



## **MONITORING AND EVALUATION STRATEGIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF CHILD PROTECTION PROGRAMS IN NYAMIRA COUNTY, KENYA**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Ministry of Health (MOH) reports indicate that of the 18,203 pregnant women coming in for their first antenatal care visit in 2020 in Nyamira county, about 5,400 were adolescent girls. In Nyamira County, poor parenting was rated as the most serious harm to children wellbeing (25%). According to data recorded by the Children Protection Management Information System (CPMIS) between 2020 and 2021, out of every 10 children in Nyamira, four of them are neglected by their parents. The general objective of the study is to establish the relationship between monitoring and evaluation strategies on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. Specifically, the study sought to determine the effect of M&E learning on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya and to establish the effect of dissemination of M&E results on performance of implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive research. The study targeted 128 respondents from 12 child protection organizations in Nyamira County. The unit of observation was the organizations directors, social workers, county coordination for children affairs, and the County M&E officers. Census approach was appropriate for selecting the sample for this study, and the sample size for the study was 128 respondents. This study also used questionnaire to collect data relevant to this study. Quantitative data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques which are frequencies, mean, standard deviation. Inferential statistics which include Pearson correlation and the Regression Analysis Model was used to test the relationship between study variables. The significance of the model was tested at 5% level of significance. Data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. The study results were presented through use of tables and figures. Findings show that; a strong significant relationship between M&E learning and project implementation ( $r=0.786$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and a strong significant relationship between dissemination of M&E results and project implementation ( $r=0.841$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). The study recommended that; The management should improve on M&E capacity building to focus on monitoring and evaluation activities such as data collection, analysis, and utilization. The management should have an effective result dissemination plan to ensure that all stakeholders are well informed about the M&E report.

**Key Words:** Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies, M&E Learning, Dissemination of M&E Results, Performance of Implementation of Child Protection Programs

## Background of the Study

Monitoring and evaluation is an independent and systematic exercises that asses either completed or ongoing projects including the implementation phase and the results. It is a process where data is systematically collected and analyzed on the ongoing programs and it is carried out through the system. Stakeholders are always demanding for accountability of resources and the related impact of the project and this is what has heightened the need to adopt M&E systems in project organization (Oyelami, & Dosumu, 2021). Mabare, and Otieno (2019) noted that the M&E system is an important factor if the project is to meet its formulated goals. However, performance of the M&E system has been a concern among different projects around the world. According to Paru (2019), one of the key challenges affecting performance of the M&E is that there are no clearly established parameters for determining the quality as a proxy of M&E system. Odhiambo, Wakibia and Sakwa (2020) argued that tracking of progress and timeliness are salient practices of any M&E system in a project organization. Proper performance of the M&E system requires the project managers to organize the resources behind the M&E function in a project organization. Inadequate resources are slowing down performance of the M&E system of the organization while excessive funding results into wastage of the resources of the organization (Machelule, Otonde & Achayo, 2018).

The monitoring and evaluation strategy is organized into four main streams of work which are results monitoring, grant monitoring, evaluation, and dissemination and learning. Each plays a pivotal role in the ability to monitor and assess progress of project under implementation. Monitoring and evaluation learning encompasses adaptable frameworks with processes, best practices, and tools that are strategically tailored for the uniqueness of organizations and sector-specific initiatives. The frameworks provide tools to help grant makers evaluate and improve programs that include multiple grantees pursuing similar objectives through different means or contexts. Foundations, government agencies, and other grant makers can use monitoring learning when they need a systematic way to monitor comprehensively, evaluate selectively, and learn continuously to support their programs or initiatives (Kibuacha, 2022).

