



Effects of organizational development practices on the effectiveness of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Rwanda

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ABSTRACT

The effect of Organizational Development (OD) practices on the effectiveness of local non-governmental organizations [NGOs] in Rwanda was investigated in this study guided by Open Systems and the Extended General Model of Planned Change. It sought to determine the levels of organizational effectiveness and OD practices, analyze the relationships between the two, and predict the effect of OD interventions on NGO effectiveness. Targeting 1,399 registered local NGOs, a stratified random sample of 302 respondents was used in a descriptive study methodology to assure representation across organizational size, sector, and geography. Structured surveys were used to gather primary data, and reports and organizational papers served as secondary sources of context. Regression analysis studied how OD practices affected performance results, correlation analysis looked at relationships between OD and organizational effectiveness, and descriptive statistics measured the extent of OD practice implementation. The results indicate that local NGOs use OD techniques, including performance management, leadership development, and strategic planning, to a moderate level, and that such practices have a high positive correlation with organizational effectiveness. While weaknesses in external relations and operational procedures limited wider OD outcomes, effective management, human resource systems, and the integration of cross-cutting themes emerged as the most important variables. The study comes to the conclusion that improving NGO capacity, adaptability, and long-term performance requires organized and contextually appropriate OD interventions. Strengthening human resource management, integrating cross-cutting themes into organizational procedures, and carrying out comparative or longitudinal research to assess the long-term and context-specific impacts of OD practices are among the recommendations.

Keywords: Effectiveness, Impact, Leadership, Local NGOs, Organizational Development, Performance Management

I. INTRODUCTION

It is commonly acknowledged that organizational development (OD) interventions and the ensuing organizational changes are essential mechanisms for improving the effectiveness, flexibility, and sustainability of organizations worldwide. According to research, OD practices not only give businesses a competitive edge and enhance business processes (Raj & Manivannan, 2021), but they also promote innovation, ongoing learning, and knowledge integration from external networks—all of which are critical for maintaining organizational performance (Inthavong et al., 2023). In the immediate future, OD activities have been associated with increased employee engagement, morale, and productivity; in the long run, they have been linked to enhanced financial performance, market positioning, and organizational resilience (Hasyim & Bakri, 2023). These results highlight the importance of OD in determining organizational effectiveness, especially for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) functioning in resource-constrained, dynamic situations like Rwanda, where the ability to adapt and change is essential for attaining long-term social impact. Increasing an organization's potential and competency, which makes it more adaptable and capable of carrying out planned change efforts on an action-oriented basis, is the main conceptual goal of organizational development (OD) (Velusamy, 2017). To promote self-renewal and ongoing development, OD improves the alignment of organizational structure, procedures, strategy, people resources, and culture. Using behavioral concepts to encourage improvements in how employees interact and perform, it is a methodical, organized, and ongoing endeavor to improve individual, group, and systemic performance (Intelliven, 2020). OD improves an organization's overall performance and adaptability by fostering teamwork, strong interpersonal interactions, and a positive organizational culture.

Structured interventions that include diagnosis, planning, execution, and assessment procedures are necessary for effective OD (Solanky et al., 2019; Warner & David, 2005). The goal of these procedures is to increase organizational congruence in a number of important areas, including as information systems, work policies, culture, structure, leadership, strategy, and mission. Adaptability, technical and financial performance, service quality, and employee and stakeholder satisfaction and engagement are all indicators of organizational effectiveness (Cummings & Worley, 2009;



Thomas & Christopher, 2009). In order for NGOs to successfully fulfill its objective, leaders must make sure that organizational design, culture, and staff are in line with changing operational and competitive situations. OD is a long-term, strategic, and future-focused approach intended to increase the organization's ability for sustained success, which sets it apart from change management (Worley & Cummings, 2009).

NGOs in Africa are subject to regional pressure from governments, local populations, and donors, which affects OD and management procedures. NGOs' ability to carry out OD projects successfully is frequently hampered by a lack of personnel, shaky finance, and uncertain operational environments (Emanuela, 2015). Despite these obstacles, OD has become a crucial facilitator of social and economic development, strengthening institutional capacity, encouraging accountability, and boosting service delivery in a variety of African contexts (Cheru, 2012).

