

**MONITORING & EVALUATION RESOURCES ON PERFORMANCE OF
CHEPNYAL ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT INTERVENTION PROGRAMME IN
WEST POKOT COUNTY, KENYA**

^{1*} **Kimeu Mueni Elizabeth**
lizletu@gmail.com

^{2**} **Jennifer Wangari Wairiuko**
jenniferw@cuea.edu

^{3***} **Violet Nekesa Simiyu**
vsimuyu@cuea.edu

¹ *Scholar, The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Department of Social Sciences and Development Studies, Kenya*

^{2,3} *Lecturers, The Catholic University of Eastern Africa, Department of Social Sciences and Development Studies, Kenya*

Abstract: *This study explores the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) practices on the performance of economic empowerment interventions in Kenya, with a particular focus on M&E resources in West Pokot County, Kenya. Monitoring and Evaluation practices are critical in project management, especially in development, public policy, and business, as they help in systematically tracking, assessing, and improving project performance. However, ineffective M&E practices have been identified as major contributors to project failures globally. This research investigates the correlation between M&E resources—such as financial allocation, personnel expertise, and time—and project success within West Pokot County, particularly the Chepnyal Development Intervention. The study employed a convergent parallel mixed methods design, integrating quantitative data from semi-structured questionnaires analyzed through SPSS and qualitative data gathered via interviews and focus group discussions. The results indicate a strong positive correlation between adequate M&E resource allocation and improved project outcomes. Specifically, the presence of skilled personnel, sufficient budgets, and adequate time for M&E activities were found to significantly enhance project performance. The Generalized Linear Model (GLM) analysis further supported these findings, although it suggested that resources alone are not the sole determinant of project success. This research contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the importance of resource allocation in M&E practices, and it provides actionable insights for project managers, policymakers, and development practitioners aiming to improve the effectiveness of economic empowerment interventions.*

Keywords: *economic empowerment interventions, monitoring and evaluation resources, project performance*

Introduction

The need to deliver successful projects has become a global phenomenon compelling various organizations to strive for competitiveness. As a result, many project managers have embraced monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices as a means to gauge project performance (Kemboi & Muchelule, 2019). M&E practices are crucial components in the field of project management, particularly in the field of development, public policy,

and business. These practices include systematically tracking and assessing progress, performance, outcomes and impact of projects, programme or interventions to inform decision making (Eval Community, 2024). Project performance refers to the extent to which a project realizes its objectives while meeting the expected needs of its stakeholders within the constraints of cost, schedule, scope, and quality (James & Wambua: 2018; Freeman, 2020; Kerzner 2021).

While M&E practices have been recognized as a contributing factor to project success, ineffective M&E practices have negatively affected the outcomes of various projects across the globe. In a study carried out in Europe, McManus and Wood-harper (2020) observed that ineffective M&E practices accounted for 65% of project failures, and these were linked to poor leadership, skills inadequacies, and poor stakeholder communication. Similarly, in North America, project implementation failure was rated at 27.85% and the reason was attributed to inadequate leadership commitment, coupled with insufficient skills; weak engagement of stakeholders, issues with project team organization and project complexities (Gupta et al.,). These aspects when left unattended negatively affect the performance of development programmes.

Effective monitoring and evaluation demands adequate resource allocation, including skilled personnel, sufficient budgetary provisions, and ample time to facilitate the smooth implementation of M&E activities. Resource allocation is the process of assigning and scheduling available resources most effectively and economically possible to realize project objectives (Landau, 2023). This means that M&E cannot function without resources, and in this case, a proper budget, competent personnel to run the M&E unit and time to navigate around to monitor, collect and analyse data that will inform decision making is crucial. These views find support in the EvalCommunity (2024) assertion that M&E enables projects to define, select, collect, analyse and use information for a variety of purposes. Thus, for it to function properly an M&E implementation needs to be adequately resourced.

