No.	%
Yes	18	75
No, never determine	6	25
Total	**24**	**100**

The data presented in the previous table provides insights into the respondents' perceptions regarding the effectiveness of the Humanitarian Assistance project. It is noteworthy that a significant majority of respondents (74%) expressed confidence in ensuring the project's effectiveness. This indicates that they believe their efforts and actions contribute positively to achieving the desired outcomes and impact of the project.

Conversely, a smaller proportion of respondents (25%) reported that they did not ensure the effectiveness of the project. This suggests that they may have reservations or concerns about their ability to effectively contribute to the project's goals and objectives.

It is important to further analyze the reasons behind these varying perceptions. Factors such as individual roles, responsibilities, resources, and external challenges could potentially influence respondents' confidence in ensuring project effectiveness. Understanding these factors can provide valuable insights for improving project implementation and addressing any existing gaps or barriers that may hinder the achievement of desired outcomes.

Table 6. Shows Obstacles for the M&E System in Syria Response Humanitarian Assistance Projects

Obstacles	No.	%
Access and knowledge of ME system	1	3.7
Access and remote management	1	3.7
Availability of the qualified staff	3	11.1
Adequate fund/ Required fund	3	11.1
Beneficiaries' Displacement	1	3.7
Organization Culture	1	3.7
Lack of reaching trustable information and data collection	2	7.4
Lack of documentation for verification purposes	1	3.7
MEAL activities are limited of planned activities only.	1	3.7
Reaching the beneficiaries in non-accessible areas.	1	3.7
Security Situation	1	3.7
Lack considering MEAL as important and depending on TPM only	1	3.7
Lack Understanding of the fundamental role of M&E	1	3.7
Never determine	9	33.3
N =24	**27**	**100.0**

The table provided offers further insights into the obstacles faced by the M&E system in Syria's Response to Humanitarian Assistance Projects. Let's delve deeper into each of the mentioned challenges:

Lack of qualified staff: This obstacle indicates a shortage of personnel with the necessary skills, knowledge, and expertise in monitoring and evaluation. It suggests that there is a need for trained professionals who can effectively implement and manage the M&E system, ensuring accurate data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Inadequate funding or required funds: This obstacle highlights the financial constraints faced by organizations involved in humanitarian projects. Insufficient funding can hinder the proper implementation of the M&E system, including the acquisition of necessary resources, technology, and tools to effectively monitor and evaluate project activities.

Lack of documentation for verification purposes: This challenge emphasizes the importance of documentation in the M&E process. Proper documentation is essential for verifying the accuracy and reliability of data, ensuring transparency, and facilitating accountability. Without sufficient documentation, it becomes difficult to track and assess the impact and outcomes of humanitarian projects.

Limited access and knowledge of the ME system: This obstacle suggests that there may be a lack of awareness or understanding among stakeholders about the M&E system and its importance. Limited access could also refer to difficulties in accessing relevant information, data, or resources needed for effective monitoring and evaluation.

Difficulties in accessing and managing remote areas: In humanitarian contexts, reaching beneficiaries located in remote and hard-to-access areas can pose logistical challenges. This obstacle highlights the need for innovative strategies and approaches to ensure comprehensive coverage and effective monitoring and evaluation, even in challenging geographic locations.

Displacement of beneficiaries: The displacement of beneficiaries due to the humanitarian crisis can impact the implementation of the M&E system. It can result in difficulties in tracking and assessing the outcomes of interventions when beneficiaries are constantly on the move or dispersed across different locations.

Organizational culture issues: This challenge points to cultural factors within organizations that may impede the successful implementation of the M&E system. It could include resistance to change, lack of buy-in from staff and management, or a limited understanding of the value and benefits of monitoring and evaluation.

Limited implementation of MEAL activities beyond planned activities: MEAL (Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning) activities should extend beyond the initial planning phase to ensure continuous monitoring, evaluation, and learning throughout the project lifecycle. This obstacle suggests that organizations may struggle to implement comprehensive MEAL activities beyond what is initially planned, limiting their ability to gather meaningful data and insights.