NGOs are an essential part of civil society in Rwanda, supporting government initiatives to further social and economic development. Particularly in post-conflict and rural areas, civil society organizations (CSOs) offer venues for citizen involvement, advocacy, and service delivery (Celestin, 2020; USAID-Rwanda, 2020). The Rwanda Governance Board (RGB), which coordinates and enhances the ability of civil society actors to contribute to national development, has 1,339 local NGOs registered as of 2023 (RGB, 2022). Local NGOs in Rwanda confront ongoing OD issues despite their vital role, such as a high dependence on outside funding, a lack of material and human resources, top-down management structures, and poor organizational coordination (Transparency International Rwanda, 2015; Never Again Rwanda, 2019). Such limitations constrain their effectiveness and sustainability, highlighting the urgent need for structured OD interventions.

Leadership development, strategy planning, process optimization, performance management, institutional learning, and staff empowerment are among the organizational development practices which serve as the study's independent variable. Organizational effectiveness, the dependent variable, includes an NGO's capacity to effectively accomplish its goals, maintain operations, uphold stakeholder satisfaction, and adjust to both internal and external changes (Abdi et al., 2024). This study fills a significant empirical research vacuum and offers practical advice for improving NGO performance in Rwanda by investigating the connection between OD practices and organizational success.

Although OD is generally recognized as a strategy for enhancing organizational performance (Raj & Manivannan, 2021), there is no systematic data on its efficacy in regional NGOs, which is why this research is required. It is anticipated that the study's conclusions would educate development practitioners, policymakers, and NGO leaders on successful OD tactics that boost institutional capacity, encourage learning, and enhance service delivery results. Additionally, the research provides a thorough knowledge of the mechanisms through which OD practices impact organizational performance in Rwanda's complex and changing NGO context by contextualizing the study within global, regional, national, and local contexts.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The long-term viability and operational efficacy of local non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Rwanda are threatened by persistent challenges. According to Rehema (2014), Never Again Rwanda (2019), and Norwegian People's Aid (2020), these problems include limited flexibility to changing situations, deficiencies in organizational competencies, insufficient resources, and concerns about trustworthiness with stakeholders. The uneven implementation of Organizational Development (OD) methods, which are crucial for strengthening internal systems, boosting employee performance, and promoting organizational learning, is a major contributing reason to these difficulties.

Despite OD's widespread recognition as a tool for enhancing organizational capacity, its application in Rwandan NGOs is still dispersed and frequently lacks systematic techniques that might guarantee long-term improvement (Rehema, 2014). There is a knowledge gap on how these interventions lead to improved organizational outcomes, especially organizational effectiveness, because the efficacy and contextual relevance of OD approaches in Rwanda are still little known (Sarkar, 2018; Odeny & Namusonge, 2024).

Current frameworks, like the Revised Planned Change Model (RPCM), emphasize learning, empowerment, and participatory processes while providing structured advice for planned organizational change (Asumeng & Osa-Larbi, 2015). However, little is known about how widely these approaches have been used and how they affect local NGOs in Rwanda. Examining how OD practices—such as staff empowerment, strategic planning, leadership development, and institutionalizing learning—affect their efficacy is therefore crucial.

By examining Organizational Development Practices and Their Impact on the Effectiveness of Local Non-Governmental Organizations in Rwanda, this study directly fills this gap. NGOs will be better equipped to carry out their missions in a changing and resource-constrained world by using the evidence-based insights this research will provide to help them improve internal capacities, performance, and sustainable operations.



1.2 Research Objectives

- i. To assess the level of OD practices and organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda
- ii. To assess the relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda
- iii. To evaluate the effects of OD practices on the organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda.