Despite the fact that projects are confronted by the challenge of limited resources, the potential of deploying the available resources to realize organizational objectives is not fully realized. A comprehensive study undertaken by Pretorius (2019) in South Africa on critical management failures, employing a quantitative approach through a survey questionnaire, suggests that the primary cause of project failure is not merely a shortage of resources, but rather a lack of planning and poor deployment. The findings reveal that inadequate resource allocation for M&E functions stood at 39% among other factors. This accentuates the proposition posited by Nwakego and Ikechukwu (2021) stressing that the key to a successful project lies in the project team's ability to make decisions regarding planning, scheduling, and allocating resources for M&E to enhance organizational performance.

In any M&E activity, the presence of sufficient and competent personnel is paramount for the successful execution of essential tasks. The undesirable impact of project failures often stems from the appointment of staff ill-equipped to handle M&E responsibilities. Aggor's study conducted in Ghana (2017) provides a compelling insight, revealing that a stunning 60% of project managers lack the requisite knowledge and skills in M&E, including proficiency in data collection, adherence to project timelines, and maintaining budgetary integrity for M&E activities, all of which are essential aspects for the successful completion and realization of projects results. Similarly, a survey done by Deloitte (2015) revealed that 29% of employee's experience burnout due to working long hours with unrealistic deadlines and performance expectations. This underscores the need to allocate adequate and qualified project staff to sufficiently carry out the M& E activities.

In the Rwandan context, Adople and NJega's (2021) research explored the complexities of project performance within Equity Agency Banking projects. Their quantitative study examined funds allocation, budget execution, and variance determination respectively. With a sample of 150 staff members, the study observed a significant correlation between these variables and the success of Equity Agency Banking projects. Remarkably, their findings highlighted the need for effective resource allocation to cater for project activities including M&E, thus emphasizing their association and the role in ensuring project success.

In a more recent development, Saviom (2023) postulates that proactive resource scheduling holds the potential to facilitate organizations to prudently deploy their staff across multiple projects, averting both underutilization and overstraining. This strategic approach ensures a harmonious distribution of workload and serves as a wall against resource-related bottlenecks. Likewise, Saviom argues that skillful resource planning and scheduling empower managers to optimize the profitable utilization of their workforce, eventually contributing to improved project outcomes.

Consequently, in addition to financial and personnel resources, time emerges as the third fundamental asset for M&E. According to the EvalCommunity (2024), it is imperative to not only assess the availability of financial and personnel resources for a project but also to allocate adequate time for M&E activities. A prevalent challenge in many projects is the perception that M&E tasks are secondary to other project responsibilities, leading to neglect of M&E activities. Thus, M&E is often treated merely as a donor requirement rather than a process aimed at optimizing project performance.

Moreover, Mathenge's study (2021), conducted in Mombasa, unveiled a blunt reality wherein more than 70% of executed projects revealed deviations in both time and cost. This indisputable deficiency can be traced back to various factors as outlined in the Annual Development Plan (ADP) 2017/2018 and the County Integrated Development Plan (CIDP) 2018/2022. These factors encompass dysfunctional M&E unit and inefficient resource allocation for M&E activities, both of which impede the continuous progress of projects. Thus, any delay in availing the required resources has a negative impact on project success and the project team should guard against this whenever possible.

Globally, socio-economic empowerment projects often face performance failures such as unmet outcomes, delays, and inadequate stakeholder engagement, raising concerns for both the public and private sectors. As highlighted by Kaula (2020) and Njeru (2018), it is considered optimal to allocate separate budgets for M&E activities. This approach enhances the independence of M&E functions from other project activities. Additionally, Kioko (2017) emphasizes that dedicating a distinct budget solely for M&E underscores the commitment to ensuring the autonomy of these key functions within the project framework. Furthermore, research conducted by Bundi (2020) indicates that such budgetary allocations significantly reduce the risk of organizations exhausting their entire budget, thus promoting more effective resource management to enhance project performance. Therefore, the fundamental role of M&E budget in project implementation cannot be overestimated.

