

Accounting Information System and Financial Performance of Non-Governmental Organizations in Rwanda: A Case of Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda

Fedelis Onteri Nyamari¹, Dr. Gitahi Njenga²

¹MBA (Finance and Accounting Option) of Mount Kenya University

²Mount Kenya University

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Abstract: The general objective of this study aimed to analyse the effects of Accounting Information System (AIS) and financial performance of NGOS in Kigali Rwanda. The study used descriptive design approach which involves description of the population with an aim of establishing the correlation between variables. The study targeted 152 employees of the organization who participated in data collection exercise. Staff in the accounting and finance department was chosen purposively since they are the ones knowledgeable of the Accounting information system. The staffs were divided into three strata namely chief finance officer, accountants and account clerks hence stratified sampling. The researcher then employed simple random sampling when selecting respondents within the stratum to form part of the sample size. The findings showed that AIS components had a strong relationship with financial performance, with $R = 0.974$ and $R\text{ Square} = 0.948$. The ANOVA results showed that the model was statistically significant with $F = 622.611$ and $p = 0.000$. The study recommended that Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria should ensure that all data entry tasks are handled by qualified and trained personnel, while system security, backup, recovery, and regular system updates should be strengthened to protect financial data and support better financial performance.

Keywords: Accounting Information System, financial performance, data entry, data processing, system security, non-governmental organizations.

I. INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of Accounting Information Systems (AIS) has emerged as a critical determinant of organizational performance across both for-profit and non-profit entities globally. In an era characterized by increasing demands for transparency, accountability, and efficient resource utilization, organizations are progressively recognizing that robust AIS serve not merely as record-keeping tools but as strategic assets that enhance decision-making and financial outcomes (Hasson, 2022). For non-governmental organizations (NGOs), which operate under intense scrutiny from donors, regulators, and beneficiaries, the quality of financial reporting and management directly influences their sustainability and ability to fulfill mission objectives. Globally, studies have demonstrated that well-designed AIS contribute to improved financial reporting accuracy, enhanced internal controls, and more effective resource allocation. Tyas and Putra (2023), in their examination of Indonesian NGOs, found that accounting information systems significantly streamlined financial reporting processes, reducing errors and improving timeliness. Similarly, Laoli, Zebua, Zebua, and Waruwu (2026) documented that AIS implementation at the Nias Heritage Museum Foundation in Indonesia enhanced financial management efficiency by

automating routine transactions and facilitating real-time financial monitoring. Hardiyanto, Ahmar, and Merawati (2023) further emphasized that internet-based financial reporting, enabled by sophisticated AIS, positively influences the quality of financial statements in non-profit organizations, thereby strengthening stakeholder confidence.

At the continental level, African NGOs face unique challenges that make the role of AIS particularly salient. Many African nations contend with resource constraints, limited technological infrastructure, and varying degrees of regulatory enforcement, all of which influence how NGOs deploy accounting systems. Despite these challenges, evidence suggests that computerized accounting systems yield substantial performance improvements for African NGOs. In Zambia, Mwila and Leza (2025) conducted a focused assessment of selected NGOs on the Copperbelt province and established a positive relationship between the use of computerized accounting systems and organizational performance. Their research revealed that NGOs adopting digital accounting solutions experienced enhanced financial accuracy, reduced processing times, and better donor reporting compliance compared to those relying on manual systems. Additionally, Samuel and Amachree (2024) investigated professional accounting systems among non-profit making organizations, finding that such systems significantly contributed to profitability or in the non-profit context, financial sustainability through improved cost control and fraud detection mechanisms. These findings from the African context underscore that AIS adoption is not merely a technical upgrade but a strategic imperative for NGOs seeking to optimize financial performance amid resource scarcity and accountability pressures.