1.3 Research Questions

- i. What is the level of OD practices and organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda?
- ii. What is the relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda?
- iii. What is the effect of OD practices on the organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

Theoretical viewpoints that take into consideration both internal organizational dynamics and interactions with the external environment are necessary to comprehend how organizational development (OD) practices affect the effectiveness of local NGOs. The Extended General Model of Planned Change and Open Systems Theory are two complementary frameworks that are used in this study. These ideas offer a basis for examining how OD interventions might improve performance inside Rwandan NGOs, increase internal capacity, and promote adaptation.

2.1.1 Open Systems Theory

Ludwig von Bertalanffy first presented Open Systems Theory (OST) in 1950 as a component of his General Systems Theory. Katz and Kahn then used OST in organizational research in 1978. According to the theory, organizations are dynamic entities that constantly engage in resource, information, and energy exchanges with their external environment. According to OST, an organization's effectiveness is determined by its capacity to convert inputs—such as staff, capital, and expertise—into outputs that satisfy stakeholder needs while preserving flexibility and striking a balance with outside demands. OST emphasizes the significance of responsive organizational systems, learning processes, and adaptive management in the context of Rwandan NGOs. NGOs can better adapt to shifts in donor priorities, policy requirements, and community needs by putting OD techniques like strategic planning, leadership development, and performance management into practice. In the end, this ability to adapt and learn enhances organizational resilience and boosts efficiency in achieving mission-driven results (Scott & Davis, 2015).

2.1.2 Extended General Model of Planned Change

Building on previous models of planned organizational change, Asumeng and Osaе-Larbi (2015) created the Extended General Model of Planned Change in 2015. Entering and contracting, diagnosis and feedback, evaluating organizational elements, planning and implementation, assessment and institutionalization, and empowering-withdrawal are the six main phases described by the framework. Every phase places a strong emphasis on evidence-based planning, intervention alignment with organizational priorities, and participatory involvement. This approach offers a structured route for implementing OD practices that are both sustainable and contextually appropriate, making it extremely relevant for local NGOs in Rwanda. NGOs can incorporate procedures that improve internal processes, encourage employee ownership, and cultivate a culture of ongoing learning by adhering to these phases. These procedures improve the organization's ability to accomplish its strategic objectives and maintain performance over time, which raises the effectiveness of the organization as a whole.

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1. Introduction

This empirical review examines existing research related to the study's three objectives: identifying the level of OD practices and organizational effectiveness among local NGOs, assessing the relationship between OD practices and effectiveness, and determining the effect of OD practices on organizational effectiveness. By organizing the review around these objectives, the section highlights what is already known, points to areas of agreement and debate, and identifies gaps that justify the present study. The evidence is drawn from global, regional, and Rwanda-specific studies, providing a broad foundation for understanding how OD practices shape organizational performance in diverse contexts.

Organizational Development (OD) has been widely recognized as a systematic approach to strengthening organizational performance by improving structures, processes, behaviors, and culture. Early contributions by Lewin, Beckhard, and Schein framed OD as a participatory and organization-wide process that builds adaptive capacity and supports sustained performance (Beckhard, 1969; Lewin, 1947; Schein, 1968). These foundational perspectives continue to guide contemporary OD thinking and practice.



2.2.2. Level of OD Practices and Organizational Effectiveness

Studies across various regions show that the extent of OD practice adoption differs substantially across NGOs. Diagnostic OD—such as needs assessments, organizational scans, culture audits, and performance reviews—remains common, but its depth varies by capacity and resource availability. Evidence from Rehema (2014) points out that many NGOs apply OD elements such as leadership strengthening, culture shaping, and vision clarification, although implementation remains inconsistent.

In East Africa, Yaa (2024) found that NGOs frequently practice staff development, systems improvement, and monitoring and evaluation, reporting moderate to high organizational performance. Research from Uganda and Kenya similarly shows that leadership skills, financial management competencies, and strategic planning practices are increasingly present in the sector. However, smaller organizations tend to lag behind due to resource limitations.

In Rwanda, studies reveal a mixed picture. Kigenza and Nkechi (2024) observed that many NGOs incorporate strategic planning, stakeholder involvement, and risk management into their operations, reflecting growing organizational maturity. However, local NGOs—especially smaller and newly established ones—often struggle to consistently apply OD practices due to financial constraints, limited staffing, and high donor dependency. This uneven adoption contributes to varied levels of organizational effectiveness across the sector.