Dissemination of M&E results is associated with communicating results to relevant stakeholders which include project staff, beneficiaries and funders. This is critical as it makes all relevant stakeholders conversant with the progress of the project so that decisions regarding what should be changed or maintained are made with full knowledge of the stakeholders. For effective result dissemination to be achieved an M&E report has to be produced and a dissemination plan has to be considered. Dissemination can take the form of oral presentation and circulation of an M&E report to the stakeholders among others (Nelson & Seltzer, 2020). In Kenya, approximately six million children are in dire need of protection while an estimated 2.4 million are orphans cared by Charitable Children Institutions (CCI). Amsha Africa cites that child protection measures are partially implemented inhibiting effectiveness of the program. The Department of Children's affair is a leading government agency tailored to protect and preserve children's well-being. Its mandate emanates from the Children's Act and facilitates the provision of services while advocating the rights if children (Amsha Africa 2019). In a bid to curb the crime, the state prescribes harsh penalties to individuals found guilty. The Sexual Offence Act clearly denotes that one can indeed serve a life sentence, but even with the glimmering law in place conviction rates are still low (Omondi, 2019).

## Statement of the Problem

Childhood is a critical period for the development of both social and human capital and forms a firm foundation for preparing inclusive and sustainable societies. It is estimated that 40% of the world population is composed of children, and developing countries continue to capture an increasing share. Child organizations allows orphaned and vulnerable children to have a better life and access basics like food, shelter, clothing and education. The organizations also offer a

save have or children living in abusive environments. Department of Children Services in Nyamira County has successfully reintegrated 297 children from charitable children Institutions (CCIs) to homes courtesy of 'Changing The Way We Care' (CTWWC) programme. The exercise of reintegrating children to suitable homes for holistic growth by CCIs has progressed steadily since its inception in 2019 and is optimistic that a large percentage of children, if not all, will soon be under home-based care (Nyamira County Coordinator of Children Services, 2023).

Irrespective of the great role played by children organizations in Kenya, implementation of child protection programs have been scrutinized by UNICEF which noted that child welfare institutions in Kenya are underperforming leading to ineffectiveness of the project. Child participation as a right as provided in UNCRC and African Charter has not been properly established and implemented in Nyamira County. Children in Nyamira County face challenges like neglect by their caregivers, subjected to child labour like brick and ballast making, tea picking and even working as domestic workers or farm hands and are denied an opportunity to access education which is free shattering their hope of living an economically stable future. According to Labour and Social Ministry review (2019) more than one in three children homes in Nyamira county has unfavorable environment for children both emotionally and physically. There is still high rate of violence against children and rape cases resulting to 16.4% of early pregnancies in the county. Ministry of Health (MOH) reports indicate that of the 18,203 pregnant women coming in for their first antenatal care visit in 2020 in Nyamira county, about 5,400 were adolescent girls. In Nyamira County, poor parenting was rated as the most serious harm to children wellbeing (25%). According to data recorded by the Children Protection Management Systems (CPIM) between 2020 and 2021, out of every 10 children in Nyamira, four of them are neglected by their parents. Additionally, statistics from the Directorate of Children Services indicate that at least 13 out of every 100 children are entangled in parental custody disputes. Other harms to children were alcohol and drugs (53.5%).

According to the County social services department, although 82% of the children living in public and private childcare institutions having lived there for more than one year, less than a fifth of case files had completed child assessments. Similarly, just 12% of files contained family assessments which makes it hard to understand the root cause of child vulnerability. In addition, just 10% of case files sampled contained case plans, and 14% contained monitoring forms. Without case plans and systematic monitoring, it is difficult to gauge whether the services provided are suitably meeting each child's needs. The child organizations have less experience with placement into alternative family- and community-based care options, including foster care, independent living and adoption whereby 81% and 89% of all children exited in the last 3 years. In addition, 90% of children were returned to the same household from which they had originated. The staff have very little knowledge of the processes related to alternative family and community-based forms of care.

