MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS AND PERFORMANCE OF URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: A CASE OF TOWN COUNCILS IN JINJA DISTRICT, EASTERN UGANDA

MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS AND PERFORMANCE OF URBAN LOCAL GOVERNMENTS: A CASE OF TOWN COUNCILS IN JINJA DISTRICT, EASTERN UGANDA

[1]*Seezi Bogere

Research and Evaluation Specialist

National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC)

*Corresponding Author's E-mail: bogereseith@gmail.com

[2]Dr. John Micheal Maxel Okoche

Lecturer and Dean, School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU)

[3]Isaac Eremugo

Post Graduate Student, School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Uganda Technology and Management University (UTAMU)

ABSTRACT

Purpose: The study investigated the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District of Eastern Uganda. Specifically, the study focused on establishing the relationship between M&E systems inputs, M&E systems process, M&E systems outputs and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

Methodology: The study used a cross sectional study design employing both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. The population (112) of the study consisted of the Town clerks, Political leaders and Town council employees to which simple random sampling was applied. Quantitative data was collected from a sample of 76 respondents using researcher administered questionnaire. Responses were rated on a 5-Likert scale and analyzed for descriptive and inferential statistic using SPSS software presented in tables. Qualitative data was collected from 10 key informants using interview guides analyzed using content analysis and presented as text.

Findings: Correlational analysis revealed that a significant and a strong positive linear relationship between performance of urban local governments in Jinja District and M&E systems inputs (r= 0.730**, p < 0.05), M&E system process (r= 0.814**, p < 0.05) and M&E system outputs (r= 0.739**, p < 0.05). Regression analysis showed a significant and positive influence of M&E system inputs (β=-.203, p=.001, <0.05), M&E system process (β=.071, p=.001, <0.05) and M&E system outputs (β=.315, p=.000, <0.05) on the performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

Unique contribution to theory, practice and policy: There are weaknesses in the M&E systems in urban local governments in Jinja District in terms of failure to track results despite the huge investments in area of M&E. Therefore, there is need to strengthen the M&E systems of urban local governments in Jinja district by; placing trained M&E human resource; developing M&E frameworks and developing costed M&E work plans Future studies should examine the perception of local government employees on the institutionalization of M&E system in the public sector of Uganda.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The history of monitoring and evaluation systems (M&E systems) is generally integrated within the history of monitoring and evaluation (Kabeyi, 2019). Globally, the literature reveals that Egypt is the father and founder of the M&E system in the world. The ancient Egyptians regularly monitored their country's outputs in grain and livestock production more than 5,000 years ago (Masuku et al. 2015). Developed countries, including the Organization for Co-operation and Development (OECD), followed suit, and today, the OECD and developed countries implement result-based M&E systems (Masuku et al. 2015).

In an effort to improve performance, boost confidence of donors and demonstrate results and account to stakeholders, the government of Uganda introduced a centralized M&E systems called the National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy (NIMES) in 2005 in the public sector (Goldman et al., 2018). M&E system defines and guides stakeholder participation, the commissioning, undertaking, and utilization of M&E information (Goldman et al. 2018; Kanyamuna, 2019). Monitoring is the process of continues data collection and analysis on an ongoing project, program or policy to provide information to stakeholders for informed decision making while Evaluation is aimed at determining the worth of an ongoing or completed intervention.

The National Evaluation System (NES) also referred to as the NIMES has resulted into increased demand for monitoring evidence, better performance reporting and accountability to stakeholders (Byamugisha & Basheka, 2015). However, the system is still being faced with; funding shortage, limited capacity, limited institutionalization and poor utilization of M&E information (Byamugisha & Basheka 2015; Holvoet & Inberg, 2015; OAG, 2017). Also, monitoring but not evaluation is the most practiced (Byamugisha & Basheka, 2015).

Popova and Sharpanskykh (2011) defined performance as the level of attainment of organizational goals/objectives. According to Rolstadas (1998), performance can be measured based on seven criteria namely; effectiveness, efficiency, quality, productivity, quality of work life, innovation, and profitability. In the public sector, local government performance is reflected in the efficiency, effectiveness, and sustainability of interventions (Horton, 2002). Several reports have indicated poor performance of local governments including urban local governments in Uganda (Muhwezi et al., 2020; Singiza & Visser, 2011; Nakayi, 2018).
The poor performance threatens the government plan of the attainment of middle-income status by 2040 and the realization of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030. There has been a grouping demand from stakeholders including citizens, civil society organizations and donor organizations pushing for a major reform in the delivery of basic services in the public sector.

Urban local governments also referred to as Town councils in Uganda has an important role to play in improving communities' lives by providing basic services such as water and sanitation, electricity, roads, health care, market and school (Jili & Mthethwa, 2016). Thapa (2020)

defined a local government as a decentralized government body elected by the people that have administrative, legislative and executive functions in the areas of their jurisdiction. Local government is not a new concept in Africa as it existed in the form of individual community level administration before the pre-colonial era (Aiguosatile, 2011). During the colonial era, different communities were grouped together inform of local governments but with more centralized power structures. In post-colonial Uganda, establishment of local governments/Town Councils has been promoted by the National Resistance Movement (NRM) since it took power in 1986 (Nakayi, 2018). However, the idea became more pronounced in 1993 due to decentralization programme that focused on local government as the epitome of democracy in Uganda (Singiza & Visser, 2011).

Today, there are 214 town councils distributed in all the regions in Uganda. The increase in the number of Town Council has resulted into significant government investment in the local government sector through increased budget, man power and training among others. The establishment of more Town Councils is aimed at creating more space for nurturing democracy to stimulate development and improve performance of public sector projects at the local level (Nakakayi, 2018; Singiza & Visser, 2011). Despite the creation of more Town Councils, performance of public sector projects and service delivery at local level in Uganda is still poor. For example, substandard housing conditions are prevalent with over 70% of housing units built with temporary building materials, of which 27% are in urban areas, poor waste management with 13% of urban population disposing waste in gardens, 19% in pits, 32% heaping it in drainages and streets (Muhwezi, Mbabazi & Kasalirwe, 2020).

Most studies in Uganda mainly focused on the influence of M&E system on the performance of Non-Governmental Organizations (Eremugo & Okoche, 2021; Nasambu, 2016; Okeny, 2015). Few studies have focused on the public sector M&E system in Uganda (Holvoet & Inberg, 2015; Byamugisha & Basheka, 2015; Nwanzi, 2017). Limited studies have been dedicated to examine the influence of M&E system on the performance of Town Councils in Uganda. Therefore, this study focused on the M&E system and performance of urban local councils in Jinja district, a case of Kakira and Buwenge Town councils.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Existence of Monitoring and evaluation systems improves organization performance (Mackay, 2007; Dube, 2018). In a bid to improve performance Kakira and Buwenge Town councils have put in place M&E systems (Jinja District Local Government report, 2019). Kakira and Buwenge Town councils continue to post poor performance in terms of service delivery (OPM, 2020). For instance, in Kakira TC the quality of services declined by 20%, efficiency and effectiveness declined by 15% and 18% respectively; during the Financial Year 2018/19 only 39% of planned outputs by the town council were achieved (OPM, 2020). In Buwenge TC in 2017 primary school completion rate in the UPE schools stood at 24.3%, far below the national average of 61% (MoES, 2018) while the town council's water, sanitation, and hygiene were rated as weak with a score of 43% (MWE, 2018), over 20 boreholes within the town council are not functional (Bukenya, 2018). In a bid to improve their performance at the two town councils, strategies have been made to improve the town council revenue to extend public service delivery such as, putting in place a revenue enhancement plan, implementation of the revenue plan and appraisal, sensitization of politicians, taxpayers, and staff, recruiting of competent staff, and training, staff motivation, quarterly audits, reports, and reviews among others (Kakira Town Council Performance report, 2017). Despite these efforts, poor

performance has remained a challenge, and it was not clear to what extent monitoring and evaluation systems influence the situation that curtail effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of services in the two urban local governments. Several studies have been carried out in Uganda in relation to monitoring and evaluation systems and performance of local governments (Kananura et al., 2017; Kabeyi, 2019; Ojok & Basheka, 2016; Ojambo, 2012). However, existing studies have accorded little attention to the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and the performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District. This study, therefore, sought to investigate the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The study investigated the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

1.4 Objectives

The study was guided by the following objectives:

  i.   To establish the relationship between M&E systems inputs and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.
 ii.   To find out the relationship between M&E systems process and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.
iii.   To examine the relationship between M&E systems outputs and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

1.5 Research questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

  i.   What is the relationship between M&E systems inputs and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District?
 ii.   What is the relationship between M&E systems process and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District?
iii.   What is the relationship between M&E systems outputs and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District?