2.2.3. Relationship between OD Practices and Organizational Effectiveness

Empirical literature consistently shows a positive relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness. Research by Thomas and Christopher (2009) demonstrates that organizations with structured OD processes tend to achieve stronger performance outcomes. Studies by McEwan (2018) and Kaltiainen et al. (2018) further highlight that collaboration, fair processes, and trust-building enhance the impact of OD initiatives by improving staff engagement and acceptance.

African studies reinforce this link. Odeny and Namusonge (2024) found significant associations between learning organization practices—team learning, shared vision, and reflective thinking—and improved performance in humanitarian NGOs. Amanyire et al. (2024) also established that leadership and managerial competencies, which are central to OD, predict financial performance. These findings emphasize that the relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness is shaped by both structural and interpersonal dynamics.

Within Rwanda, evidence from organizations such as World Vision Rwanda confirms this positive association. Effective resource allocation, strategic alignment, and participatory planning have been shown to reinforce program quality and organizational performance, mirroring trends observed across the region.

2.2.4. Effect of OD Practices on Organizational Effectiveness

A number of studies have explored the direct effects of OD interventions on organizational outcomes. Anderson and Lannon (2018) demonstrated that staff training, role clarity, and engagement initiatives yield measurable improvements in organizational performance. Jafari et al. (2017) also established that empowerment and organizational support enhance motivation and learning, which in turn improve performance.

Supporting systems such as knowledge management, communication structures, and performance evaluation have also been identified as mediators of OD effectiveness. Zheng et al. (2013) showed that knowledge management strengthens the impact of OD by enabling organizations to learn and adapt, while Sarkar (2018) found that fair compensation and effective communication reinforce OD outcomes by strengthening staff commitment.

African studies also highlight OD's potential in resource-constrained environments. Evidence from Nairobi demonstrates that monitoring and evaluation structures, human resource development, and learning systems significantly strengthen NGO performance. Similar patterns appear in Rwanda, where OD components such as leadership development, strategic planning, and stakeholder engagement contribute to improved governance, accountability, and program delivery. Still, the depth and sustainability of these effects vary across organizations.

2.5 Research Gaps

Despite growing literature, several gaps remain:

- Limited comprehensive assessments of the level of OD practices among local NGOs in Rwanda
- Sparse research examining how specific OD components interact to influence effectiveness
- Few studies that focus on overall organizational effectiveness rather than project outcomes
- Heavy reliance on cross-sectional designs that restrict insights into long-term change
- Insufficient adaptation of OD models to the realities of resource-constrained NGOs

These gaps justify the present study, which examines the level, relationship, and effect of OD practices on organizational effectiveness among local NGOs in Rwanda, contributing evidence that is both contextually grounded and methodologically relevant.



III. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study used a quantitative, descriptive methodology that was enhanced by a review of secondary data. The descriptive approach was chosen because it makes it possible to quantify the connections between Organizational Development (OD) practices and organizational success as well as to systematically examine OD practices as they exist inside local NGOs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Given the study's goal of capturing the current state of OD practices across a broad and changing NGO sector in Rwanda, this strategy was especially appropriate.

3.2 Target Population

The study targeted 1,339 registered local NGOs in Rwanda as recorded by the Rwanda Governance Board (RGB, 2022). The target population included NGO leadership, managers, and staff directly involved in organizational planning and operations.

3.3 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Procedure

Using stratified random sampling, the study selected 302 respondents from across the population to ensure representation by NGO size, sector focus, and geographical location. Stratification was necessary to account for the heterogeneity of local NGOs in Rwanda, including small, medium, and large organizations. The sample size was determined following Slovin's formula (1960) for finite populations, balancing statistical reliability with feasibility in data collection.