Challenges in reaching beneficiaries in non-accessible areas: Similar to the earlier point on accessing remote areas, this obstacle refers specifically to areas that are deemed non-accessible due to security concerns, infrastructure limitations, or other barriers. It underscores the need for innovative approaches to reach and engage beneficiaries in such contexts.

Security concerns: Operating in conflict or crisis-affected regions can pose security risks for organizations involved in humanitarian projects. This obstacle highlights the additional complexities and risks faced when implementing the M&E system in such volatile environments.

Lack of recognition of the importance of M&E and overreliance on TPM: This challenge suggests that some stakeholders may not fully recognize the significance of monitoring and evaluation in ensuring effective humanitarian interventions. Additionally, an overreliance on Third Party Monitoring (TPM) without a comprehensive understanding of the broader role of M&E can limit the effectiveness of the system.

Addressing these obstacles requires a multi-faceted approach that includes building capacity and expertise in M&E, securing adequate funding, improving documentation practices, promoting a culture of accountability and learning, and developing innovative strategies to reach beneficiaries in challenging contexts. Overcoming these challenges will contribute to the enhanced effectiveness of the M&E system and ultimately lead to improved humanitarian outcomes in the Syria.

Table 7. How Donor/INGOs/M&E NGO's System Approach Aid the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance Programme.

Phrases	No.	%
By providing the accurate information and correct data about the	1	3.8
Classify the needs based on the types as well.	1	3.8
Share the experiences with other organization working in the same	1	3.8
Provide trainings	1	7.7
Support in Health, Education, and WASH	1	3.8
Identification of the actual needs and the right programming.	1	3.8
Partnership and sub grants	1	3.8
Proper M&E Systems and Stronger Community Engagement	1	3.8
Never determine	17	65.4
N =24	**26**	**100.0**

The table presented above provides insights into how donor/INGO/M&E NGO's system approaches to aid the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance program. Among the responses, several key approaches were highlighted:

By providing accurate information and correct data about the people in need: Approximately 3.8% of respondents acknowledged that the system facilitates the provision of accurate information and correct data about the individuals requiring assistance. This helps ensure that aid efforts are targeted to those who truly need it.

Classify the needs based on the types: Another 3.8% of respondents recognized that the system assists in classifying the needs of the affected population based on different types or categories. This categorization allows for a more systematic and targeted approach to addressing the diverse needs arising from the crisis.

Share experiences with other organizations working in the same sector: Approximately 3.8% of respondents appreciated the system for facilitating the sharing of experiences and best practices with other organizations operating in the humanitarian sector. This exchange of knowledge enhances collaboration, prevents duplication of efforts, and promotes innovative approaches.

Provide training: Around 7.7% of respondents acknowledged that the system supports the provision of training opportunities. These training enhance the capacity and skills of humanitarian workers and local organizations, enabling them to effectively deliver services and implement programs.

Support in Health, Education, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH): Approximately 3.8% of respondents recognized the system's role in providing support in key sectors such as health, education, water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH). This assistance contributes to improving the overall well-being and quality of life of the affected population.

Identification of the actual needs and the right programming: Another 3.8% of respondents highlighted the system's ability to identify the actual needs of the affected population and ensure appropriate programming. This data-driven approach helps in tailoring interventions to address specific needs, leading to more effective outcomes.

Partnership and sub-grants: Around 3.8% of respondents acknowledged the system's support in fostering partnerships and providing sub-grants. These collaborative efforts enable a coordinated response, leveraging the strengths and resources of various organizations to maximize impact.

Proper M&E Systems and Stronger Community Engagement Protocols: Approximately 3.8% of respondents recognized the importance of proper monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and stronger community engagement protocols facilitated by the system. These elements ensure accountability, enable evidence-based decision-making, and empower communities in the aid process.

It is worth noting that 65.4% of respondents did not attribute any specific approaches to the system. The data was derived from a sample of 24 respondents.