1.6 Conceptual framework

This study investigated the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District. The study's conceptual framework was based on the model shown in the Figure 1.1 below.
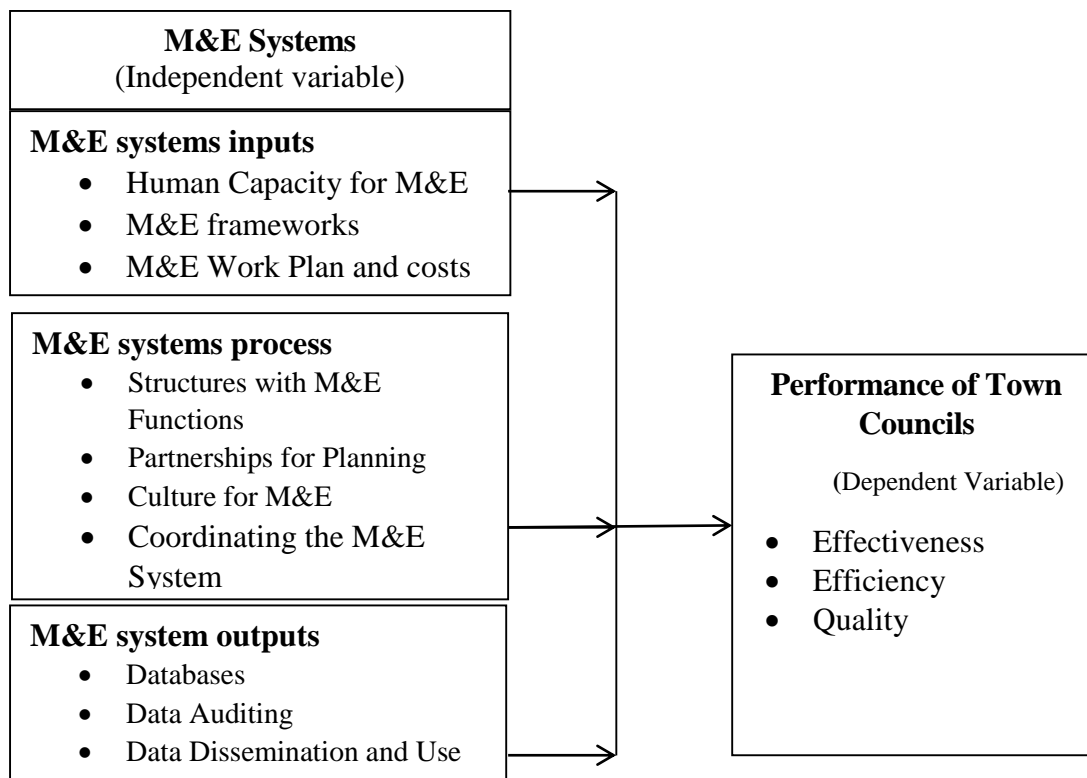
Source: Adopted from Gorgens & Kusek, (2009) and modified by researcher
Figure 1.1: A Conceptual Framework
2.0 Literature review

2.1 Review of theories
2.1.1 Systems theory
This study was guided by the systems theory by Von Bertalanffy (1969). The systems theory holds that a complex system is made up of multiple smaller systems, and it is the interactions between these smaller systems that create a complex system as it's known (Von Bertalanffy, 1969). Systems theory assumes certain underlying concepts and principles can be applied universally in different fields, even if these fields evolved separately (Von Bertalanffy, 1969).

The Systems theory assumes that organizations like organisms are open systems: they cannot survive without continuously exchanging matter and energy with their environment (LoPucki, 1996). The peculiarity of open systems is that they interact with other systems outside of themselves (Sneddon, 2008). This interaction has two components: input, which enters the system from the outside, and output, which leaves the system for the environment (Yoon & Kuchinke, 2005). The output of a system is in general a direct or indirect result from the input; thus, what comes out, needs to have gotten in first. However, the output is in general quite different from the input: the system is not just a passive tube, but an active processor (Tinajero & Páramo, 2012). The transformation of input into output by the system is usually called throughput. This point of view considers the system as a "black box", something that takes in input, and produces output, without us being able to see what happens in between. In contrast, if we can see the system's internal processes, we might call it a "white box" (Tinajero & Páramo, 2012; Berman, 1996).

Bailey (1970) applied the systems theory to the determination of the nature of accounting, he identified the basic concepts of general systems theory and described the nature of accounting within the system's framework with the basic elements of the structure of any system as the environment, objective, boundary, inputs, and outputs, and components. Chuang & Inder (2009) used the systems theory to carry out an effectiveness analysis of healthcare systems, thus their approach provided a system thinking structure to assist the design of quality improvement strategies. Likewise, Rousseau (2017) used the systems theory to propose a model of how principles and laws are understood across the specialized sciences thus, when applied to systems science, open up new ways to discover systems principles.

A number of studies have shown that systems consist of different parts from interrelated bodies put together to form one body (Dunn, 2016; Eagle, 2005; Edmonds, 2012). Zhang and Luo (2016) believe that you cannot understand the conduct of the whole component without understanding the behaviour of the different parts that form part of the whole body. They further allude to the fact that most researchers point to the norm of holistic interconnected parts. This view is supported by Chikere and Nwoka (2015) who write that this approach emphasises the association between the arrangements of portions and how they work collectively as a whole, how they are organised and how they interact with each other.

Zhang and Luo (2016) suggest that inputs comprise resources which include people, investments, supervisory services and technical skills which contribute to an organization as service providers or stakeholders in Local government. Inputs are transformed into outputs through an activity of processing them into outcomes that the organization aims to achieve. These specific outcomes achieve an impact (Presidency, 2012). Unfortunately, systems theory disregards the role of organizational restraints, and this is unlikely to produce sound advice on standardization of organizational procedures and desirable levels of standardization (Charlton and Andras, 2003). Another problem with systems theory is the difficulty of drawing actionable conclusions based on what is found. Identifying problems is important, but finding solutions to these problems may create difficulty, especially at the cultural and policy level (Von Bertalanffy,1993).

Despite these weaknesses, systems theory is important to monitoring and evaluation specialists and helps practitioners reach a better understanding of those they work with (Luhmann, Baecker & Gilgen, 2013). Systems thinking plays a dominant role in a wide range of fields including management (Luhmann et al., 2013). Therefore, this study was guided by the systems theory by Von Bertalanffy (1969) to investigate the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and the performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

The theory can be applied in the study of M&E systems and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District where M&E system inputs components are considered to include human Capacity for M&E, M&E frameworks, and M&E Work Plan. Here, the interaction between these sub/smaller systems is supposed to impact the performance of the urban local governments. Therefore, the theory was adopted to guide this particular study.