3.4 Data Collection Instruments

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire, designed around validated Organizational Development assessment tools (Cummings & Worley, 2019; Asumeng & Osae-Larbi, 2015). The instrument captured dimensions of OD including leadership development, strategic planning, process optimization, staff empowerment, institutional learning, and performance management. Secondary data included organizational records from the 52 NGOs in the sampling frame, which provided contextual and historical information on OD initiatives and performance outcomes.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by three OD experts and pre-tested with 20 NGO staff outside the main sample. Construct validity was evaluated through exploratory factor analysis, confirming that items measured the intended OD dimensions. Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with all scales achieving coefficients above 0.80, indicating high internal consistency (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

3.6 Data Analysis Methods

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to summarize participant responses and organizational characteristics. Correlation analysis was employed to examine relationships between OD practices and organizational effectiveness, while multiple regression analysis assessed the effects of specific OD interventions on organizational outcomes, providing both effect size and statistical significance. Secondary data were used to triangulate findings, enhancing credibility and contextual interpretation.

This mixed approach ensured a comprehensive and contextually grounded analysis, combining statistical rigor with real-world insight into how OD practices are implemented and their effect on organizational effectiveness in local NGOs. By linking structured OD interventions to measurable outcomes, the methodology provides robust evidence to inform practice and policy within Rwanda's NGO sector.

IV. FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

4.1 Findings

This section presents the findings of the study, structured to align with the research objectives and the relationship between the independent variable—Organizational Development (OD) practices—and the dependent variable—organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda. The findings are presented in four stages: demographic characteristics of respondents, descriptive statistics for OD practices and organizational effectiveness, correlation analysis examining the relationship between OD practices and effectiveness, and regression analysis evaluating the effects of OD practices on organizational effectiveness. This structured presentation ensures that the results address the three specific research objectives: (1) assessing the level of OD practices and organizational



effectiveness, (2) examining the relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness, and (3) evaluating the effect of OD practices on organizational effectiveness.

4.1.1 Demographics Characteristics

Table 1 summarizes the profile of the 302 respondents. The data indicate a mature and professionally qualified workforce, with substantial experience across various NGO sectors. This diversity enhances the validity of the analysis and contextual relevance of findings related to OD practices and organizational effectiveness

Table 1
Demographic Data of Respondents (N=302)

Characteristic	Description	No of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	158	52.3
	Female	144	47.7
Age	18-29	7	2.3
	30-49	155	51.3
	50-64	140	46.4
Education level	Associate Degree/Equivalent:	18	6.0
	Bachelor’s Degree:	159	52.6
	Postgraduate Certificate/Diploma	75	24.8
	Master’s Degree	42	13.9
	Doctorate/PhD	8	2.6
Years of service	3-5 years	8	2.6
	6-10 years	118	39.1
	11-15 years	75	24.8
	16+ years	101	33.4
Specialization	Program Management	93	30.8
	Monitoring & Evaluation	25	8.3
	Finance & Operations	58	19.2
	Human Resources	42	13.9
	General Management	34	11.3
	Community Development	50	16.6
Position	CEO/President	17	5.6
	Executive Director /Executive Secretary	92	30.5
	Senior Management Team Member	152	50.3
	Middle-Level Manager	25	8.3
	Program /M&E Coordinator	16	5.3
Size of the organization	Large	54	17.9
	Medium	114	37.7
	Small	134	44.4
Sector of interventions	Governance	25	8.3
	Social transformation	199	65.9
	Economic transformation	78	25.8

The demographic profile indicates that most respondents are well-educated and experienced, predominantly aged 30–49, and actively involved in social and economic transformation sectors. These characteristics are critical for implementing OD practices and fostering a culture of continuous learning.

4.1.2 Descriptive Statistics

To address the first research objective, this section presents descriptive statistics summarizing the current level of Organizational Development (OD) practices and organizational effectiveness among local NGOs in Rwanda. The analysis highlights how these practices are implemented and the extent to which they translate into measurable organizational outcomes.

4.1.2.1 Level of Organizational Development Practices

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics for OD practices in local NGOs in Rwanda. The overall average mean of 2.82 reflects a moderate level of implementation, indicating that while OD practices are present, there remains scope for improvement across key areas. Key: N=302, Legend: 1.00 – 1.79 Very low, 1.80 – 2.59 Low, 2.60 - 3.39 Moderate, 3.40 – 4.19 High, 4.20 – 5.00 Very High.



