

Planning for Monitoring and Evaluation on Performance of Girl's Education Projects of Public Primary School in Baidoa, Somalia

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Abstract

Education for girls is very vital in any country since girls are very delicate in nature and need to be given the necessary support they require. Since the onset of relative political stability in Somalia, the federal and state governments have initiated education projects targeting vulnerable communities to increase access to quality education for girls who have reached age going to school. The projects are also targeted at improving gender equality in access to education with the aim of raising the literacy levels in the country. Thus, the current study aimed at determining how planning for monitoring and evaluation influence performance of girls' education project in public primary schools in Baidoa, Somalia. The study used a mixed research methodology which comprised qualitative and quantitative data gathered by use of questionnaires. The target population was 1400 people comprising Ministry of education officers, Project managers, Monitoring and Evaluation officers, Members of the Committee, Head Teachers, Teachers and Beneficiaries with a sample size of Sample size of 361 participants. Data collection instrument were questionnaires and interview guide. Pilot study was carried out to test and retest the effectiveness of the research tool in the neighboring district. The study established and concluded that there was no adequate budget allocation for project monitoring and evaluation during project planning. Most beneficiaries were not involved into the process, capacity building was not done based on code of ethics and thus capacity building training was not anchored on mature learning values that assisted in adult gaining much needed M&E skills.

Key words: *Education Projects, Girl's education, Monitoring and Evaluation, Performance, Planning, Practices*

Introduction

Educational reforms globally are continually being formulated and gradually implemented to address the gaps that exist in the education sector as observed by (Cohen, Spillane & Peurach 2018). Educational reforms globally are continually being formulated and gradually implemented to address the gaps that exist in the education sector. Objectives of these reforms is enhancing access to standard education in the world by overcoming the hindrances that exist. Tram and Ngoc Huy (2021) argue that educational programme offer students the ability to gain critical skills that enable them to contribute towards solving the emerging socio-economic and environmental problems. Despite the educational advancements that having been realized, most developing and third world countries continue to experience little growth in accessing standard education. According to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as of 2021, over 200 million children across the world in the age group of 6 to 18 years are out of school. Reports by the United Nations Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF) indicates that more than 120 million girls are either not in school or have dropped of school. The African continent leads with the highest number of children as well as youth having no access to education with more than 95 million locked out of the system (Guglemi et.al, 2021).

Development organizations such as the World Bank and UNICEF are investing in education programs and projects that are intended to bridge the disparity in school attendance of boys compared to girls. McGreal, Mackintosh and Olcott (2022) postulate that the aim of the programme is to bring about equality to education access to both genders while reducing the number of non-school going children by 50% by 2030. According to Wambua (2019) the approach is in line with the global sustainable goals (SDGs) on education

that seeks to promote education access. According to Bage and Serthy (2019), empowering girls to successfully attain secondary education will impart them with skills that will significantly result in community development. Therefore, it is imperative to ensure that girls are enrolled into basic education and proceed to clear their primary education. In the long term, the impact of the programmes will be experienced with more gender equitable academic systems that empower boys and girls (Harper et.al, 2018). Rumenya and Kisimbi (2020) posit that effective monitoring and evaluation education projects enhances their performance and significantly contributes to project success. The intended benefits of the project are effectively achieved because of efficient tracking of the project outcomes. Results from research conducted by Obunga (2017) concluded that monitoring and evaluation approaches that are result-based improves tracking of the project inputs and activities are well implemented leading to the delivery of desired outputs.

According to Kang et.al. (2021), baseline surveys are critical in monitoring and evaluation of projects and as such they should be conducted with due consideration of best practices. Beneficiary surveys should also be performed accurately as they influence project planning. Tram and Ngoc Huy (2021) postulate that managers should enhance the participation of the project team within monitoring and evaluation through training on the use of the log frame o enhance accuracy of the data captured. Proper use of the M & E logical frameworks enhances the outcome of the process and contributes to project success (Obunga, 2017). Consequently, the application of the practices discussed and their influence on performance of girls' education programme in Baidoa has not been studied in detail. Therefore, this study focused on evaluating their influence when it comes to project implementation.

Since the onset of relative political stability in Somalia, the federal and state governments have initiated education projects targeting vulnerable communities to increase access to quality education for girls who have reached age going to school. The projects are also targeted at improving gender equality in access to education with the aim of raising the literacy levels in the country. To date, the state ministry of education with funding from development partners is implementing a majority of the educational projects in the Southwest State. Southwest State government collaborated with the Finn Church Aid (FAC) and initiated the READ project under financing from the European Union Civil Protection & Humanitarian Aid (ECHO). The goal of the project is to increase access to education of for children living in internally displaced camps in Baidoa with more focus on the girl child. The project sought to improve the enrollment of children in schools in the area stands at below 10 percent. The area also lacks sufficient classes to absorb the children and the project aims at provision of adequate learning facilities. Gagaar Relief and Development Organization (GREDO) has been executing the project activities in the target area for the partners but still there are many girls who are not able to attend school thus need for this study.