Various researchers have focused on monitoring and evaluation; Kamau and Mohamed (2015) on efficacy of monitoring and evaluation function in achieving project success in Kenya around that strength of M&E team, monitoring approach adopted, political influence and project lifecycle stage affect project Success. Onyango (2019) on the influence of the monitoring and evaluation on successful implementation of County development projects found that result based performance, learning capacity, participatory tracking and beneficiary accountability have a significant effect respectively, Yusuf, Otonde, and Achayo (2019) on the influence of training and time allocated on performance of monitoring and evaluation of CDF projects found that M & E is important for success of any project. There is study limitation on M&E strategies and implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. This study sought to fill the research gap by examining the effect of monitoring and evaluation strategies on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya.

## **General Objective**

The general objective of the study is to establish the relationship between monitoring and evaluation strategies and implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya

## **Specific Objectives of the Study**

- i. To assess the effect of M&E learning on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya.
- ii. To establish the effect of dissemination of M&E results on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Literature Review**

#### **Organizational Learning Theory**

Organization learning theory was developed by Argyris and Schon (1978). A learning organization is the term given to an organization or a firm that facilitates the learning of its members and continuously transforms itself. Learning organizations develop as a result of the pressures facing modern organizations and enables them to remain competitive in the business environment. A learning organization has five main features; systems thinking, personal mastery, mental models, shared vision and team learning. The learning organization concept encourages organizations to shift to a more interconnected way of thinking. Organizations should become more like communities that employees can feel a commitment to and therefore will work harder (Serenko, Bontis & Hardie, 2018).

Organizations seek to use a range of authoritative sources, including knowledge held by individual and within knowledge systems maintained by the organization. Explicit knowledge can be documented, categorized, transmitted to others as information, and illustrated to others through demonstrations, explanations and other forms of sharing. However, tacit knowledge is difficult to duplicate, replace or interpret, as it is grounded in a blend of experience, research and induction which may have been refined over many years (Debowski, 2019). The theory supports the objective on knowledge acquisition. Organization learning enables staff to acquire more skills to improve on their competency in carrying out their duties. Learning will enable the M&E staff to comprehensively monitor the projects, select the projects that needs to be evaluated and continuously learn about the projects.

#### **Diffusion of Innovation Theory**

Diffusion of innovation theory was proposed by Everette Rogers in (1983). This theory explains how new ideas, information and new viewpoints spread across cultures. The theory stipulates that information or new ideas pass through a path of communication in order to reach a target group. The spread of ideas is influenced by a myriad of factors that include nature of the idea to be spread, the available communication channels, the social system and time of communication of which channel of communication plays a crucial role of all factors (Westen, 2019). Diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system (Everett Roger, 1961).

Rogers and Scott (1997) proposed four elements of diffusion of innovations they are innovations, communication channel, time, and social system. The diffusion theory stipulates that it is difficult to influence or change how individuals will behave and adjust their thinking having received new information. Some members will be disoriented with the new information while others will be accommodating. Communication of new information should therefore be done in a manner that it can accommodate all group members (Lewis, 2019). The diffusion theory therefore ensures feeling of inclusion by all team members. In communicating to team members, there is need to be conscious of the communication channels to be used since some

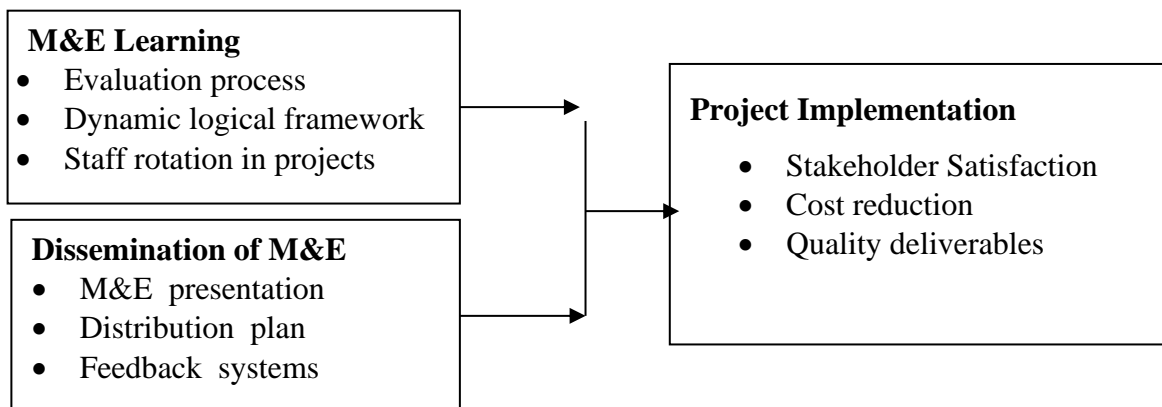
communication channels are more appropriate than others depending upon the nature of information. Ideas that are serious may be taken less serious depending upon the channel of communication. For instance using social media to share M&E results may appear informal and may not be taken seriously. This theory hence supports the objective on dissemination of M&E results.