Table 2
Level of Organizational Development (OD) Practices

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Entering	2.63	0.59	Moderate
Contracting	2.36	0.76	Low
Diagnosing	2.64	0.50	Moderate
Feedback	2.71	0.61	Moderate
Assessing organizational and client factors	2.87	0.66	Moderate
Planning Change	2.82	0.63	Moderate
Implementation of change	2.88	0.78	Moderate
Evaluation of impact	3.07	0.82	Moderate
Institutionalization of impact	3.05	1.10	Moderate
Empowering people	3.03	0.86	Moderate
Internal Integration and Withdrawal of external support	2.95	0.92	Moderate
Average Mean	2.82	0.75	Moderate

4.1.2.2 Level of Organizational Effectiveness

Table 3 shows the descriptive statistics for organizational effectiveness (dependent variable), reflecting performance across financial management, program delivery, HR, external relations, operations, and crosscutting themes. The average mean of 2.91 indicates moderate effectiveness overall.

Table 3
Level of Organizational Effectiveness

Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Interpretation
Proficient Financial Management	2.95	0.88	Moderate
Program Implementation	2.97	0.91	Moderate
Program Monitoring & Evaluation	2.88	0.82	Moderate
Efficient Management and Human Resources	2.87	0.95	Moderate
Efficient External Relations	2.82	1.06	Moderate
Smooth Operations of IT, Procurement, and Logistics	2.92	0.85	Moderate
Integration of Crosscutting Themes	2.99	0.97	Moderate
Average Mean	2.91	0.92	Moderate

The descriptive data suggest that NGOs generally maintain moderate effectiveness across operational and programmatic domains, with opportunity for strengthening organizational systems.

4.1.3 Correlation Analysis

To address the second research objective, this section examines the relationship between Organizational Development (OD) practices and organizational effectiveness among local NGOs in Rwanda. The correlation analysis identifies the strength and direction of associations between the independent and dependent variables. Table 4 shows that the Pearson correlation coefficient between OD practices and organizational effectiveness is $r = 0.946$ ($p < 0.01$), indicating a very strong positive relationship. Improved OD practices are associated with higher organizational effectiveness across financial management, HR, program delivery, and other domains.

Table 4
Correlation Analysis

Item	Measure
r	.946**
P -Value	0.00
N	302

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



4.1.4 Relationship between OD Practices and Organizational Effectiveness in local NGOs in Rwanda

4.1.4.1 Regression Analysis

To address the third research objective, this section evaluates the effect of Organizational Development (OD) practices on the organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda. Regression analysis quantifies how variations in OD practices predict changes in key effectiveness outcomes.

Table 5

Model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.966 ^a	.932	.931	.15957

a. Predictors: (Constant), DV7, DV1, DV3, DV2, DV5, DV6, DV4

Table 5 shows that the model demonstrates a strong and statistically significant relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness. $R^2 = 0.932$ indicates that 93.2% of the variance in OD practices is explained by the predictors

Table 6

Analysis of Variance

ANOVA ^b						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	103.302	7	14.757	579.543	.000 ^a
	Residual	7.486	294	.025		
	Total	110.789	301			

a. Predictors: (Constant), DV7, DV1, DV3, DV2, DV5, DV6, DV4

b. Dependent Variable: Organizational Development (OD) Practices

The ANOVA confirms that the regression model is statistically significant ($p < 0.001$) and reliable for evaluating the effect of OD practices on organizational effectiveness.

4.1.4.2 Hypothesis Testing: Effect of OD Practices on Organizational Effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda

The high F-statistic (579.543) and the corresponding p-value (0.000) provide strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This finding establishes that OD practices significantly and positively affect the organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda. Table 7 further disaggregates these effects, identifying specific OD components—such as entering, contracting, diagnosing, and others—that exert the greatest influence on organizational effectiveness..