2.1.2 Goal Setting Theory

This study was also complimentarily guided by the Goal Setting Theory. The goal-setting theory draws from the inspiration of Locke and Aristotle (Locke, 1968). The underlying assumptions of the theory are that goals and intentions are cognitive and volitional, and that they serve as the immediate regulators of human action. The prime axiom of goal setting theory is that specific, difficult goals lead to higher performance than when people strive to simply "do their best", (Locke, 1966; Locke & Latham, 1990). By providing direction and a standard against which progress can be monitored, challenging goals can enable people to guide and

refine their performance (Lunenburg, 2011). Locke was able to demonstrate that goal setting was linked to performance (Lee, Locke and Latham, 1989).

The theory is so relevant in the public sector like local government: it translates into desired quantity, quality, and behavioral performance levels, as actions are taken in line with set goals (Simpson, 2013). More so, Ahamed, Yurtkora & Kola (2017) also asserted that the goal-setting theory acts as a moderating aspect between stakeholders and tasks to be accomplished, motivating, and guiding directions and decisions. Despite the view that different goals may not be in reality a reflection of what is on the ground, the goal-setting theory reduced uncoordinated activity in the organization (Ahamed et al., 2017). The goal-setting theory is relevant because performance in the form of service delivery is an outcome of the public sector's set goals, plans, and budgets. Locke's goal-setting theory is applied in this study because it advocates continuous constructive feedback which the M&E systems can provide. As a result, organization such as local governments receive important insights on their particular strengths and weaknesses. On this basis, the goal setting theory is ideal to underpin this study that investigated the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District.

2.2 Empirical review
2.2.1   M&E systems inputs and performance of local governments

M&E system inputs components are considered to include human Capacity for M&E, M&E frameworks, and M&E Work Plan and costs. According to Lahey (2015), the development of National M&Es (NMESs) rests on four building blocks – vision of the leadership, an enabling environment, capacity to supply and analyze M&E information, and the capacity to demand and use M&E information. Therefore, it is important to research the setup of the national systems to understand the lower levels. Relatedly, Lopez-Acevedo, Krause, and Mackay (2012) argue that a successful M&E system is one where good-quality performance information and evaluation findings are produced and are used intensively at one or more stages of the policy cycle. However, the above studies were not conducted in the context of an urban local government as this study was.

On the M&E system inputs, Jili & Mthethwa (2016) wrote that shortage of skills and lack of financial resources contribute to the ineffectiveness of M&E systems in local governments. Similarly, Hambaryan (2020) opined that presence of M&E systems inputs can help with accountability and boost performance, if it tracks the results that provincial administrations are expected to deliver. In Rwanda, Hwang (2014) found that M&E systems inputs are designed to support political priorities and national strategies to ensure that relevant information is produced and used, as well as to strengthen ownership and sustainability of the M&E system. However, in Tanzania, Shaffer (2012) observed that initial poverty-reduction monitoring processes were not linked with plans and budgets but rather acted as parallel systems. In Uganda, according to World Bank (2014), it was planned that the M&E system should create linkages with public finances and development management through the provision of a more evidence-based foundation for policy, budgeting, and operational management. However, even when the above studies were done within East Africa, they largely focused on M&E systems generally yet the present study focused on inputs particularly human Capacity for M&E, M&E frameworks, and M&E work plan and costs as a component of M&E system inputs.

From the literature, it is widely accepted that public service institutions including urban local governments need to have appropriate structures and functions that support M&E because M&E and M&E systems are a "good thing" and have intrinsic merit (Goldman et al., 2018). In agreement, Cloete et al (2014) give options on institutional arrangements for M&E. First, they suggest an option for establishing an autonomous and centralized unit at a national level. Second, they propose a corporate support unit. Third, they suggest decentralizing M&E officials in each line department who report to the head of a line department and the M&E Manager. In addition, Chaplowe & Cousins (2015) opine that at the local government level, throughout the implementation of the M&E system, institutions need to establish the level of capacity available, identify gaps, and develop a capacity-building mechanism. Much as the above studies directly studied M&E systems and performance of local governments, they were conducted outside Uganda yet the present study examined the relationship between M&E system inputs and the performance of town councils in Jinja District.

In another study, Rossignoli, Coticchia & Mezzasalma (2015) found that M&E systems have affected the quality of development cooperation projects. Similarly, Hardlife & Zhou (1980) found that speedy implementation of the M&E systems through the formulation of appropriate system designs and baseline indicators, strict and routine follow-ups on the implementation of evaluation findings, and use of multi-disciplinary evaluation frameworks affected performance. Relatedly, Kusek, et al, (2004) argue that monitoring and evaluation systems are crucial management tools in achieving results and meeting specific targets by governments. These systems are also essential tracking instruments that are part of organizational management toolkits especially for local governments (Chaplowe & Cousins, 2015, Anderson et al., 2019).

However, in a different study done by Umlaw (2015) on the state and use of M&E systems in the national and provincial government to understand the M&E landscape in South Africa, it was found that the M&E systems of most departments focus on quantitative measures of the achievement of pre-specified activities and outputs which do not contribute to relevant, sustainable and adequate public outcomes and impact.

Further, Kariuki & Reddy (2017) sought to show that monitoring and evaluation is a critical development tool that needs to be supported by urban local government political and administrative leadership to ensure that it functions optimally by offering citizen-responsive services. The study found that monitoring and evaluation capacity is low in the majority of municipalities in South Africa.

Mackay (2009) found that an M&E system produces monitoring information and evaluation findings that are judged valuable by key stakeholders; are used to improve government performance. Similarly, Govender (2011) found that Monitoring and Evaluation systems improve corporate governance through aiding better service delivery, achievement of strategic goals, decision making, financial management, and accountability. However, much of the studies reviewed were largely quantitative in approach unlike the present study that followed both quantitative and qualitative research approaches.

2.2.2 M&E systems process and performance of local governments

M&E system process components are envisaged to include structures with M&E Functions, partnerships for Planning, culture for M&E, and coordinating the M&E (United Nations Development Programme, 2009). In a study Nyakundi (2014) found out that structures with M&E Functions affect the implementation of M&E, in that M&E units play a key role in

providing functional advice in the development of appropriate results-based performance monitoring systems thus, impacting on performance. Similarly, findings by Ngatia (2015) showed that the presence of an M&E unit led to an increase in the performance of projects in Murang'a County. However, much as the two studies examined the relationship between M&E systems and organizational performance, they were done in the context of non-governmental organizations, not urban local government as this study was.

Engela & Ajam (2010) wrote that building monitoring and evaluation systems process mechanisms help to strengthen governance in countries by improving transparency, by strengthening accountability relationships, and by building a performance culture within governments to support better policymaking, budget decision making, and management. Similarly, Thornhill (2008) had noted that it is important for local governments to design and implement a comprehensive M&E system. Such a system should facilitate the continuous assessment, M&E of municipal structures, systems and processes.

In Botswana, Muzinda (2007) found that implementing the monitoring and evaluation process was not effectively done due to, among other reasons, lack of partnerships, lack of expertise, and a poor culture for M&E. Although the study was not focused on the performance of a local government, the study showed that all the projects implemented by the local NGOs in Botswana were not effectively monitored and evaluated due to the inadequacy in the M&E system process components.

In another study by Wanjiku (2015), it was found that the absence of proper partnerships and poor coordination of M&E activities largely affected the performance of local projects in Kenya. Similarly, Odhiambo (2013) suggested that M&E culture should continuously be developed and instilled through training and other capacity-building initiatives to ensure that managers keep up with current and emerging trends in the field of Monitoring and Evaluation. This study found that there were no established partnerships and coordination of M&E activities in the urban local governments in Jinja District which greatly affected their performance.