**Conceptual Framework**

Conceptual framework refers to a diagrammatic set of interrelated ideas on a particular phenomenon and it’s characterized by cause and effect relationships which helps interpret more and hence making it easily understandable. This makes it more straightforward and also easily predictable (Svinicki, 2019). It is a diagram that explains the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

**Independent Variables**

**Dependent Variables**



**Figure 2. 1: Conceptual Framework**

**M&E Learning**

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) learning is a vital process within organizations, enabling them to extract valuable insights and lessons from monitoring and evaluation activities conducted throughout projects and programs. At its core, M&E learning involves systematically analyzing monitoring data and evaluation findings to inform decision-making, enhance performance, and ensure accountability. One crucial aspect of M&E learning is the thorough analysis and interpretation of monitoring data and evaluation findings. This involves synthesizing quantitative and qualitative data collected through monitoring activities and evaluation studies to identify trends, patterns, and insights related to project performance, outcomes, and impacts (Natif & Irechukwu, 2022).

Moreover, M&E learning facilitates the identification of both successes and challenges encountered during project implementation. By analyzing monitoring data and evaluation findings, organizations can gain a deeper understanding of what aspects of the project are working well and where improvements are needed to enhance effectiveness and efficiency. Additionally, M&E learning involves identifying best practices, lessons learned, and areas for improvement based on past experiences and outcomes. This process often includes documenting successful strategies, innovative approaches, and effective interventions that can be replicated or scaled up in future projects or programs (Lawar & Basheer, 2022).

Furthermore, M&E learning promotes knowledge sharing and dissemination within organizations and among stakeholders. It entails communicating findings, insights, and lessons learned through various channels such as reports, presentations, workshops, and conferences to facilitate learning, exchange of experiences, and collaboration. M&E learning also encourages feedback and reflection on project performance and outcomes, providing opportunities for stakeholders to engage in dialogue, share perspectives, and identify

opportunities for improvement. This iterative process supports adaptive management and continuous improvement by enabling organizations to respond effectively to changing circumstances, feedback, and lessons learned (Wambua & James, 2018).

### **Dissemination of M&E**

Dissemination of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is a crucial aspect of the M&E process, as it involves sharing findings, insights, and lessons learned with stakeholders to inform decision-making, promote accountability, and enhance learning and transparency. Effective dissemination ensures that M&E findings are accessible, understandable, and actionable for a wide range of audiences, including policymakers, program managers, implementing partners, beneficiaries, donors, and the wider community. Before disseminating M&E results, it is essential to identify the target audience or stakeholders who will benefit from the information. This may include policymakers, program managers, donors, community members, and other relevant stakeholders who have a vested interest in the project or program. Tailoring communication strategies to the needs, preferences, and capacities of the target audience is essential for effective dissemination. This may involve selecting appropriate communication channels, formats, and languages to ensure that M&E findings are accessible and understandable to diverse audiences (Winiko, Mbugua & Kyalo, 2018).