By incorporating these approaches, donor/INGO/M&E NGO's system plays a crucial role in assisting the Syrian Humanitarian Assistance program. These approaches help in providing accurate information, classifying needs, sharing experiences, providing training, offering sector-specific support, identifying actual needs, fostering partnerships, implementing effective M&E systems, and engaging communities. Together, they contribute to a more coordinated and impactful response to the humanitarian crisis in Syria.

Table 8. Shows the Most Effective Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Systems for NGOs Providing Humanitarian Relief in Syria.

Phrases	No.	%
Both internal and external systems	1	3.8
Context based monitoring	1	3.8
Direct M & E system	1	3.8
Direct supervision	1	3.8
IFRC system	1	3.8
Result-based system	1	3.8
MEAL system	2	7.7
Quantitative and Qualitative	1	3.8
The system who receives huge feedbacks	1	3.8

In-direct M & E system	1	3.8
Never determine	15	57.7
N =24	**26**	**100.0**

The table presented above highlights the most effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems utilized by NGOs involved in providing humanitarian relief in Syria. These systems play a crucial role in ensuring accountability, assessing the impact of interventions, and improving the overall effectiveness of humanitarian programs. Let's examine each of the mentioned systems in more detail:

Both internal and external systems: This approach emphasizes the importance of utilizing both internal and external M&E systems. Internal systems refer to the monitoring and evaluation processes implemented within the NGO itself, while external systems involve the engagement of external stakeholders, such as independent evaluators or auditing agencies. By combining these approaches, NGOs can benefit from internal insights and external expertise, ensuring a comprehensive and balanced evaluation of their relief efforts.

Context-based monitoring: This system recognizes the significance of adapting monitoring and evaluation approaches to the specific context of the Syrian crisis. It takes into account the unique challenges, dynamics, and needs of the affected population and adjusts monitoring activities accordingly. Context-based monitoring ensures that the evaluation process is relevant, sensitive, and responsive to the local context, ultimately leading to more accurate and meaningful results.

Direct M&E system: The direct M&E system involves the direct monitoring and evaluation of program activities by dedicated personnel within the NGO. This system allows for real-time tracking of progress, identification of challenges, and timely corrective actions. It enables NGOs to have a comprehensive understanding of their programs' implementation, facilitating informed decision-making and continuous improvement.

Direct supervision: Direct supervision entails close oversight and guidance provided by experienced supervisors or project managers. This system ensures that programs are implemented according to established standards and guidelines and that activities align with the intended objectives. Through direct supervision, NGOs can address any issues promptly, provide support to project teams, and maintain program quality and adherence to best practices.

The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) system: The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) has developed a well-established M&E system tailored for humanitarian operations. This system incorporates a range of tools, indicators, and methodologies to assess the impact of relief efforts. The IFRC system is designed to enhance transparency, accountability, and learning within the humanitarian sector, enabling NGOs to effectively evaluate their interventions and improve future programming.

Result-based system: A result-based system focuses on measuring the outcomes and impacts of humanitarian interventions rather than solely tracking activities or outputs. This approach links M&E efforts to the achievement of predetermined results and desired changes. By assessing the actual impact of programs on the lives of beneficiaries, NGOs can demonstrate accountability, inform decision-making, and promote evidence-based practices.

MEAL System: MEAL stands for Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability, and Learning. It is a comprehensive system that integrates various components to ensure effective program management. MEAL systems encompass monitoring the progress of activities, evaluating the outcomes and impacts, establishing mechanisms for accountability to affected populations, and facilitating organizational learning for continuous improvement. This holistic approach enhances the overall effectiveness and impact of humanitarian programs.

Quantitative and Qualitative: Effective M&E systems utilize both quantitative and qualitative methods to gather data and insights. Quantitative data provides numerical information, allowing for statistical analysis and the measurement of indicators and targets. Qualitative data, on the other hand, captures rich narratives, perspectives, and contextual nuances, providing a deeper understanding of the lived experiences and impacts of humanitarian interventions. The combination of both approaches strengthens the validity and comprehensiveness of the evaluation process.