Despite the growing body of evidence globally and across Africa demonstrating that Accounting Information Systems (AIS) positively influence organizational performance in non-governmental organizations (NGOs), a significant empirical gap exists regarding the specific context of Rwanda, particularly among NGOs operating in Kigali. Internationally, studies have confirmed that AIS enhance financial reporting accuracy, streamline transaction processing, and improve internal controls within non-profit entities (Hasson, 2022; Tyas & Putra, 2023). Within Africa, Mwila and Leza (2025) established a clear positive relationship between computerized accounting systems and organizational performance among NGOs in Zambia's Copperbelt province, while Samuel and Amachree (2024) demonstrated that professional accounting systems contribute to financial sustainability and fraud reduction in non-profit making organizations. These findings suggest that AIS adoption should yield comparable benefits for Rwandan NGOs. However, the extent to which these findings are transferable to Rwanda's unique regulatory, technological, and operational environment remains unsubstantiated due to a conspicuous absence of localized empirical research.

The case of the Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria (ICU) Rwanda exemplifies this knowledge gap. ICU Rwanda, an international NGO engaged in development cooperation, higher education support, and community-based interventions in Kigali, manages multiple donor-funded projects with diverse financial reporting requirements. Preliminary observations suggest that ICU Rwanda operates with a mix of manual and partially automated accounting procedures, potentially leading to inefficiencies in financial data consolidation, delayed reporting to donors, and increased vulnerability to errors or discrepancies. While the organization has made efforts to comply with Rwanda Governance Board (RGB) financial reporting standards, there is no systematic evidence documenting how its current AIS or lack thereof affects its financial performance indicators such as cost efficiency, budget utilization rates, donor fund traceability, or audit outcomes. Furthermore, no prior study has specifically examined whether implementing or upgrading AIS would significantly improve ICU Rwanda's financial management outcomes compared to its current practices.

The research gap is therefore twofold. First, there is a general absence of empirical studies investigating the AIS-financial performance nexus for NGOs in Kigali, Rwanda, despite the country's strategic emphasis on digital transformation and transparent governance. Second, specific to ICU Rwanda, no documented analysis exists that quantifies or qualitatively assesses how its existing accounting information system influences its financial performance. This lack of evidence leaves NGO managers, policymakers, and donors without critical guidance on whether investments in AIS infrastructure, staff training, or system upgrades are likely to yield measurable returns in financial performance. Consequently, this study seeks to address the following core question: What is the effect of Accounting Information Systems on the financial performance of NGOs in Kigali, Rwanda, using ICU Rwanda as a case study? By answering this question, the research aims to fill the identified gap and provide actionable insights for NGO financial management in the Rwandan context.

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of Accounting Information Systems on the financial performance of NGOs in Kigali, Rwanda, with specific focus on Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study is anchored on three complementary theories that collectively explain the relationship between Accounting Information Systems (AIS) and financial performance of NGOs. These theories are the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), the Task-Technology Fit (TTF) Model, and the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm. Each theory is discussed in terms of its origin, core propositions, recent scholarly reviews, and relevance to the present investigation of AIS effects on financial performance at Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria (ICU) Rwanda.

2.1 Technology Acceptance Model (TAM)

The Technology Acceptance Model was originally developed by Fred Davis in 1989 as an adaptation of the Theory of Reasoned Action to explain and predict user acceptance of information technology. TAM posits that two primary beliefs determine an individual's intention to use a technology: perceived usefulness (the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would enhance their job performance) and perceived ease of use (the degree to which a person believes that using a particular system would be free of effort). These beliefs, in turn, influence actual system usage, which ultimately affects performance outcomes (Davis, 1989).

The theory has been extensively reviewed and extended over the past three decades. A recent comprehensive review by Taherdoost (2022) examined the evolution of TAM across various contexts, confirming its continued relevance in explaining technology adoption behaviors in both for-profit and non-profit settings. Similarly, Marangunić and Granić (2015) conducted a systematic literature review and found TAM to be one of the most influential and parsimonious models for understanding technology acceptance. More recently, Scherer, Siddiq, and Tondeur (2019) updated TAM's application to educational technology contexts, while Al-Emran and Granić (2021) highlighted TAM's integration with other theories to explain system use in developing countries.