The Southwest State government has a partnership with the UNICEF that supports girls' education projects within the state with the main focus area being Baidoa. The projects have incorporated various measures that are meant to keep the girls in school but still many girls are out of school. Provision of sanitary pads to girls is aimed at ensuring that they continue learning which has contributed to the reduction of dropout rates. Social protection has also been adapted into the projects that are meant to enable the parents /guardians are able to take their children to attend primary education. The measure is affected by way of cash transfers to ensure that the girls are not discriminated against in favour of the boys due to financial problems at their homesteads which validated this study to investigate if it is monitoring and evaluation of this projects is the problem leading still to many young girls not attending school as per the wish of the government. Despite the efforts that have been made in addressing the inequality in access to education and in particular, due to the high dropout rates of girls still more needs to be done. Some of the girls' education projects funded by local and international development partners have failed to realize the intended goals. Some of the reasons the projects have failed include poor planning, mismanagement, misappropriation of funds and deficient M&E practices throughout implementation thus the current study seek to assess these influences hindering achievement of this projects. Recent withdrawal of the GPE in funding some of the educational projects in the Southwest State such as funding for standard eight exams in Baidoa is a true reflection of

the dwindling funds available for the programme. The failure of several educational projects that were meant to promote access to quality education by girls further necessitates studies to be carried out to investigate the causes therefore, the aim of this research is to scrutinize how planning for monitoring and evaluation influence performance of girls' education project in public primary schools in Baidoa, Somalia.

Literature Review

Monitoring and evaluation plan is a document that aids in assessing and tracking outcome of interventions throughout the lifetime of a projects and thus need to be referred to and as well updated regularly. Planning for monitoring and evaluation need to analyze constriction and their probable solution, capacity build, demonstrate program and plan mechanism.

In marine spatial monitoring and evaluation, planning is a crucial M&E practice to enhance understanding and decision making. It enables institutions to formulate strategies that would help explore alternative to attain project objectives, predicting outcomes and use the outcomes to update knowledge and actions taken by management (Douvere & Ehler (2011). According to him, Monitoring and evaluation plan need to be designed in a way that is comprehensive and cost effective as well. It should set and assess metrics among performance to achieve social and economic objective by clearly showing actions to be taken by management.

Putting resources into M&E strategies without proper planning in place hinders effectiveness and efficiency of monitoring and evaluation plan. Reynolds & Sutherland (2013) in their research on monitoring and evaluation planning and performance of integrated health system established that the rush of intervening without adequate monitoring and evaluation results into weak evidence base for decision making and resource allocation. M&E planning and project implementation are inextricability linked and thus health systems among countries need guidance on developing country specific M&E planning to enhance performance among health projects.

One of the major educational projects in Africa is the educational project aiming at integrating ICT into teaching and learning process. In research conducted by Rodríguez, Nussbaum, López, & Sepúlveda, (2021) asserts that despite the introduction of ICT as an educational project within learning is institution students' performances have been lacking. This is attributed to the mismatch between approaches used to measure effectiveness and learning, lack of M&E information pertaining to ICT used, scarce M&E planning schemes and lack of M&E attention in evaluation ICT in educational projects. Their research which examined educational project M&E practices and learners outcomes called or the need to use M&E practices that supported interventional process within the educational projects to enhance provision of real time information to enhance informed decision making through application of assessment instruments in accordance to monitoring plan.

Research by Hubert & Mulyungi (2018) pertaining to effect M&E planning on project performances among Rwandese nongovernmental organization and which employed descriptive research design. The study's findings were that an M&E plan ought to be prepared prior to the commencement of any project if its implementation is to be successful. The study results further stresses on the importance of critical analysing and formulating relevant performance indicators that will measure against project progress. The study's results point to the existence of an important association between M&E planning and project performance. Research recommended that non-governmental organizations should ensure that proper M&E planning is conducted before project commencement. According to Odhiambo Wakibia and Sakwa (2020), budgeting for M&E is important to the completion rates of projects.

The research's scope was examining influence of practices used in monitoring and evaluation and their impact on project performances. The research focused on mariculture programme being implemented in the coastal counties within Kenya. It established that allocation of adequate resources for M&E practices implementation was beneficial as it improved project

performance. The study results indicate that M&E planning is key to project success and should be prioritized in project planning. The outcome from the research showed a strong important connection M&E planning and project performances. While Ifran et.al. (2021) in her research investigating project planning influence on project performances. A descriptive research design was selected when conducting the research by the researchers. Their research which focused on projects under implementation by government agencies and south to examine the impact of planning a project of project completion. Outcomes from the project indicated the M&E planning is a crucial component of proposed public programme and projects and therefore should not be underestimated. The research endorsed that planning of M&E must be incorporated into the project master plan and allocated sufficient funds to enhance implementation. The results of this study indicate existence of strong important association between M&E planning and project success however this could be missing in Baidoa Education projects necessitating this study to investigate how planning within M&E can impact girls education performance in Baidoa state.