In Kenya, Ngatia's (2015) study found that program officers coordinated with their counterparts in agribusiness NGOs in Murang'a County on matters of M&E, there were regular training in M&E either formally or through in-service training besides having several years of experience working with M&E systems. However, in this particular study, there was no linkage made between such practices and the performance of Muranga'a County as a local government. In another study, Mbiti & Kiruja, (2015) found that the absence of an M&E system caused weaknesses in the entire area of M&E in public organizations. Chebet (2017) found that M&E system components had a significant influence on the performance of horticulture projects. Ooko et al. (2018) found out that the presence of structures for M&E improved the practice of monitoring and evaluation to a moderate extent as indicated by a mean of 3.37 and standard deviation of 0.1. However, none of the above studies was conducted in Uganda. However, the current study found a positive significant relationship between the M&E system process and the performance of town councils in Jinja District in Uganda.

In a study conducted in the USA, it was indicated that the M&E system cannot function well without sound partnerships and proper coordination and this affects the performance of entities (Gorgens & Kusek, 2010). UNAIDS (2010) noted that not only is it necessary to have dedicated and adequate numbers of M&E staff, but it is also essential to have a strong culture for monitoring and evaluation. This study found that there were no established partnerships and coordination of M&E activities in the urban local governments in Jinja District which greatly affected their performance.

A study done in Mali, Guinea, and Nigeria by WHO (2013) in public health centers, indicated that internal and external partnerships are very crucial for strengthening the sustainability of an M&E system which is critical for organizational performance. Not only does M&E needs skilled people but also working together with stakeholders to ensure the success of the M&E system (Reyes & Due, 2009). This partnership is crucial for a local municipality as it is a confluence of various actors for program implementation. The M&E partnership brings improved M&E coordination between government organs and CSOs together to share responsibility reduces confusion and duplication, facilitates shared learning, and, therefore, lowers the costs associated with M&E systems (Görgens & Kusek, 2009). It simplifies and harmonizes M&E reporting procedures that result in standardized reports rather than expending unnecessary time and money for preparing multiple reports. As the partners communicate regularly and effectively there is a great potential for each other's human, financial and technical support. However, none of the above studies was conducted in Uganda. However, the current study found a positive relationship between the M&E system process and the performance of town councils in Jinja District in Uganda.

2.2.3   M&E systems outputs and performance of local governments

M&E system output components are considered to include databases, data Auditing, Data Dissemination, and Use (Ali et al., 2018). Upon drawing on this concept of M&E systems and performance of local governments, Jili & Mthethwa (2016) has been able to explain that to improve service delivery, local governments must design and implement comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to facilitate continuous assessment, M&E of municipal structures, systems and processes, in line with municipalities' integrated development plans (IDPs), service delivery outcomes, and operational plans to implement the budget.

Ali et al. (2018) opined that alignment of an organization's data to its mission provides the starting point for improvement in organizational performance. Numerous studies (Xiang, Lee & Kim. 2013; Tee et al., 2007) have defined data quality and identified its multiple dimensions, which include accuracy, timeliness, consistency, completeness, and reliability, etc. Several data quality frameworks were developed to organize and structure the data quality dimensions yet previous studies used these frameworks to help develop procedures to measure data quality (Haug et al., 2011).

According to Emmanuel (2015), poor data quality has a direct impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization, especially over the entire life cycle of a task, and errors in different dimensions of the data can lead to financial losses or serious errors. This study found that there was a positive relationship between M&E systems outputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District which greatly affected their performance.

In another study, Xiang, Lee & Kim (2013) empirically investigated the effect of firm-level data quality on firm performance in the Korean financial industry during 2008–2010. The results show that commercial banks have high-quality data, while credit unions have comparatively low-quality data. In the same study, it was found that better data quality has a positive influence on sales, operating profit, and value-added. However, the above study was done in the private sector context, quite different from a local government environment in which the present study was executed.

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Mbiti & Kiruja (2015) noted that delivering quality data requires not only communication but also a focus on building explicit knowledge about how data is produced and consumed. Similarly, Ngatia (2015) wrote that data quality is important for performance measurement and effective decision making and good performance and that measuring management's perspective of data quality is an effective way of learning about users' expectations that are associated with the intended uses of the data. However, the above studies were conducted in Kenya where conditions were quite different from Uganda.

In another study, concluded that data auditing is a core theme of the program's performance assessment, however, the Wanjiku (2015) study also found that many organizations do not have any data quality improvement strategy or even data quality assessment frameworks. From the literature reviewed, there were limited published research about the specifics of the database that were relevant to the context of local governments, this study aimed at examining how M&E system outputs affected the performance of Town Councils in Jinja District.

Irvine et al., (2018) investigated the impact of data use on activity classification using data-driven approaches. Results produced by four common classifiers highlight the effects of noisy data by comparing the classification performances of raw and subsequently cleaned data. Tee et al. (2007) and Debbarma, Nath & Das (2013) found that management's commitment to data quality and the presence of data quality champions strongly influence data quality in the target organization. Nevertheless, the above two studies were done outside the context of a local government.

Several studies have been undertaken to understand the effectiveness of public sector M&E in Uganda (Ojok & Basheka, 2016). Ojambo (2012) agreed with the fact that the Public Sector M&E System is not geared towards understanding causality and attribution between the stages of development change while Hauge (2003) established that local government performance is less than desirable and M&E system has remained overly centered on compliance with government requirements and regulations rather than end-results of policy, program and project efforts. However, none of these studies done in Uganda focused on databases, data Auditing, Data Dissemination, and Use as components of M&E system outputs and performance in the context of Local Government. To partially address this gap, this study is being undertaken.

3.0 Methodology

The study used a cross-sectional survey design adopting both a qualitative and quantitative methodology. The cross-sectional design was used for this study because of the economic nature of the design, its rapid ability of data collection, and it was also suitable for such an analytical study that aimed to assess association between different parameters (Amin, 2005; Martins, Romeiro & Caldeira, 2017). Although the study was largely quantitative, it also concurrently used a qualitative research approach. Qualitative approaches helped the researcher to come up with conclusions on variables that cannot be measured quantitatively while quantitative approaches facilitated establishing values attached to numerical variables (Martins et al., 2017). This study population was one hundred sixty-four (164) respondents as per the Human resource records in Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils (Kakira TC and Buwenge TC databases, 2020). These included Town clerks (2), Political leaders (50) and Town council employees (112). These categories were chosen because they were the employees working

within Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils, thus they understood the performance issues of the entity.

The sampling frame included the Town clerks of Kakira and Buwenge TCs, Political leaders in Kakira and Buwenge TCs and employees of Kakira and Buwenge TCs. To determine sample size for Town Council employees from whom quantitative data was collected, the researcher used the Slovin's Formula is given as follows: $n = N/(1+Ne^2)$ where n is the sample size, N is the population size and e is the margin of error to be decided by the researcher.

$$n = 112/ (1+ 112 \times 0.05^2)$$

$$n = 112/1.28$$
$$n = 86$$

The sample size for the political leaders and Town clerks as respondents from whom qualitative data was collected were initially assigned by the researchers although the final figure (10) was determined by saturation levels based on the recommendation of Charmaz (2008), that in qualitative research one stops collecting data when the categories (or themes) were saturated: when gathering fresh data no longer sparks new insights or reveals new properties.

Simple random sampling was utilized to identify the Eighty-six (86) employees of Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils. Simple random sampling was chosen because of its ease of use and its accurate representation of the larger population (Kato et al, 2020; Soranno et al., 2020). The researcher used purposive sampling for selecting key informants who were knowledgeable about the situation in the areas of Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils; these included political leaders and the town clerks. Purposive sampling was chosen because it is extremely time and cost effective when compared to other sampling methods (Amin, 2005).