M&E results should be presented in clear, concise, and accessible formats to facilitate understanding and interpretation by stakeholders. This may include developing summary reports, infographics, presentations, or multimedia materials that highlight key findings, insights, and recommendations in an easily digestible format. Engaging stakeholders in dialogue and discussions around M&E results can enhance understanding, ownership, and buy-in. This may involve organizing dissemination workshops, roundtable discussions, or stakeholder meetings where participants can ask questions, share perspectives, and provide feedback on the findings.

Organizing dissemination events and activities can help reach a wider audience and generate interest in M&E results. This may include hosting conferences, seminars, webinars, or community meetings where stakeholders can learn about the findings, engage in discussions, and explore opportunities for collaboration and action. Leveraging digital platforms and technologies can expand the reach and accessibility of M&E results. This may involve sharing findings through websites, social media channels, online forums, or interactive data visualization tools to reach a broader audience and facilitate ongoing engagement and interaction (Mugayi & Mulyungi, 2018).

### **Empirical Review projects**

#### **M&E Learning and Project Implementation**

Natif and Irechukwu (2022) researched on the effect of monitoring and evaluation on the performance of strengthening school readiness project in Rwanda. The researcher used a mixed research design which incorporated qualitative and quantitative techniques. The population for the study was 212 people. The study found that there is a positive relationship between formative evaluation and performance of the SSR project, process evaluation and performance of the SSR project and participatory evaluation and performance of the SSR project. The study concluded that M&E plays a key role in the performance of the SSR project.

Lawar and Basheer (2022) conducted a study on the role of monitoring and evaluation of project performance in the federal capital territory Abuja Nigeria. The Study adopted Contingency theoretical analytical framework. The target population was administered questionnaire and oral interview. The study found that that project monitoring and evaluation has significant impact on project performance in Federal Capital Territory. The study

concluded that that monitoring and evaluations significantly impacts project performance, and positively ensure projects are completed.

Wambua and James (2018) conducted a study on monitoring and evaluation practices and performance of county funded education projects in Makueni County, Kenya. The research design used is descriptive survey. The study targeted 31 county funded education projects in Makueni County. The study found that in all sub-counties projects M&E teams underwent M&E training, participated in baseline surveys in form of public participation and were privy to the M&E plans developed by the county M&E unit. The study concluded that stakeholder involvement, M&E planning, use of baseline survey and M&E staff training had significant influence on performance of county funded education projects.

Machuka and Atambo (2019) investigated on the effect of monitoring and evaluation practices on organizational performance in Kenya: a case study of Trans Mara Sugar Company. The study adopted a case study research design. The target population was 120 persons. The study found out that project programs helped in providing improvements and provided efficient work flow hence building expertise and knowledge. The study concluded that monitoring and evaluation planning embedded the project performance.

Pingano and Onjure (2020) researched on the influence of monitoring and evaluation adoption on implementation of county government sponsored projects in Rabai Sub-County, Kenya. The study employed descriptive survey research design and had a target population of 46 county governments sponsored projects in Rabai sub-county from which the accessible population comprised 92 project officials were derived. The study found that the top management support for M&E had no significant influence on implementation of county government sponsored projects. It was also revealed that top management gave very minimal supports to carrying out capacity assessment for firms bidding for M&E and that M&E planning, adequate Budget allocations for M&E, and facilitating Community involvement in M&E leads to a rise in implementation of county government sponsored projects in Rabai Sub-County. The study concluded that there is need to improve M&E processes.

### **Dissemination of M&E Results and Project Implementation**

Winiko, Mbugua and Kyalo (2018) conducted a study on the the role of dissemination of monitoring and evaluation results in the promotion of performance of digital education technology project in Malawi. The study used descriptive survey correlational design. The target population was comprised of 456 persons who were involved in the management, implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation of the DET project. The study found a statistically significant influence of dissemination of M&E results on performance of DET project. The study concluded that Dissemination of M&E results had a statistically significant positive influence on the performance of DET project.