Relevance to this study: TAM is directly applicable to examining how ICU Rwanda's finance staff and managers perceive the AIS they use for data input, processing, and security management. If users perceive the AIS as useful for improving budget tracking, donor reporting, and cost efficiency, they are more likely to use it consistently and effectively, thereby enhancing financial performance. Conversely, if the system is perceived as difficult to use (low ease of use), staff may bypass it, rely on manual workarounds, or underutilize its features, leading to data entry errors, processing delays, and security vulnerabilities. Thus, TAM provides a lens for understanding the behavioral and perceptual mechanisms through which AIS components translate into financial performance outcomes at ICU Rwanda.

2.2 Task-Technology Fit (TTF) Model

The Task-Technology Fit model was introduced by Goodhue and Thompson (1995) to address a fundamental limitation of earlier technology acceptance models: the assumption that technology characteristics alone determine usage and performance. TTF argues that for a technology to positively influence performance, there must be a fit between the capabilities of the technology and the demands of the task being performed. When the technology provides features, functionalities, and data that align well with what users need to accomplish their tasks, task-technology fit is high, leading to improved performance and utilization. Conversely, poor fit results in reduced performance and potential abandonment of the technology.

Goodhue and Thompson (1995) identified eight dimensions of task-technology fit, including data quality, data accuracy, ease of use, timeliness, system reliability, and compatibility with existing work processes. The model has been widely applied in information systems research. A recent review by Ziguers and Buckland (1998) extended TTF to group decision support systems, while more contemporary reviews by Furneaux (2012) and Howard and Rose (2019) confirmed the model's enduring utility in explaining performance impacts across diverse information systems, including accounting and financial management systems. In the non-profit context, Mwila and Leza (2025) implicitly drew on TTF logic when they concluded that the benefits of computerized accounting systems depend on whether the system's features match the specific financial reporting needs of NGOs.

Relevance to this study: TTF is particularly relevant to analyzing the effect of AIS on financial performance at ICU Rwanda because the study focuses on specific AIS components data input, data processing, and system security and their alignment with financial management tasks. For example, if ICU Rwanda's AIS requires manual double-entry of data that could be automatically imported from bank feeds (poor fit for the task of data input), errors and delays will increase, harming budget

tracking. If the system lacks automated reconciliation features (poor fit for data processing tasks), staff must spend excessive time on manual checks, reducing cost efficiency. Similarly, if system security controls are too restrictive (e.g., requiring multiple approvals for routine transactions) or too lax (e.g., lacking audit trails), the fit with ICU Rwanda's need for both accountability and operational agility is compromised. Therefore, TTF guides the investigation of whether and how well ICU Rwanda's AIS characteristics match its financial task requirements, thereby influencing financial performance.

2.3 Resource-Based View (RBV)

The Resource-Based View of the firm was originally articulated by Jay Barney in 1991, building on earlier work by Penrose (1959) and Wernerfelt (1984). RBV posits that organizations achieve sustainable competitive advantage and superior performance not primarily through external market positioning but through the possession of valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources and capabilities (Barney, 1991). In the context of information systems, an AIS can be considered a strategic resource if it enables the organization to perform financial management activities more efficiently or effectively than competitors, and if it cannot be easily replicated by other organizations.

Barney (1991) argued that resources include all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, and knowledge controlled by an organization. Subsequent developments have extended RBV to the non-profit sector, where competitive advantage is reframed as organizational sustainability or donor confidence (Kong, 2008). A recent review by Barney, Ketchen, and Wright (2021) revisited RBV after three decades, affirming its continued relevance while acknowledging critiques regarding tautology and empirical testing. Newbert (2007) provided a comprehensive empirical assessment of RBV, finding substantial support for the relationship between valuable, rare resources and performance. In the context of AIS, Mwila and Leza (2025) and Samuel and Amachree (2024) implicitly drew on RBV logic by suggesting that computerized accounting systems constitute a strategic asset that differentiates higher-performing NGOs from lower-performing ones.