Quantitative data was collected using researcher administered questionnaires; responses were rated on a 5-Likert scale and were coded, cleaned and analyzed for descriptive and inferential statistic using SPSS software (version 22.0). Quantitative data was presented in tables, graphs and charts. First, the questionnaires were pretested using 5 respondents who didn't participate in the final study. A value of .734 for internal consistency of the questionnaire was obtained using Chronbach's alpha co-efficient. Data was then collected from the determined sample of Town clerks (2), Political leaders (10) and Town council employees (86) and presented in tables.

Qualitative data was collected using key informant interview guides from 10 key informants that consisted of town clerks and political leaders. The qualitative data were analyzed using content analysis and presented as text in normative form. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected while observing ethical consideration of confidentiality, informed consent and voluntary participation of the respondents.

4.0 Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation of findings

4.1 Response rate

The response rate was calculated to find out if it was sufficient for supporting valid conclusions. From a sample size of 98 people, 86 (88%) were able to fill and return the questionnaires and interview guides, while only 12(12%) people failed to respond. Amin (2005) wrote that a response rate of 88% in a study is reasonable and would produce binding results. Among the 12 respondents targeted for interviews, 10 were reached making 83% response rate to the interview instrument.

Table 1: Response rate

Category	Target	Actual	Response rate
Questionnaire	86	76	88%
Interview	12	10	83%
Totals	**98**	**86**	**88%**

Source: Primary data

4.2 Demographic characteristics of respondents

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of respondents

Variable	Dimensions	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	52	60.5
	Female	34	39.5
Marital status	Single	34	39
	Married	52	61
	20-30 years	43	50.0
Age	31-40 years	43	50.0
	O' level	18	21
Education level	Bachelor's degree	32	37
	Postgraduate	36	42

Source: Primary data

The findings show that majority of the respondents 52(61%) were male while 34(39%) were female. This means that Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils have a fair representation of both sexes. For this particular study, it implies that the study was representative thus, the findings are reliable.

The findings show that majority of the respondents 52(61%) were married while 34(39%) were single. This means that many of the workers and staff at Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils were married although there were also some that were single. For this study, the implication of such findings is that the study was representative.

The findings indicated that 43(50%) of the respondents were aged between 20-30 years while still 43(50%) of the respondents were aged between 31-40 years. The means that almost all the workers and staff of Kakira and Buwenge Town Councils were fairly young. For this particular study, such findings imply that fairly young staff was likely to perform better, thus improve the performance levels of the Town Councils with the presence of a good a M&E system in place.

The study findings show that majority 36(42%) of the respondents had postgraduate qualifications as their highest level of education, followed by 32(37%) of respondents who had bachelors' degree as the highest level of education and lastly 18(21%) of the respondents who had O' level as their highest education level. This implies that most of the workers and staff of Kakira and Buwenge Town Council were fairly educated. For this particular study, such findings imply that the study was very representative in terms of participant characteristics. However, the higher levels of education also imply that respondents gave quality responses since they understood the different aspects of the study.

4.3 M&E systems inputs and Performance of urban local governments in Jinja District

This section presents results on M&E systems inputs. For this particular research, strongly agree and agree are considered to refer to agree and strongly disagree and disagree are

considered to refer to disagree. Mean and Standard deviation are as well applied in the analysis of data as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Opinions regarding M&E systems inputs

Statements	Percentage Response (%)					Mean	Stddev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
Human capacity for M&E influences performance of our town council	53% (40)	10% (8)	8% (6)	10% (8)	18% (14)	3.68	1.629
M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council	21% (16)	50% (38)	0% (0)	28% (22)	0% (0)	3.68	1.125
M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council	21% (16)	71% (54)	8% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4.13	.529
We have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation	10% (8)	29% (22)	0% (0)	53% (40)	8% (6)	2.82	1.249
We develop M&E frameworks	8% (6)	18% (14)	0% (0)	74% (56)	0% (0)	2.61	1.054
We develop M&E Work Plan and costs	0% (0)	40% (30)	18% (14)	42% (32)	0% (0)	2.97	.915

Source: Primary data

Findings from the Table 3 above indicate that most of the respondents 48(63%) agreed that human capacity for M&E influences performance of their town council, while 22(28%) disagreed and only 6(8%) were undecided. The mean was 3.68 and standard deviation was 1.629 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that human capacity for M&E influences performance of their town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation while those that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This means that human capacity for M&E if properly built could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district. This is in agreement with Jili & Mthethwa (2016) who wrote that shortage of skills and lack of financial resources contribute to the ineffectiveness of M&E systems in local governments.

It was established that 54(71%) agreed that M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council, yet 22(28%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 3.68 and standard deviation was 1.125 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation. This means that M&E frameworks if properly developed could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district. These findings are supported by Hambaryan (2020) who wrote that presence of M&E systems inputs can help with accountability and boost performance.

The findings further indicated that majority of the respondents 70(92%) agreed that M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council while only 6(8%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean was 4.13 and standard deviation was .529 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council. Those respondents that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This means that M&E Work Plan and costs if properly developed could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district. The findings concur with Hwang (2014) found that M&E systems inputs are designed to support political

priorities and national strategies to ensure that relevant information is produced and used, as well as to strengthen ownership and sustainability of the M&E system.

The study found that only 30(39%) of the respondents agreed that they have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation while 46(61%) disagreed. The mean was 2.82 and standard deviation was 1.249 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that they have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers that did not have any training in M&E aspects or did not possess knowledge of any body employed at their workplace to handle M&E tasks/activities. In confirmation of this finding, Key Informant 4 said

> We have had plan to hire or recruit M&E qualified staff for the last five years to allow effective leadership for M&E and commitment towards ensuring M&E system performance but our biggest challenge has been limited funds from the central government for M&E.

Another Key Informant 5 interviewed said

> Currently, our staff staff in the organization are clear on the organization's overall goals and the strategies it has chosen to achieve its goals but many of our staff don't clearly understand the role of M&E in helping the organization meet its goals, many are not motivated to fulfil their M&E responsibilities, and almost all of them lack the ability to execute their M&E responsibilities without hindrance.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the urban local governments do not provide capacity building or training for staff involved in conducting M&E activities *"So far we don't have M&E specialist or anyone assigned specifically for M&E activities"* Key informant 3. This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no M&E trained staff employed to specifically handle M&E work which is likely to result into no learning from the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively. This finding suits the suggestion made by Goldman et al. (2018) that public service institutions including urban local governments need to have appropriate structures and functions that support M&E because M&E and M&E systems are a "good thing" and have intrinsic merit.

It was established that only 20(26%) of the respondents agreed that at the town council they develop M&E frameworks, yet 56(74%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 2.61 and standard deviation was 1.054 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that at the town council they develop M&E frameworks. Those respondents that disagreed could be among the many workers that did not have any knowledge on M&E frameworks or had not seen any M&E frameworks. When asked why there are no developed M&E frameworks, Key Informant 5 said "*As a matter of fact, in our town council we don't have adequately skilled M&E staff who can effectively and efficiently conduct M&E activities as may be required*". This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no developed M&E frameworks which is likely to result into poorly guided evaluations of the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively. The findings show that just as Kusek, et al, (2004) argued that monitoring and evaluation systems are crucial management tools in achieving results and meeting specific targets by governments. This was upheld by Chaplowe & Cousins (2015) who opined that at the local government level, throughout the implementation of the M&E system,

institutions need to establish the level of capacity available, identify gaps, and develop a capacity-building mechanism.