Mugayi and Mulyungi (2018) researched on the influence of management support on successful implementation of monitoring and evaluation in public institutions of Rwanda: a case study of Rwanda agriculture board, Kigali. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design with a case study. The target population was 55 members comprising of staff of Rwanda Agriculture Board working from the head quarter with management, planning, monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. The study found a strong positive association between management support and successful M&E implementation. The study concluded that there is a strong positive association between budget allocation, staffing and capacity building and institutional M&E policy and successful implementation of M&E and that staffing and capacity building has the strongest correlation with successful M&E implementation.

Niyongira and Kwena (2021) conducted a study on the influence of monitoring and evaluation on performance of agricultural projects in Rwanda: a case of capacity building project in the horticultural center of excellence. The study used mixed methods research design, which

involved triangulation of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The population of study was 1507. The study found that all independent variables under have a positive and statistically significant influence on the performance of HoCE capacity building project. The study concluded that monitoring and evaluation had a statistically significant and positive influence on the performance of Rwanda-Israel HoCE capacity building project.

Gaibo and Mbuua (2018) investigated on the influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on the implementation of county governments' infrastructural development projects in Marsabit County, Kenya. The study used descriptive research survey design. The target population was therefore 165 personnel involved in the implementation of these. The study found no correlation between M&E baseline surveys, M&E planning, management participation and technical expertise in M&E on the implementation of development projects. The study concluded that infrastructural project implementation was not influenced by M&E baseline surveys, M&E planning did not influence infrastructural projects implementation, management participation in M&E did not positively influence infrastructural projects implementation and that technical expertise in M&E did not have an influence on the implementation of development projects.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study adopted a descriptive research. The study targeted 128 respondents from 12 child protection organizations in Nyamira County. The unit of observation was the organizations directors, social workers, county coordination for children affairs, and the County M&E officers. In this study, due to the small size of the study population, the census sampling approach was used. The study used primary data that was collected using questionnaires. This study collected both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualitative data was analyzed by use of content analysis. Quantitative data was coded then analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) computer software version 28. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data in frequency distributions and percentages which were presented in tables and figures. The study also adopted multiple regression analysis to test the relationships between the variables.

### **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

The sample size of study was 128 respondents who included organizations directors, social workers, county coordination for children affairs, and the County M&E officers. The pilot test respondents were 10% of the total hence 13 respondents. The researcher distributed 115 questionnaires and 91 were successfully answered. The response rate was 79% which was considered an exceptional response rate as recommended by Kothari (2014).

#### **M&E Learning**

The first objective aimed at assessing the effect of M&E learning on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. Respondents were asked to tick on the extent to which they agree/disagree with statements related to M&E learning. Findings are presented in Table 1.



**Table 1: M&E Learning**

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
M&E learning informs decision-making and improves project outcomes.	1	1.1	11	12.1	13	14.3	19	20.9	47	51.6	3.90
Lessons from monitoring and evaluation are shared for continuous improvement.	2	2.2	8	8.8	3	3.3	21	23.1	57	62.6	4.35
Adaptation based on M&E findings enhances project strategies.	6	6.6	9	9.9	3	3.3	49	53.8	24	26.4	3.84
Feedback from M&E processes guides interventions and innovation.	2	2.2	6	6.6	1	1.1	51	56.0	31	34.1	4.13
M&E learning cultivates a culture of reflection and growth.	1	1.1	6	6.6	0	0	50	54.9	34	37.4	4.21
Capacity-building enhances stakeholders' M&E skills and analysis.	5	5.5	4	4.4	1	1.1	24	26.4	57	62.6	4.36

N=91

Findings show that the respondents strongly agreed that capacity-building enhances stakeholders' M&E skills and analysis (M=4.36), lessons from monitoring and evaluation are shared for continuous improvement (M=4.35), and M&E learning cultivates a culture of reflection and growth (M=4.21). Respondents also agreed that feedback from M&E processes guides interventions and innovation (M=4.13), M&E learning informs decision-making and improves project outcomes (M=3.90), and adaptation based on M&E findings enhances project strategies (M=3.84). Findings indicate that M&E learning enables the project team members and stakeholders to understand the M&E process and its importance to project performance. Monitoring and evaluation feedback contributes to improvement of project quality. Human capital with proper training and experience is vital for the production of M&E results. Findings concur with Wambua and James (2018) that M&E training is essential as it ensures quality M&E o projects.