Relevance to this study: RBV is relevant because it frames ICU Rwanda's AIS as a potential strategic resource that can enhance financial performance if it possesses VRIN characteristics. Specifically, an AIS that provides accurate, timely financial data (value) that is not commonly found among peer NGOs in Kigali (rarity), is difficult for competitors to copy due to customized configurations or proprietary software (imperfect imitability), and has no equivalent manual substitute that achieves the same efficiency (non-substitutability) would generate sustained improvements in budget utilization, cost efficiency, and donor reporting. Conversely, if ICU Rwanda uses a generic, poorly configured, or commonly available AIS, its financial performance gains may be limited and easily replicated. The study therefore examines whether ICU Rwanda's data input, processing, and security features constitute VRIN resources that translate into measurable financial performance advantages.

2.4 Empirical Review

Al-Dalaïen (2018) conducted an investigation on how AIS influences the financial position of real estate organisations in Jordan. Data collection was done using questionnaires and 200 sample respondents were considered, while the analysis included 175 questionnaires. The analysis was done using linear regression and showed that the Jordanian companies benefited greatly from the use of AIS in their organisations.

According to studies by Ironkwe (2018) on AIS implementation and financial health of corporates in Nigeria, data were collected from 17 entities for the years 2011 to 2014 from Nigeria Stock Exchange. Multiple regression was conducted using SPSS. The study concluded that accounting systems positively correlate with financial indicators of organisations in Nigeria.

Rehab (2018) investigated the impact of implementing an accounting system on financial health. The researcher collected data from SMEs in Saudi Arabia. Data analysis and hypothesis testing were done using linear analysis. The results revealed that a proper AIS can lead to cost reduction and improve the quality of financial reports, which assists management in making good decisions and improving performance.

Saeidi (2014) researched on AIS effects on financial performance. The researcher used a sample of 40 top managers who were distributed with questionnaires to provide their responses. A linear regression model was adopted with SPSS software. Hypotheses were analysed by the use of student t sample statistic. The results showed that a proper AIS in the organisation improves the knowledge of managers and accountants, facilitates decision making, improves resource allocation, and increases financial performance.

III. METHODOLOGY

In this research, descriptive design approach was used with the intention of examining how AIS affects business performance of selected NGOs in Kigali Rwanda. Descriptive design involves description of the population with an aim of establishing the correlation between variables.

The population to be studied was obtained from the list of those NGOs registered with the government of Rwanda and operating within Kigali Rwanda. The study targeted 152 employees of the organization who participated in the data collection exercise. Staff in the accounting and finance department were chosen purposively since they are knowledgeable about Accounting Information System. The staff were divided into three strata namely chief finance officer, accountants and account clerks, hence stratified sampling. The researcher then employed simple random sampling when selecting respondents within the stratum to form part of the sample size. The sample size was obtained using Slovin's formula. The study used a sample of 110 respondents from the target population. Purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques were used to select respondents with relevant knowledge of AIS and financial performance.

Data were collected using questionnaires which were served to the respondents physically and electronically. The questions were structured in a Likert scale where respondents were required to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. The researcher obtained an introductory letter signed by the coordinator of MBA which was given to the respondents before data collection.

The raw data was collected, summarised and analysed using various statistical and logical tools in order to arrive at conclusions. Using SPSS version 21, analysis of data was done utilising descriptive and inferential statistical tools. The regression model was specified as:

$$y = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1x_1 + \alpha_2x_2 + \alpha_3x_3 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where: y = Financial performance of Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria; α_0 = Constant Term; α_1 = Alpha coefficients; x_1 = Data entry; x_2 = Data processing; x_3 = System security; ϵ = error term.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Comments
Research instrument	0.976	Reliable

Note. Source: Pilot Data Results (2026).

The reliability result was above the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming that the research instrument was reliable for the main data collection.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This section summarizes, analyzes, and discusses the study findings on Accounting Information System and financial performance of non-governmental organizations in Rwanda, with focus on Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda. The section presents the response rate and inferential results aligned with the research objectives.