The findings further indicated that only 30(40%) of the respondents agreed that at the town council they develop M&E Work Plan and costs while 32(42%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 2.97 and standard deviation was .915 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that at the town council they develop M&E Work Plan and costs. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers that did not have any knowledge on M&E Work Plan and costs or had not seen any M&E Work Plan and costs. In confirmation key informant 4 interviewed said *"We don't have M&E plan .... We use the plan of action found in our budget plan to conduct monitoring and evaluation"* Another respondent stated that **"*In fact we do not have, we use five years strategy plan to create a budget and guiding us in the implementation of various activities".* This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no developed M&E Work Plan and costs which is likely to result into poorly guided evaluations of the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively.

4.4.2 M&E systems inputs and Performance of urban local governments in Jinja District

This section presents results on M&E systems inputs. For this particular research, strongly agree and agree are considered to refer to agree and strongly disagree and disagree are considered to refer to disagree. Mean and Standard deviation are as well applied in the analysis of data as presented in Table 4

Table 4: Opinions regarding M&E systems inputs

Statements	Percentage Response (%)					Mean	Stddev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
Human capacity for M&E influences performance of our town council	53% (40)	10% (8)	8% (6)	10% (8)	18% (14)	3.68	1.629
M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council	21% (16)	50% (38)	0% (0)	28% (22)	0% (0)	3.68	1.125
M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council	21% (16)	71% (54)	8% (6)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4.13	.529
We have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation	10% (8)	29% (22)	0% (0)	53% (40)	8% (6)	2.82	1.249
We develop M&E frameworks	8% (6)	18% (14)	0% (0)	74% (56)	0% (0)	2.61	1.054
We develop M&E Work Plan and costs	0% (0)	40% (30)	18% (14)	42% (32)	0% (0)	2.97	.915

Source: Primary data

Findings from the table 4 above indicate that most of the respondents 48(63%) agreed that human capacity for M&E influences performance of their town council, while 22(28%) disagreed and only 6(8%) were undecided. The mean was 3.68 and standard deviation was 1.629 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that human capacity for M&E influences performance of their town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation while those that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This means that human capacity for M&E if properly build could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

It was established that 54(71%) agreed that M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council, yet 22(28%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 3.68 and standard deviation was 1.125 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that M&E frameworks influence performance of our town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation. This means that M&E frameworks if properly developed could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

The findings further indicated that majority of the respondents 70(92%) agreed that M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council while only 6(8%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean was 4.13 and standard deviation was .529 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that M&E Work Plan and costs influence performance of our town council. Those respondents that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This means that M&E Work Plan and costs if properly developed could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

The study found that only 30(39%) of the respondents agreed that they have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation while 46(61%) disagreed. The mean was 2.82 and standard deviation was 1.249 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that they have staff trained in monitoring and evaluation. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers that did not have any training in M&E aspects or did not possess knowledge of any body employed at their workplace to handle M&E tasks/activities. In confirmation of this finding, Key Informant 4 said

> We have had plan to hire or recruit M&E qualified staff for the last five years to allow effective leadership for M&E and commitment towards ensuring M&E system performance but our biggest challenge has been limited funds from the central government for M&E.

Another Key Informant 5 interviewed said

> Currently, our staff staff in the organization are clear on the organization's overall goals and the strategies it has chosen to achieve its goals but many of our staff don't clearly understand the role of M&E in helping the organization meet its goals, many are not motivated to fulfil their M&E responsibilities, and almost all of them lack the ability to execute their M&E responsibilities without hindrance.

Furthermore, the findings showed that the urban local governments do not provide capacity building or training for staff involved in conducting M&E activities *"So far we don't have M&E specialist or anyone assigned specifically for M&E activities"* Key informant 3. This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no M&E trained staff employed to specifically handle M&E work which is likely to result into no learning from the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively.

It was established that only 20(26%) of the respondents agreed that at the town council they develop M&E frameworks, yet 56(74%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 2.61 and standard deviation was 1.054 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that at the town council they develop M&E frameworks. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers that did not have any knowledge on M&E

frameworks or had not seen any M&E frameworks. When asked why there are no developed M&E frameworks, Key Informant 5 said "*As a matter of fact, in our town council we don't have adequately skilled M&E staff who can effectively and efficiently conduct M&E activities as may be required*". This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no developed M&E frameworks which is likely to result into poorly guided evaluations of the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively.

The findings further indicated that only 30(40%) of the respondents agreed that at the town council they develop M&E Work Plan and costs while 32(42%) disagreed with the statement. The mean was 2.97 and standard deviation was .915 implies that most respondents were in disagreement with the statement that at the town council they develop M&E Work Plan and costs. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers that did not have any knowledge on M&E Work Plan and costs or had not seen any M&E Work Plan and costs. In confirmation key informant 4 interviewed said *"We don't have M&E plan …. We use the plan of action found in our budget plan to conduct monitoring and evaluation"* Another respondent stated that *"In fact we do not have, we use five years strategy plan to create a budget and guiding us in the implementation of various activities".* This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were no developed M&E Work Plan and costs which is likely to result into poorly guided evaluations of the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect performance negatively.

4.4.4 M&E system outputs and Performance of urban local governments in Jinja District

This section presents results on M&E systems outputs. For this particular research, strongly agree and agree are considered to refer to agree and strongly disagree and disagree are considered to refer to disagree. Mean and Standard deviation are as well applied in the analysis of data as presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Opinions regarding M&E system outputs

Statements	Percentage Response (%)					Mean	Stddev
	SA	A	N	D	SD		
M&E databases influence performance of our town council	71% (54)	29% (22)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3.71	.460
Data Auditing influences performance of our town council	0% (0)	61% (46)	39% (30)	0% (0)	0% (0)	3.61	.495
Data dissemination and use influences performance of our town council	0% (0)	47% (36)	42% (32)	10% (8)	0% (0)	3.37	.675
We have M&E databases	50% (38)	8% (6)	0% (0)	42% (32)	0% (0)	3.66	1.457
We conduct data auditing	29% (22)	71% (54)	0% (0)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4.29	.460
We disseminate and use M&E findings	16% (12)	74% (56)	10% (8)	0% (0)	0% (0)	4.05	.517

Source: Primary data

Findings from the table 5 above indicate that all of the respondents 76(100%) agreed that M&E databases influence performance of their town council. The mean was 3.71 and standard

deviation was .460 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that M&E databases influence performance of their town council. This means that all participants were in agreement regarding the critical role M&E databases could play in improving performance of town councils in Jinja district. This implies that M&E databases if established could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

It was established that 46(61%) agreed that data auditing influences performance of our town council, yet 30(39%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean was 3.61 and standard deviation was .495 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that data auditing influences performance of our town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation or did not see any data auditing taking place. This means that majority of the participants were in agreement regarding the critical role data auditing could play in improving performance of town councils in Jinja district. This implies that data auditing if properly done could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

The findings further indicated that 36(47%) of the respondents agreed that data dissemination and use influences performance of our town council; 8(10%) disagreed with the statement while 32(42%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean was 3.37 and standard deviation was .675 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that data dissemination and use influences performance of our town council. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the many workers in the two urban local governments that didn't much about monitoring and evaluation or did not see any data dissemination and use taking place while those that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This means that majority of the participants were in agreement regarding the critical role data dissemination and use could play in improving performance of town councils in Jinja district. This implies that data dissemination and use if properly done could influence the performance of town councils in Jinja district.

The majority of the respondents 44(58%) agreed that at the town council they have M&E databases while 32(42%) disagreed against the statement. The mean was 3.66 and standard deviation was 1.457 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that at the town council they have M&E databases. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers that did not have any training in M&E aspects or did not see any M&E databases at their workplace while those that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. In confirmation, Key Informant 6 interviewed said

> We mainly have management databases for planning and budgeting purposes here in Buwenge Town Council, not specifically databases developed and maintained to enable stakeholders access relevant data for policy formulation, program management and improvement.