Table 7

Regression Coefficients

Regression Coefficients ^a						
		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.010	.041		24.911	.000
	Proficient Financial Management	-.011	.028	-.016	-.407	.684
	Program Implementation	-.035	.031	-.052	-1.119	.264
	Program Monitoring & Evaluation	.051	.030	.069	1.718	.087
	Efficient Management and Human Resource	1.446	.170	2.256	8.491	.000
	Efficient External Relations	-.629	.083	-1.097	-7.580	.000
	Smooth Operations of IT, Procurement and Logistics	-.378	.078	-.527	-4.844	.000
	Integration of Crosscutting Themes	.172	.043	.275	4.013	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Development (OD) Practices

The regression coefficients indicate that Efficient Management & HR and Integration of Crosscutting Themes positively and significantly influence OD practices, whereas inefficient external relations and operational systems negatively affect OD outcomes. Financial management and program implementation show minimal direct effect, suggesting that OD success relies more on effective human resource management, learning, and integration of organizational values.



The findings confirm a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness in local NGOs in Rwanda, providing empirical support for prioritizing HR efficiency, organizational learning, and crosscutting integration in OD interventions.

4.2 Discussion

This study set out to assess the effect of Organizational Development (OD) practices on the effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda, focusing on three specific objectives: assessing the level of OD practices and organizational effectiveness, examining their relationship, and evaluating the effect of OD practices on effectiveness. The findings provide empirical insight into how structured OD interventions shape NGO performance within the Rwandan context.

4.2.1 Level of OD Practices and Organizational Effectiveness

Descriptive statistics indicated that the overall level of OD practices among local NGOs is moderate (mean = 2.82), while organizational effectiveness is also moderate (mean = 2.91). This aligns with the first research objective, highlighting that although NGOs employ some OD systems—such as leadership development, strategic planning, and staff empowerment—these practices are not yet fully institutionalized or consistent across organizations. The moderate effectiveness scores suggest that NGOs achieve satisfactory operational outcomes in financial management, program implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and human resource management, but significant opportunities remain to optimize processes and performance.

These results are consistent with the literature on OD in NGOs. Rehema (2014) noted that OD strengthens organizational renewal and engagement, while Kigenza and Nkechi (2024) highlighted that strategic planning, stakeholder engagement, and resource allocation partially determine NGO performance. The moderate levels observed in this study suggest that Rwandan NGOs possess competent staff and foundational systems, but formal OD structures—such as institutionalized learning loops and systematic performance evaluation—require strengthening to fully translate human capacity into sustained effectiveness.

4.2.2 Relationship between OD Practices and Organizational Effectiveness

The correlation analysis revealed a very strong positive relationship between OD practices and organizational effectiveness ($r = 0.946$, $p < 0.01$), addressing the second research objective. This finding confirms that improvements in OD—particularly in human resource management and integration of crosscutting themes—are closely associated with enhanced NGO performance across key dimensions, including program delivery, financial management, and organizational operations.

The results support existing studies emphasizing the role of OD in organizational performance. Yaa (2024) and Odeny and Namusonge (2024) found that employee development, learning systems, and team-based interventions significantly enhance NGO performance in African contexts. Similarly, Asumeng and Osae-Larbi (2015) and Bushe and Marshak (2015) emphasized that OD interventions fostering leadership, cultural alignment, and participatory decision-making are critical to organizational success. The current study extends these insights to Rwanda, demonstrating that in resource-constrained environments, the strength of OD practices—rather than resource abundance alone—drives effectiveness.

4.2.3 Effect of OD Practices on Organizational Effectiveness

Regression analysis confirmed that OD practices significantly predict organizational effectiveness, with an R^2 of 0.932, addressing the third research objective. Among the OD components, Efficient Management and Human Resources and Integration of Crosscutting Themes were the strongest positive predictors of effectiveness. This suggests that leadership quality, HR systems, and deliberate incorporation of gender, inclusivity, and sustainability considerations are pivotal for strengthening NGO outcomes.