Methodology

The study used a mixed research methodology which comprised qualitative and quantitative data gathered by use of questionnaires. This approach enabled the researcher to obtain comprehensive information through open conversation with respondents when responding to statements and questions asked in the study. The target population was 1400 people comprising Ministry of education officers, Project managers, Monitoring and Evaluation officers, Members of the Committee, Head Teachers, Teachers and Beneficiaries with a sample size of 361 participants as presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Sampling Matrix

Categories	Target population	Sample Size	Sampling Techniques
Ministry of education officers	10	10	Purposive Sampling
Project managers	15	15	Purposive Sampling
Monitoring and Evaluation officers	5	5	Purposive Sampling
Head Teachers	45	45	Purposive Sampling
Members of the Committee	90	18	Simple random sampling
Teachers	180	39	Simple random sampling
Beneficiaries	1055	228	Simple random sampling
Total	1400	361	

Data collection instruments were questionnaires and interview guide. Pilot study was carried out to test and retest the effectiveness of the research tool in the neighbouring district. Validity was done via the guidance of the experienced university supervisor and the experts in the field where the research questions were evaluated to ascertain they conform to research objectives context. Descriptive statistics was analyzed through a computer package known as Statistical package for social sciences (SPSS). Data analyzed was presented in tables, means and standard deviations and interpretation given to each of them.

Results and Discussion

There were seven items responded to as indicated in Table 2 on planning for monitoring & evaluation on performance of girl's education projects in public primary schools in Baidoa, Somalia. The results were presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Planning for monitoring & evaluation and performance of girl's education projects

Statement (Planning for M&E)	SD % F	D % F	N % F	A % F	SD % F
1.An adequate budget allocation for project monitoring and evaluation was performed during planning for the project	35 (10.6%)	50 (15.1%)	41 (12.4%)	151 (45.6%)	54 (16.3%)
2. The ministry of education supports monitoring and evaluation of the girls' education projects.	32 (9.7%)	48 (14.5%)	37 (11.2%)	155 (46.8%)	59 (17.8%)
3.Monitoring and evaluation performance indicators were set during planning for the projects	26 (7.9%)	44 (13.3%)	37 (11.2%)	150 (45.3%)	74 (22.4%)
4. The goals for monitoring & evaluation of the education projects were set and adopted into the project master plan	23 (6.9%)	39 (11.8%)	47 (14.2%)	162 (48.9%)	60 (18.1%)
5.Allocation of monitoring and evaluation duties was done during project planning and those responsible notified	16 (4.8%)	42 (12.7%)	53 (16.0%)	139 (42.0%)	81 (24.5%)
6. A plan of action for the analysis as well as reporting of monitoring & evaluation data for the projects was formulated.	39 (11.8%)	33 (10.0%)	40 (12.1%)	149 (45.0%)	70 (21.1%)
7. The timeline for monitoring and evaluation process was determined and appropriate methodology adopted in gathering M&E data	30 (9.1%)	46 (13.9%)	44 (13.3%)	144 (43.5%)	67 (20.0%)

As per the findings in Table 2, there is an adequate budget allocation for project during planning and designing of projects. Those in disagreement were 85(25.7%) and in agreement were 205(61.9%). Meaning that those in agreement were the majority. However, Lack of proper budgetary allocation within M&E during planning hindered adoption of monitoring and evaluation practices thus affecting educational project success. These findings are same to those by Deroo, Walter, & Graham, (2015). Projects are further delayed and even stagnated as a result of inadequate budgetary allocation for monitoring and evaluation. There are 41(12.4%) people who did not choose a side, causing them to not support or deny the assertion, most respondents were in agreement that budgetary constraints had an impact on how projects were planned.

Monitoring and evaluation duties were assigned during planning and those involved were notified meaning in agreement were 214 and those who disagreed were 80 while those not sure were 37. There was varying perception which attributed to the level of monitoring and evaluation practices being adopted by different education projects among public primary schools. These educational projects are very critical since they ensure that educational projects are implemented successfully in accordance with the project goals and objectives. The differencing perception of how monitoring and evaluation practices are carried as per these findings are same to those by Negandhi, Negandhi, Tiwari, Sharma, Zodpey, ulatilaka & Tikyani, (2015) who established support M&E projects vary from institution to another. The implication is that majority agreed giving a positive influence on the performance of girl's education projects in public primary schools in Baidoa, Somalia.