This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were M&E databases which is likely to result into learning from the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect their performance positively.

It was also established that all respondents 76(100%) agreed that at the town council they conduct data auditing. The mean was 4.29 and standard deviation was .460 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that at the town council they conduct data auditing. This means that all participants were in agreement regarding the practice of data

auditing at their town councils in Jinja district. This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there were conducting data auditing which is likely to result into learning from the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect their performance positively.

The findings further indicated that majority of the respondents 68(90%) agreed that at the town council they disseminate and use M&E findings while 8(10%) of the respondents were not sure. The mean was 4.05 and standard deviation was .517 implies that most respondents were in agreement with the statement that at the town council they disseminate and use M&E findings. This means that all participants were in agreement regarding the practice of dissemination and use M&E findings at their town councils in Jinja district. Those respondents that disagreed could be the among the few workers that did not have any training in M&E aspects or did not see any dissemination and use M&E findings at their workplace while those that were not sure were relatively new or simply concealed information. This implies that at the two town councils investigated, there was dissemination and use M&E findings which is likely to result into learning from the activities, programs and projects done at the local governments which is likely to affect their performance positively.

4.4 Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 6: Correlation results on M&E system inputs and Performance

Correlations

		M&E system inputs	M&E system process	M&E system outputs	Performance of urban local governments
M&E system inputs	Pearson Correlation	1	.606**	.318	.730**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.052	.001
	N	76	76	76	76
M&E system process	Pearson Correlation	.606**	1	.791**	.814**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.001
	N	76	76	76	76
M&E system outputs	Pearson Correlation	.318	.791**	1	.739**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052	.000		.001
	N	76	76	76	76
Performance of urban local governments	Pearson Correlation	.730**	.814**	.739**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.001	.001	
	N	76	76	76	76

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: **Primary data**

Table 6 above shows a strong positive significant correlation between M&E systems inputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District (r=.730** p < 0.05). This means that M&E systems inputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District move in the same direction. Therefore, putting in place M&E databases; ensuring there is proper data auditing, ensuring there is proper data dissemination and use of M&E findings other factors remaining constant is most likely to significantly improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District. This finding concurs with Mackay (2009) who wrote that monitoring information and evaluation findings that are judged valuable by key stakeholders; are used to improve government performance. However, on the contrary Umlaw (2015) found that M&E systems of most departments focus on quantitative measures of the achievement of pre-specified activities and outputs which do not contribute to relevant, sustainable and adequate public outcomes and impact.

Generally, these findings concur with the systems theory by Von Bertalanffy (1969) which assumes that that organizations like organisms are open systems: they cannot survive without continuously exchanging matter and energy with their environment therefore, theory can be used to carry out an effectiveness analysis of entity such the town councils.

Table 3 above shows a strong positive significant correlation between M&E systems process and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District (r=.814** p < 0.05). This means that M&E systems process and Performance of urban local governments in Jinja District move in the same direction. Therefore, putting in place structures with M&E functions; establishing partnerships for planning, developing a culture for M&E, ensuring there is proper coordination for M&E activities other factors remaining constant is most likely to significantly improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District. Such findings are in agreement with the views held by Nyakundi (2014) who found that structures with M&E Functions affect the implementation of M&E, in that M&E units play a key role in providing functional advice in the development of appropriate results-based performance monitoring systems thus, impacting on performance. The findings are also in harmony with Ngatia (2015) who stressed that that the presence of an M&E unit led to an increase in the performance of projects in Murang'a County.

Table 3 above shows a strong positive significant correlation between M&E system outputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District (r=.739** p < 0.05). This means that M&E system outputs and Performance of urban local governments in Jinja District move in the same direction. Therefore, putting in place M&E databases; ensuring there is proper data auditing, ensuring there is proper data dissemination and use of M&E findings, other factors remaining constant is most likely to significantly improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District. Such findings are supported by Jili & Mthethwa (2016) who noted that to be able to improve service delivery, local governments must design and implement comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems. In line with the study findings, Ali et al. (2018) opined that alignment of an organization's data to its mission provides the starting point for improvement in organizational performance. Findings from this study still concur with Emmanuel (2015) who concluded that poor data quality has a direct impact on the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization, especially over the entire life cycle of a task, and errors in different dimensions of the data can lead to financial losses or serious errors.

4.5 Regression analysis

Table 7: Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.907[a]	.823	.808	.11062

a. Predictors: (Constant), M&E system inputs, M&E system process, M&E system outputs

Source: Primary Data

Table 7 shows that 0.823 or 82.3% of the variation in performance of urban local governments in Jinja District was a result of changes in M&E system inputs, M&E system process and M&E system outputs. The R square tells how a set of independent variables explains variations of a dependent variable (Mugenda & Mugenda, 1999). This implies that 82.3% of the variation in performance of urban local governments in Jinja District can be explained by M&E system inputs, M&E system process and M&E system outputs. Further analysis was done by computing the Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) as presented in Table 8.

Table 8: Showing Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) results

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.941	3	.647	52.864	.001[b]
	Residual	.416	34	.012		
	Total	2.357	37			

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of urban local governments

b. Predictors: (Constant), M&E system inputs, M&E system process, M&E system outputs

Source: Primary Data

Table 8 shows that the effect of M&E system inputs on performance of urban local governments in Jinja District was positive and significant (Sig. = 0.001, P =.001 <0.05, F= 52.864). This meant that the model is significant because its significance value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which stated that there is a significant positive relationship between M&E systems inputs and performance of urban local governments was accepted. Table 8 shows that the effect of M&E system process on performance of urban local governments in Jinja District was positive and significant (Sig. = 0.001, P =.001 <0.05, F= 52.864). This meant that the model is significant because its significance value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which stated that there is a significant positive relationship between M&E systems process and performance of urban local governments was accepted.

Table 8 shows that the effect of M&E system outputs on performance of urban local governments in Jinja District was positive and significant (Sig. = 0.001, P =.001 <0.05, F= 52.864). This meant that the model is significant because its significance value is less than 0.05. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis which stated that there is a significant positive

relationship between M&E systems outputs and performance of urban local governments was accepted.

Table 9: Regression coefficients of the predictor variables against performance of Urban local governments

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.648	.247		14.747	.001
	M&E system inputs	.203	.039	.494	5.142	.001
	M&E system process	.071	.073	.145	.974	.001
	M&E system outputs	.315	.084	.467	3.741	.001

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of Urban local governments

From the linear regression equation

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \varepsilon$$

Where, Y is the value of performance of Urban local governments (dependent variable) and X_1 is the value of M&E system inputs, X_2 is the value of M&E system process, X_3 is the

value of M&E system outputs, β is the Beta coefficient of the independent variable (Slope/gradient), α is the intercept (constant) and ε is the error term. Substituting the values in Table 9 in the linear regression Equation

$$Y = 3.648 + .203 X_1 + .071X_2 + .315X_3 + \varepsilon$$

The constant value of 3.648 is the value of the performance of Urban local governments (Y) when the influence of the predictor variables is zero (all other factors constant). The equation also showed that all factors constant; a unit increase in M&E system inputs results into -.203 increases in the performance of Urban local governments. The model indicates a positive and significant relationship between M&E system inputs and performance of Urban local governments (β=-.203, p=.001, >0.05). The alternate hypothesis that state that M&E system inputs has a significant influence on the performance of Urban local governments is accepted.

In agreement with this, Kugonza & Mukobi (2015) wrote that one of the key factors that influence public participation in local governance is access to information. Goldman et al. (2018) found that public service institutions including urban local governments need to have appropriate structures and functions that support M&E because M&E and M&E systems are a "good thing" and have intrinsic merit.