**Dissemination of M&E Results**

The second objective sought to establish the effect of dissemination of M&E results on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. Respondents were asked to tick on the extent to which they agree/disagree with statements related to dissemination of M&E results. Findings are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Dissemination of M&E Results**

Key: *SD=Strongly disagree, D=Disagree, NS=Not Sure, A=Agree, SA= Strongly agree, M=Mean.*

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
M&E results are shared to inform stakeholders and promote transparency.	1	1.1	9	9.9	0	0	45	49.5	36	39.6	4.16
Findings from monitoring and evaluation are communicated for organizational learning.	2	2.2	8	8.8	0	0	28	30.8	53	58.2	4.34
Dissemination of M&E results fosters accountability and decision-making.	7	7.7	6	6.6	3	3.3	48	52.7	27	29.7	3.90
Sharing lessons learned enhances knowledge exchange and collaboration.	3	3.3	1	1.1	0	0	18	19.8	69	75.8	4.64
Stakeholder engagement in result dissemination ensures relevance and uptake.	1	1.1	2	2.2	5	5.5	17	18.7	66	72.5	4.66
Effective communication channels facilitate wide-reaching dissemination efforts.	5	5.5	4	4.4	1	1.1	29	31.9	52	57.1	4.31

**N=91**

Results show that all the study respondents agreed that; stakeholder engagement in result dissemination ensures relevance and uptake (M=4.66), sharing lessons learned enhances knowledge exchange and collaboration (M=4.64), findings from monitoring and evaluation are communicated for organizational learning (M=4.34), effective communication channels facilitate wide-reaching dissemination efforts (M=4.31), M&E results are shared to inform stakeholders and promote transparency (M=4.16), and dissemination of M&E results fosters accountability and decision-making (M=3.90). The findings imply that the project managers make efforts to share the M&E results with the stakeholders which enhances transparency in project management. The stakeholders are also able to share theory opinion regarding project implementation and as well advice on measures that would enhance project performance. Dissemination of M&E results provides an opportunity for improving M&E results as stakeholders give feedback which is a basis for corrective action for the M&E report. Findings are in line with Mugayi and Mulyungi (2018) that publicizing M&E results gives public recognition to the stakeholders and volunteers who have worked hard to make the program a success which is a recipe for the attraction of new funders.

**Implementation of Child Protection Programs**

Respondents were asked to tick on the extent to which they agree/disagree with statements related to child protection projects in Nyamira County, Kenya. Findings are presented in Table 3.

**Table 3: Implementation of Child Protection Programs**

Key: SD=Strongly disagree, D=Disagree, NS=Not Sure, A=Agree, SA= Strongly agree, M=Mean.

Statements	SD		D		N		A		SA		M
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	
The implementation of child protection projects is well-coordinated and efficient.	15	16.5	2	2.2	4	4.4	7	7.7	63	69.2	4.11
The child protection projects are implemented in a timely manner.	64	70.3	2	2.2	6	6.6	9	9.9	10	11.0	1.89
The funding allocated for the implementation of child protection projects is sufficient	39	42.9	15	16.5	15	16.5	8	8.8	14	15.4	2.37
There are few complaints on the quality of project implementation	62	68.1	7	7.7	4	4.4	4	4.4	14	15.4	1.91
The community is involved and consulted during the implementation of child protection projects.	16	17.6	4	4.4	9	9.9	10	11.0	52	57.1	3.86

N=91

Findings show that the respondents agreed that the implementation of child protection projects is well-coordinated and efficient (M=4.11) and the community is involved and consulted during the implementation of child protection projects (M=3.86). Respondents disagreed that the funding allocated for the implementation of child protection projects is sufficient (M=2.37), the child protection projects are implemented in a timely manner (M=1.89), and there are few complaints on the quality of project implementation (M=1.91). Findings imply that even though the implementation of child protection projects is well-coordinated and efficient and community involved in project implementation, the projects are not implemented in timely manner and are poorly funded hence face budgeting constraints. In addition, there are many complaints regarding project implementation.