Several scholars agree that ensuring the effective delivery of economic empowerment projects compels an enhancement in M&E practices including allocating sufficient budget to positively impact project performance (Karanja & Yusuf, 2018; W. Muchelule, 2018; Y. Muchelule, Geoffrey, & Saada, 2017). Hence, successful M&E demands financial resources, and the allocated budget directly impacts the implementation of activities, consequently affecting project performance.

In a quantitative study conducted by Letsolo, Wanjiru and Gaiku (2022) investigating the influence of the M&E budget allocation on the performance of socio-economic empowerment projects in Kenya, it revealed that allocating a budget for M&E positively influences project performance. These findings stress the importance of preserving a separate M&E budget as a best practice, while also advocating for transparency through the issuance of M&E budget performance reports by the project team. Such findings align with the resource-based view theory, as advocated by Utami and Alamanos (2023), which emphasizes the need to adequately allocate resources to enable the M&E team to effectively execute activities outlined in the M&E plan.

In a study conducted by Waititu (2022) on resource allocation and performance of M&E units within child protection initiatives in Kenya, significant insights were discovered. The findings underscored the challenges posed by inadequate budgetary provisions for M&E activities, compounded by constraints in human resources. These were found to significantly compromise the quality and advancement of child protection initiatives in Kenya. He advocated for staffing the M&E unit with personnel possessing the required skills, knowledge, and expertise for effective M&E. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of continually enhancing their capabilities to adapt to evolving trends in project management. This viewpoint is echoed by ITRAC (2019), who emphasizes the importance of evaluating the M&E capacities of key stakeholders, including staff, and determining the necessary support. Therefore, enhancing staff skills through peer support, mentoring, training, and workshops, emerges as essential for improving project performance.

Problem statement

While M&E is recognized in project management as essential for control, transparency, and accountability, a significant number of projects still experience failure. Ndege, (2017) notes that the inadequate emphasis on establishing effective M&E practices, often considering M&E as a mere donor requirement rather than an element contributing to project performance has resulted in extensive project failures in development interventions. Reports indicate that three out of four economic empowerment interventions fail within their first year, primarily attributed to poor oversight and weak M&E practices (CIDP, 2022; UNDP, 2022), stressing the critical role of effective M&E in preventing such failures. Additionally, Abdul (2018) affirm that in Kenya, the stagnation of development interventions and mismanagement of resources can be traced back to issues of poor leadership, inadequate stakeholder involvement and unskilled management personnel.

In Kenya, the challenge of resource mishandling, poor leadership persists across government, private and non-governmental organization (NGO) sectors, leading to deregistration of 21% of NGO's (NGO Coordination Board Report, 2020). Further, Gardner, Lowe, Moss, Mahoney and Coglisier, (2021) add that inadequate M&E practices exacerbated by poor leadership, lack of transparency and accountability in resource deployments and involvement of project stakeholders inhibit the eradication of extreme poverty and the realization of Vision 2030 in Kenya. Although projects often face resource limitations, the ability to optimize these resources to achieve organizational goals remains largely underutilized.

Adequate allocation and utilization of M&E resources—including financial, human, and technological assets—are pivotal for capturing accurate data, analyzing outcomes, and identifying areas for improvement. However, many interventions suffer from insufficient or inefficient M&E resources, leading to challenges such as inadequate data collection, poor program oversight, and limited understanding of impact, which ultimately hinder the success and scalability of these initiatives. Therefore, this study seeks to bridge this gap by

investigating how M&E resources influence the performance of economic empowerment interventions, with a specific focus on M&E resources.

Study objectives

The general objective of this study was to examine the influence of M&E practices on the performance of economic empowerment interventions in Kenya, with a specific objective to determining the influence of M&E resources on the performance of economic empowerment interventions in West Pokot county.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant in facilitating knowledge sharing among project management practitioners, thus expanding their opportunities for learning and development. Further, the insights gained from this study will contribute to more effective project management strategies and approaches, thereby leading to increased project success. Similarly, the study contributes to the identification of leadership best practices in the field of project management.