Conversely, inefficient external relations and operational processes, such as IT, procurement, and logistics, negatively impacted OD practices, indicating that misaligned or underperforming operational systems can constrain broader development initiatives. Financial management and program implementation showed weak direct effects, suggesting that resources and activities alone are insufficient to drive organizational effectiveness without the supporting mechanisms provided by structured OD practices.

These findings are consistent with the literature but also provide contextual nuance. While some studies (e.g., Yaa, 2024) found direct resource allocation effects on performance, the Rwandan context appears to mediate this relationship through organizational learning, HR management, and systemic integration. This underscores the importance of contextually adapted OD interventions, particularly in post-conflict and resource-limited environments where human capital and systemic alignment can outweigh mere financial or programmatic inputs.



4.2.4 Agreements, Contradictions, and Contextual Meaning

The findings largely align with prior research emphasizing the developmental and capacity-building nature of OD (Rehema, 2014; Brendel, 2022; Jafari et al., 2017). They affirm that structured OD practices—leadership, learning, HR management, and integration of crosscutting themes—are central to achieving measurable effectiveness in NGOs. However, the weak influence of financial management and program implementation contrasts with studies in other African contexts (Yaa, 2024), suggesting that in Rwanda, resource deployment must be coupled with robust OD practices to translate into organizational outcomes.

Contextually, these results highlight that Rwandan NGOs operate in an environment where professional competence alone is insufficient. The integration of systematic OD mechanisms—including institutionalized learning, staff empowerment, participatory planning, and crosscutting thematic alignment—is essential to bridge the gap between individual capabilities and collective organizational effectiveness. This finding reinforces the need for NGO leaders and policymakers to prioritize OD strategies that are both structured and contextually tailored to maximize institutional performance and sustainability.

V. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusion

Three specific objectives were addressed in this study, which looked at how Organizational Development (OD) practices affected the organizational effectiveness of local NGOs in Rwanda: determining the level of OD practices and effectiveness, analyzing their relationship, and assessing the effect of OD practices on effectiveness. The results show that both organizational effectiveness and OD practices are adopted at a moderate level, indicating that organized OD procedures are not yet fully institutionalized or regularly employed, even if NGOs have capable staff and fundamental systems.

The considerable predictive effect of OD practices ($R^2 = 0.932$) and the strong positive correlation ($r = 0.946$) show that organized OD interventions are important factors in determining the effectiveness of an organization, especially in human resource management and integration of cross-cutting themes. On the other hand, in order for NGOs to reach their full potential, they need to strengthen their operational systems, external relations, financial management, and implementation of programs techniques. Overall, the study demonstrates that professional capacity alone is inadequate in the Rwandan NGO context; systematic implementation of OD practices, such as staff empowerment, leadership development, participatory planning, institutional learning, and thematic integration, is necessary to improve local NGOs' performance, sustainability, and resilience.

5.2 Recommendations

The following important suggestions are put forth to improve the organizational effectiveness of local non-governmental organizations in Rwanda in light of the study's findings: **Boost Human Resources and Leadership Systems:** Leadership development, employee empowerment, and efficient HR management should be given top priority since they are the main factors influencing organizational effectiveness and OD practices. **Institutionalize Learning and Knowledge Management:** To guarantee ongoing development and sound decision-making, institutional systems for organizational learning, regular feedback, and reflective practice should be established. **Integrate Crosscutting Themes:** To increase relevance and impact, systematically include themes such as gender, inclusion, sustainability, and others into organizational policies, programs, and operations.

Optimize Operational Processes: Reduce inefficiencies that could impede larger OD initiatives by increasing efficiency in IT, procurement, logistics, and external relations. **Boost Strategic Planning and Performance Management:** Create and put into place thorough frameworks for planning and performance monitoring that match corporate goals, assets, and results.

Contextualize OD Practices: Tailor OD interventions to Rwanda's post-conflict and resource-constrained environment by focusing on human capacity and systemic alignment in addition to programmatic and financial inputs. Local NGOs can use organized OD methods to enhance efficacy, guarantee sustainable performance, and optimize the impact of their development projects by concentrating on these areas.



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