The system that receives huge feedback: This system emphasizes the importance of actively seeking and incorporating feedback from beneficiaries, local communities, and other stakeholders. By engaging in dialogue, actively listening, and responding to feedback, NGOs can ensure that their programs are responsive to the needs and preferences of the affected population.

Table 9. Shows How NGOs Improve the Humanitarian Aid Response in Syria.

Phrases	No.	%
Considering the major findings for corrective actions.	1	4.2
Following the project implementation	1	4.2
Preparing the correct selection criteria that are focus on the vulnerable people.	1	4.2
Deployment tools and improving the report quality	1	4.2
Shows the accountability and rewards	1	4.2
Strengthen CRM system	1	4.2
Improving program quality and ensure the appropriate assistance.	1	4.2
Improving how evidence is used for program design	1	4.2
Never determine	16	66.7
N =24	**26**	**100.0**

The table presented above highlights the various ways in which NGOs improve the humanitarian aid response in Syria. These improvement strategies are crucial for enhancing the effectiveness and impact of humanitarian interventions. Let's delve into each of the mentioned approaches in more detail:

Considering the major findings for corrective actions: NGOs actively assess and analyze the major findings from their monitoring and evaluation activities. By identifying areas that require improvement or adjustments, NGOs can take corrective actions to address any identified gaps or challenges. This proactive approach ensures that programs are continuously refined and optimized based on evidence and lessons learned.

Following the project implementation: This strategy emphasizes the importance of ongoing monitoring and evaluation throughout the implementation phase of humanitarian projects. NGOs closely track and assess project activities, outputs, and outcomes in real time. By monitoring progress and identifying any deviations or issues early on, NGOs can promptly address them, make necessary adjustments, and ensure the effective implementation of the project.

Preparing the correct selection criteria that focus on vulnerable people: NGOs strive to establish appropriate selection criteria when identifying beneficiaries for humanitarian assistance. By focusing on vulnerable populations and considering their specific needs, NGOs can ensure that aid reaches those who are most in need. This approach contributes to equitable distribution and effective targeting of assistance.

Deployment tools and improving report quality: NGOs utilize various tools and technologies to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of their monitoring and reporting processes. These tools facilitate data collection, analysis, and reporting, enabling NGOs to generate accurate and timely reports. By continuously improving the quality of reports, NGOs enhance transparency, accountability, and the overall credibility of their aid response.

Strengthening CRM system: NGOs prioritize the strengthening of their Customer Relationship Management (CRM) systems. A robust CRM system allows NGOs to effectively manage relationships with stakeholders, including beneficiaries, donors, and partners. By maintaining accurate records, tracking interactions, and ensuring efficient communication, NGOs can enhance coordination, collaboration, and responsiveness in their humanitarian aid operations.

Improving program quality and ensuring appropriate assistance: NGOs constantly strive to improve the quality of their programs. This includes aligning activities with established standards and best practices, incorporating feedback from beneficiaries and other stakeholders, and continuously assessing and enhancing program relevance, efficiency, and impact. By delivering appropriate and context-specific assistance, NGOs can maximize positive outcomes for affected populations.

Improving how evidence is used for program design: NGOs recognize the importance of evidence-based decision-making in program design. They actively incorporate evidence, insights, and lessons learned from monitoring and evaluation activities into the design and planning of future interventions. By leveraging evidence, NGOs can ensure that programs are evidence-driven, responsive to community needs, and aligned with best practices and proven approaches.

These strategies collectively contribute to strengthening the overall humanitarian aid response in Syria, enabling NGOs to continually improve their interventions, optimize resource utilization, and achieve greater impact in addressing the needs of affected populations.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

In summary, the primary objective of this study was to evaluate the efficacy of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system implemented by NGOs involved in the Syrian response. Additionally, the study aimed to identify the hurdles encountered by the M&E system in humanitarian assistance projects in Syria.