Still about M&E frameworks, just as in this study Chaplowe & Cousins (2015) opine that at the local government level, throughout the implementation of the M&E system, institutions need to establish the level of capacity available, identify gaps, and develop a capacity-building mechanism. Kusek, et al, (2004) in support of the findings, further argued that monitoring and evaluation systems are crucial management tools in achieving results and meeting specific targets by governments.

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This study found that M&E Work Plan and costs were positively related to performance of urban local governments in Jinja District. This was in concurrence with the views held by Umlaw (2015) who wrote that the M&E systems of most departments focus on quantitative measures of the achievement of pre-specified activities and outputs which do not contribute to relevant, sustainable and adequate public outcomes and impact. In agreement with the study findings, Mackay (2009) wrote that an M&E system produces monitoring information and evaluation findings that are judged valuable by key stakeholders; are used to improve government performance. Based on the reviewed literature, in line with the study findings, it becomes imperative that urban local governments in Jinja District should put in place M&E systems inputs human Capacity for M&E, M&E frameworks and M&E work plan and costs.

The regression equation also showed that all factors constant; a unit increase in M&E system process results into .071 increases in the performance of Urban local governments. The model indicates a positive and significant relationship between M&E system process and performance of Global Aim Uganda (β=.071, p=.001, <0.05). The alternate hypothesis that state that M&E system process has a significant influence on the performance of Urban local governments is accepted. The study found a statistically significant relationship between M&E system process and performance of Urban local governments. Such findings are supported by Engela & Ajam (2010) who wrote that building monitoring and evaluation systems process mechanisms help to strengthen governance in countries by improving transparency, by strengthening accountability relationships, and by building a performance culture within governments to support better policymaking, budget decision making, and management. Muzinda (2007) found that implementing the monitoring and evaluation process was not effectively done due to, among other reasons, lack of partnerships, lack of expertise, and a poor culture for M&E. This study found that coordination of M&E activities is positively related to performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District. This concurs with Wanjiku (2015) who found that the absence of proper partnerships and poor coordination of M&E activities largely affected the performance of local projects in Kenya. Similarly, Mbiti & Kiruja, (2015) found that the absence of an M&E system caused weaknesses in the entire area of M&E in public organizations. Still in agreement with this study findings, Gorgens & Kusek (2010) wrote that the M&E system cannot function well without sound partnerships and proper coordination and this affects the performance of entities.

The equation also showed that all factors constant; a unit increase in M&E system outputs results into .315 increases in the performance of Urban local governments. The model indicates a positive and significant relationship between M&E system outputs and performance of Urban local governments (β=.315, p=.000, <0.05). The alternate hypothesis that state that M&E system outputs has a significant influence on the performance of Urban local governments is accepted. This concurred with the views of Xiang, Lee & Kim (2013) noted that found that better data quality has a positive influence on sales, operating profit, and value-added. Ngatia (2015) wrote that data quality is important for performance measurement and effective decision making and good performance and that measuring management's perspective of data quality is an effective way of learning about users' expectations that are associated with the intended uses of the data. However, on the contrary Wanjiku (2015) found found that many organizations do not have any data quality improvement strategy or even data quality assessment frameworks. Such findings can be explained based on systems theory (Von Bertalanffy, 1969). The theory assumes that inputs are transformed into outputs such as data

through an activity of processing them into outcomes that the organization aims to achieve. This means that managers of Urban local governments need to establish M&E databases, carry out data auditing, data dissemination and use of M&E findings.

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 Summary of the study findings
The study findings revealed that there was a strong positive significant correlation between M&E systems inputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District ($r=.730**$ $p < 0.05$). This study found that putting in place human resource that is trained in M&E; developing M&E frameworks, developing M&E work plans and costs other factors remaining constant is most likely to significantly improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

The study findings revealed that there was a strong positive significant correlation between M&E systems process and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District ($r=.814**$ $p < 0.05$). This meant that putting in place structures with M&E functions; establishing partnerships for planning, developing a culture for M&E, ensuring there is proper coordination for M&E activities, other factors remaining constant, is likely to improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

The study findings revealed that there was a strong positive significant correlation between M&E system outputs and performance of urban local governments in Jinja District ($r=.739**$ $p < 0.05$). This meant that putting in place M&E databases; ensuring there is proper data auditing, ensuring there is proper data dissemination and use of M&E findings, other factors remaining constant, is likely to improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

5.2 Conclusion
The following conclusions were drawn from the study findings

Generally, findings showed that to some extent monitoring and evaluation had been applied in urban local governments as a management tool for activities, projects or programme. However, the study found that there are no robust M&E system inputs such as human resource that is trained in M&E; developed M&E frameworks and developed M&E work plans and costs in Kakira and Buwenge TCs. Moreover, M&E systems input components were found to affect performance of urban local governments. Therefore, putting in place human resource that is trained in M&E; developing M&E frameworks, developing M&E work plans and costs are critical steps to improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

Generally, findings showed that to some extent monitoring and evaluation has been conducted through planning departments in their respective councils. However, the study found that there are no robust M&E system process components such as structures with M&E functions; established partnerships for planning, developed a culture for M&E and proper coordination for M&E activities in Kakira and Buwenge TCs. Moreover, M&E systems process components were found to affect performance of urban local governments. Therefore, putting in place structures with M&E functions; establishing partnerships for planning, developing a culture for M&E, ensuring there is proper coordination for M&E activities are critical steps to improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

Generally, findings showed that though not robust there were established M&E system output components in the urban local governments in Jinja District. For instance, there were M&E databases; data auditing was done and there was evidence of data dissemination and use of

M&E findings in Kakira and Buwenge TCs. Moreover, M&E systems output components were found to affect performance of urban local governments. Therefore, putting in place M&E databases; ensuring there is proper data auditing, ensuring there is proper data dissemination and use of M&E findings, critical steps to improve performance of urban local governments in Jinja District.

5.3 Recommendations

Basing on the study findings, the following recommendations are made in this study:

Jinja district should ensure that Town councils recruit staff training in M&E to carry out activities related to monitoring and evaluation. Still Kakira and Buwenge TCs should ensure that all their staff are trained in aspects of monitoring and evaluation through refresher seminars and workshops or sending staff to universities for courses in M&E.

The findings reflect that the urban local governments investigated did not have developed M&E frameworks, M&E work plan and costs and M&E frameworks. This study recommends that the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda in conjunction with the Ministry of Local Government should support urban local government through funding the establishment of M&E systems inputs.

The findings reflect that the urban local governments investigated did not have established, M&E structures such as M&E units. This study recommends that the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda in conjunction with the Ministry of Local Government should support urban local government through training and providing funds for the establishment of M&E systems process components.

This study recommends that frameworks for guiding local governments and district council on how to design and build M&E Systems should be developed by the Office of the Prime Minister of Uganda. This is so because from the findings, it has been noticed that there are challenges facing M&E system which include absence of a common understanding within the local governments on what should constitutes M&E System; inadequate understanding on the institutional framework for the M&E; and lack of a framework for guiding local governments and district council on how to design and build M&E Systems.

Jinja district urban local governments should put in place up-to-date M&E databases since this study found that M&E databases play a critical role in improving performance of town councils yet these critical databases although were in place, they were not regularly updated in Kakira and Buwenge TCs.

This study recommends that formal Databases should be developed, maintained by the M&E unit and accessed by stakeholders for improved management, planning, and budgeting. The town council database should be linked to district and relevant national database to ensure compatibility of reporting templates.

5.4 Areas for further research

This study investigated the relationship between Monitoring and Evaluation systems and performance of Urban local governments in Jinja District using a case of Kakira and Buwenge Town councils. Future studies should also consider Local government employees' perception of the institutionalization of M&E in local government in Uganda, this could help to explain why M&E structures are not yet fully established despite the efforts by the central government.

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