Formulation of planning indicators were formulated and analyzed as per projects performance. Those in disagreement were 70(21.2%) while in agreement were 224 (67.7). Those not sure were 37 (11.2%). Setting M&E indicators is crucial because it demonstrates the effectiveness, success, and accountability of education projects by outlining what can realistically be expected to be accomplished given stakeholder expectations. These findings are consistent with those made by Didham and Ofei-Manu (2020), who claimed that monitoring and evaluation practices offer a systematic method for assessing the advancement of their execution relative to predetermined baselines.

The findings as described in statement four were determined to be relevant with the project being carried out and have the following results where they unanimously agreed upon by all parties that objectives for the master plan's monitoring and evaluation of the project's public primary schools had been established giving a response rate of 222 (67%). In disagreement were 62 (18.7%) while neutral were 47 (14.2%). Therefore, in this case the Project managers can define the project scope, establish intervention when things go wrong, and generate ideas for how such intervention can affect the entire project by incorporating monitoring and evaluation plans into the master plan. The implication is that if the plan is not followed to latter many problems might occur causing the project to delay or not implemented at all. These results support those of Obunga (2017), who found that incorporating an adopted M&E framework into the master plan improves the success of the project.

From the findings allocation of monitoring and evaluation duties were done during project planning and those responsible notified with 220 (66.5%) of the respondents agreeing while 58 (17.5%) disagreeing respectively. The allocation of M&E indicators thus positively influences monitoring and evaluation practices on educational projects. These results support the claims made by Obunga (2017) and Didham and Ofei-Manu (2020), who established that M&E is a systematic process for evaluating project progress by using an adopted framework to increase the likelihood of project achievement.

When planning for action of analysis and reporting on data gathering information was analyzed and ideas were formulated thus giving divisive reports on all the respondents. There were differing opinions and in agreement were 219 (66.1%) while those disagreeing are 72 (21.8%) leaving 40 (12.1%) not decided which way to go. The implication of this line item is that lack of plan of action for reporting and analyzing M&E data hinder public education projects in Baidoa. Success is attributed to the fact that it presents a threat to the ability to make informed decisions, which is caused by a lack of data, rendering educational projects ineffective because they are unable to report M&E results. These findings are consistent with those of Agbenyo, Wisdom, and Akan Bang (2021), who claim that M&E analysis and reporting allows for the earlier identification of issues during project design, allowing for the taking of the necessary corrective action to address those issues.

Finally, deadlines were established, and data collection methods that had been chosen in advance were modified giving those in agreement to be 211 (63.5%) while in disagreement were 76 (23%). Not sure were 44 (13.3%) making little influence of performance of the projects. The implication is that most statements agreed that monitoring and evaluation is done to support monitoring and evaluation of the projects as scheduled timelines are adhered to according to set timeframe. This information is in line with a study conducted by Rodríguez, Nussbaum, López, & Sepúlveda, (2021) that planning is very key to every organization.

There were respondents who responded on the qualitative data had much to say. These were responses from different people when they were interviewed.

” Monitoring and evaluation help in keeping the project implementers on track and make corrective changes when need occurs. As much as Monitoring and evaluation planning practices for girl's education projects in public primary schools in Baidoa were within the master, performance indicators set and allocation of M&E duties planned and notified. These were just formalities that were to be done on paper to show that proper M&E planning for girl's educational projects among public primary schools were done. The ministry of education as much as it

supported monitoring and evaluation planning, it played no role in ensuring that there was proper M&E planning among educational project as this was beyond their scope. Nevertheless, data for M&E is very crucial to enable success educational projects and this was compromised by lack of affirmative action when it comes to reporting and analysing girls' educational projects among public primary schools. The timelines also for M&E were not determines. Improper Governance among the girls' educational project in public primary school have hindered effective planning in monitoring and evaluation”.

Conclusion

The ministry of education supported monitoring and evaluation among projects that were not allowed to fully engage in monitoring and evaluation planning process fully. As much as there was M&E performance indicators during planning and goals for M&E set and adopted into the master plan, and allocation for monitoring and evaluation during planning communicated to those responsible, there were no plans for action when it comes to reporting and analyzing M&E data thus hindering managers from making informed decision pertaining to the education project due to lack of data this was further compromised by lack of proper timeline for M&E process to take appropriate actions.

Project managers, teachers, parents and designers need to improve on the practices of planning management trainings and utilization of resources through alignment of schools and agents with project needs for good productivity and performance of education projects. To enhance performance of girls within the educational project among public primary schools, there is need to allocate enough finance to M&E process, ministry of education be involved in M&E planning processes and plan of action build for enhance reporting and analysis of M&E data in the planning stages of the project to enable managers to make informed decision pertaining to the project.

Recommendation for Policy

National government's needs to formulate policies and laws that govern use girls' basic education in the community and be able to sustain the already existing education projects to prove services learning of the same in schools.

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