The research also highlighted the understand how the donor/INGO/M&E NGO's system approach contributes to the Syrian humanitarian assistance program and determine the most effective M&E systems for NGOs providing relief in Syria. Furthermore, the study aimed to identify areas for improving the humanitarian aid response in Syria.

Adopting a positivism philosophy and utilizing quantitative data analysis, the researcher developed a survey tool to collect primary data from 24 respondents, including NGO staff, monitoring and evaluation companies, and MEAL experts.

The results indicated a moderate level of effectiveness in the monitoring and evaluation system implemented by non-governmental organizations involved in the Syrian response, with a mean value of 3.83. The study recognized significant challenges, such as a shortage of competent personnel, insufficient funding, and a dearth of documentation for the purpose of verification.

Additional obstacles identified were limited access and knowledge of the ME system, remote management challenges, beneficiaries' displacement, organizational culture, and the inadequate comprehension of the essential role of M&E.

The study indicated that the donor/INGO/M&E NGO's system approach aids the Syrian humanitarian assistance program by providing accurate information and data about people in need, classifying needs, sharing experiences, offering trainings, supporting health, education, and Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene **(**WASH), identifying actual needs, fostering partnerships and sub-grants, implementing robust M&E systems, and strengthening community engagement protocols.

Regarding M&E systems, both internal and external systems, context-based monitoring, direct supervision, IFRC system, result-based system, MEAL system, and quantitative and qualitative approaches were identified as effective systems for NGOs providing humanitarian relief in Syria.

To improve the humanitarian aid response in Syria, NGOs can consider the major findings for corrective actions, closely follow project implementation, develop selection criteria focusing on vulnerable populations, enhance deployment tools and report quality, strengthen CRM systems, improve program quality, and ensure appropriate assistance while using evidence for program design.

Recommendations

1. Advocate for adherence to international agreements and frameworks on donor effectiveness and utilization of funds, such as the Paris Declaration Agreement.
2. Develop clear and standardized guidelines for humanitarian aids distribution that align with identified needs and adhere to humanitarian principles.
3. Support local NGOs and organizations in their efforts to develop and maintain robust M&E systems.
4. Provide training and capacity-building initiatives for staff involved in aid distribution to ensure a proper understanding of needs-based programming.
5. Ensure building local capacity through training and partnerships and facilitate the use of M&E evidence to inform decision-making and program design and ensure a proper understanding of needs-based programming through allocating sufficient funds for M&E activities.
6. Strengthening the role of third-party monitoring and evaluation companies in enhancing program quality and accountability and encouraging the use of M&E systems and establishing robust monitoring mechanisms to track the aid distribution process as a means to address challenges and improve the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
7. Enhance accountability and transparency by regularly reporting on aid distribution activities and outcomes and implementing targeted distribution strategies based on needs.
8. Promote the utilization of M&E reports for organizational learning, performance enhancement, and donor confidence.
9. Strengthen coordination and communication among stakeholders, including NGOs, INGOs, local communities, and community leaders to ensure proper planning and coordination of aid distribution and share experiences, enhance M&E practices, and enhance the effectiveness and cultural appropriateness of aid distribution.
10. Advocate for the inclusion of local communities in M&E processes, allowing them to voice concerns and provide feedback.

11. Promote community participation and engagement in aid distribution processes to ensure local ownership and relevance and Involve stakeholders in decision-making for greater accountability.
12. Conduct comprehensive needs assessments to accurately identify the specific needs and priorities of affected populations.
13. It is important to improve needs assessment, conduct periodic evaluations, continuously monitor and evaluate aid distribution to track impact, and make necessary adjustments for improvement to enhance humanitarian aid distribution effectiveness,
14. In the Syrian humanitarian context, it is highly recommended to continuously assess and improve M&E systems and processes for their relevance and effectiveness, while also continuously learning and improving aid distribution processes to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.

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Ethical Consıderations

The study was adhered to the ethical considerations, including obtaining informed consent from participants, ensuring the confidentiality of responses, and protecting the privacy of individuals involved. Ethical guidelines and protocols was followed throughout the research process to maintain the integrity and welfare of the participants.