4.1 Response Rate

In this study, out of 110 questionnaires distributed to respondents using digital questionnaire (Kobo Toolkit), 107 were responded to accordingly. This high response rate signifies strong participant cooperation and indicates that the data collected were sufficiently representative of the target population.

Table 2: Response Rate

Response	Frequency	Percent
Returned	107	97.3
Unreturned	3	2.7
Total	110	100.0

Note. Source: Primary Data (2026).

Table 2 shows that 107 questionnaires were returned out of 110 questionnaires distributed, representing a response rate of 97.3%, while 3 questionnaires were not returned, representing 2.7%. This response rate was adequate for analysis and strengthened the credibility of the findings.

4.2 Multiple Regression Analysis

This section presents the findings of the multiple regression analysis that was carried out to determine the combined effect of data entry, data processing, and system security on financial performance of Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda. The model summary and ANOVA results are presented in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.974a	.948	.946	.25795

Note. a. Predictors: (Constant), The softwares are always up to date, The data entry is done by qualified personnel, Accounting information system takes less time to respond.

Note. Source: Primary Data (2026).

Table 3 presents the model summary for the relationship between selected AIS factors and financial performance. The value of R is 0.974, indicating a very strong positive relationship between AIS and financial performance. The R Square value of 0.948 means that 94.8% of the variation in financial performance is explained by the selected AIS components included in the model. The Adjusted R Square value of 0.946 confirms that the model remains strong even after adjusting for the number of predictors. The standard error of estimate is 0.25795, showing a relatively low prediction error.

These results show that the selected AIS components explain almost all variation in financial performance. This is a strong indication that Accounting Information System plays a major role in improving financial performance through accurate data entry, timely processing, and secure systems.

Table 4: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	124.287	3	41.429	622.611	.000b
Residual	6.854	103	.067		
Total	131.140	106			

Note. a. Dependent Variable: The system facilitates the management make informed decisions thus financial performance.

b. Predictors: (Constant), The softwares are always up to date, The data entry is done by qualified personnel, Accounting information system takes less time to respond.

Note. Source: Primary Data (2026).

Table 4 displays the ANOVA results used to assess the overall significance of the regression model. The F value is 622.611 with a significance level of 0.000. Since the significance value is below 0.05, the model is statistically significant. This means that the AIS indicators used in the model jointly have a significant effect on financial performance at Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda.

The findings show that when software is updated, when qualified staff handle data entry, and when the system responds quickly, management makes better financial decisions. Better decisions improve financial planning, budget control, reporting accuracy, and overall financial performance. These results support the specific objectives of the study because qualified data entry improves accuracy and reporting, fast system response improves efficiency, and updated software strengthens system security and reliability.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it is concluded that the Accounting Information System (AIS) has a significant positive effect on the financial performance of Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria Rwanda. The findings confirm that AIS supports financial performance by improving data accuracy, report timeliness, financial control, security of information, and management decision-making.

The study confirms that data entry, data processing, and system security are interdependent yet distinct components of AIS that collectively influence the financial performance of ICU Rwanda. A well-functioning AIS enables better financial reporting, enhances accountability, supports donor confidence, and improves the organization's ability to use resources efficiently.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

Instituto per la Cooperazione Universitaria should ensure that all data entry tasks are handled by qualified and trained personnel. Regular training should be provided to improve staff skills in accounting and system use. This will reduce errors and improve report accuracy.

Management should maintain strong control over data processing. Regular system updates and performance checks should continue to ensure reports remain timely and reliable.

System security measures should be strengthened further. Even though controls exist, the organization should monitor for any signs of unauthorized access. Regular security audits should be conducted to detect and prevent system weaknesses.

Backup and recovery systems should be tested regularly to ensure they work during system failure. This will protect financial data at all times.

NGOs in Kigali should invest in strong Accounting Information Systems. AIS improves accuracy, efficiency, and decision making. These factors lead to better financial performance and stronger accountability.

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