**Correlation Analysis**

Correlation shows the strength of relationship between the independent and dependent variable. A correlation is significant at  $\leq 0.05$ . Correlation results are presented in Table 4.8.

**Table 4: Coefficient of Correlation**

Variables		Project implementation	M&E learning	Dissemination of M&E results
Project implementation	Pearson Correlation	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)			
M&E learning	Pearson Correlation	.786**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		
Dissemination of M&E results	Pearson Correlation	.841**	.976	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	

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

Findings show that there is a strong significant relationship between M&E learning and project implementation ( $r=0.786$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), and a strong significant relationship between dissemination of M&E results and project implementation ( $r=0.841$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). This implies that the project monitoring and evaluation strategies have a significant effect on implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya. Findings concur with; Lawar and Basheer (2022) that project monitoring and evaluation has significant impact on project performance in Federal Capital Territory, and Winiko, Mbugua and Kyalo (2018) a statistically significant influence of dissemination of M&E results on performance of projects.

### Regression Analysis

A regression analysis was conducted to establish how a change in monitoring and evaluation strategies would predict changes in implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya.

**Table 5: Regression Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
<b>Constant/Y Intercept</b>	5.538	.411		13.475	.000
M&E learning	1.282	.287	1.156	4.474	.000
Dissemination of M&E results	2.162	.283	1.966	7.628	.000

M&E learning affected project performance to a great extent at a factor of 1.064. The resulting regression equation was  $Y = 5.538 + 1.282X_3$ . The study established that M&E learning was positively related to implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya as shown by t-value ( $t = 4.474$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

Dissemination of M&E results affected project performance to a great extent at a factor of 1.064. The resulting regression equation was  $Y = 5.538 + 2.162X_4$ . The study established that dissemination of M&E results was positively related to implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County, Kenya as shown by t-value ( $t = 7.628$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ).

### Conclusion

Capacity building in M&E is essential as it enables the staff and the stakeholders to understand the program activities. Monitoring and evaluation requires competent staff to ensure that the right tools are used for the baseline and evaluation surveys. Adequately skilled human resource capacity in M&E is an important component of project implementation. Through M&E learning, the project managers are able to get feedback from project stakeholders that greatly help to improve project implementation.

M&E result dissemination is associated with sharing results with stakeholders concerned with the M&E process. The monitoring feedback is shared with stakeholders which fosters accountability and inclusive decision making. This is particularly important as M&E is a multistakeholder endeavor and each has their role to play in the monitoring and evaluation process and have interests regarding the progress of the project. Thus dissemination of M&E results ensures that information about the project is spread to various stakeholders.

### Recommendations

The program managers should identify the training needs of the monitoring and evaluation staff and design training programs that would fill in the training gaps. The training should focus on monitoring and evaluation activities such as data collection, analysis, and utilization. Project managers should hire skilled and experienced team members to ensure that the right team is employed to lead a process of successful project implementation. The management should also

improve on stakeholders' capacity building to ensure that they are knowledgeable on the program M&E.

The management of the children programs should play an active role in sharing the results with the stakeholders. The management should have an effective result dissemination plan to ensure that all stakeholders are well informed about the M&E report. The reports should also be shared on time and provide various channels of sharing feedback with the management.

### Areas for Further Study

The findings have showed that there are other monitoring and evaluation strategies that this study did not focus on contributing to 21.9% of implementation of child protection programs in Nyamira County. The researcher hence suggests a study focusing on other variables that were not part of this study. A similar study could also be conducted in another county in Kenya for comparison purposes.

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