Related Studies

Largely, the concept of performance is varied and there seems to be no consensus on what exactly constitutes project performance. However, many scholars agree on the traditional approaches of project performance as the degree to which a project realizes its objectives concerning the constraints of cost, schedule, scope, and quality at the same time meeting the expected needs of the beneficiaries (James & Wambua: 2018; Freeman, 2020; Kerzner 2021).

On the other hand, contemporary research according to Głodziński, (2019) proposes project performance as the management of both financial and non-financial measurements including benefits, scope, value, organization, schedule, cost, resources, risks, customer and stakeholder satisfaction. Hence the need for continuous improvement and quality performance of projects in organizations requires effective M&E practices as well as proper utilization of the feedback and results (Wambua, 2019).

Research reveals that both large and small-scale projects often fail to realize their anticipated project performance outcomes due to preventable factors that effective M&E practices could alleviate. Nzekwe, Oladejo, and Emoh (2015) conducted a quantitative study in Nigeria on project failure as a reoccurring issue in developing countries, surveying 100 project professionals. They uncovered a link between poor performance including project delays, cost overruns, and client dissatisfaction, and specific management issues such as resource mismanagement, poor planning, poor crisis management, and stakeholder involvement. These factors collectively led to project failure and dissatisfaction among stakeholders.

Currently, developers and many funders have found strong reasons to emphasize economic empowerment interventions in development programs. Basing their argument that economic empowerment is one of the most powerful means for marginalized groups to achieve their potential and advance their economic rights (Malhotra & Golla, 2017). These findings converge with Buvinic, et al (2020) who contend that there is a surge of interest from governments, the private sector and researchers in promoting economic advancement interventions.

Gefang and Verga (2019) assert economic empowerment interventions play a crucial role by providing financial and technical assistance to marginalized groups, such as women, youth, and persons with disabilities. These interventions focus on improving income-generating activities, promoting entrepreneurship, and providing training and education to build the skills of these groups to enable them to participate in fruitful

economic activities. These organizations do so by executing innumerable projects such as microfinance programs, vocational training, and business development services. These initiatives have helped to create jobs, increase income levels, and reduce poverty among vulnerable groups (Makokha et al., 2019).

The United Nations Report conducted in Kenya (2020) highlighted some key challenges facing economic empowerment initiatives in Kenya which included; data collection and analysis capacity, poor M&E practices, and resource mismanagement. It is evident that when M&E practices are weak, it becomes impossible for projects to pinpoint any positive or negative changes associated with the projects. It could be argued that evidence of absence of information is evidence of failure.

Project performance is influenced by various contributing factors with M&E practices being widely acknowledged as an essential aspect of project management as asserted by authors such as James and Wambua (2018), Barasa, (2020) and Kabeyi, (2019). Molaei et al., (2019), identified additional success factors contributing to project performance including support from senior management, well-defined clear and realistic project goals, an efficient project plan, good communication and feedback mechanisms, client involvement, and a skilled and sufficient project team. These components collectively play an important role in contributing to overall project success.

Further, the PMBOK (2021) stresses the role of robust leadership, adequate stakeholder engagement and effective resource management as a catalyst for the success of projects including economic empowerment initiatives. Karamunya (2017) argues that the failure or success of any project is mainly related to the problems and failure of the project leader. Hence, it is important to engage leaders with suitable skills and expertise to navigate uncertain and competitive environments (Gębczyńska, 2019). Carrol (2022) draws attention to alarming statistical data where 75% of projects fail to achieve at least one of their set objectives due to issues related to poor, incompetent and unskilled project leaders.

Research methodology

This study adopted a convergent parallel mixed methods design to comprehensively explore the research questions. A convergent design offered a comprehensive understanding of the phenomena by enhancing the strengths of both methods while mitigating their weakness (Creswell, 2014; Almeida, 2018, Mugenda & Mugenda, 2019). The primary purpose for selecting this method was to facilitate triangulation and complementarity of research findings, thereby improving the achievement of project objectives. Additionally, it allowed the researcher to identify other factors that contribute to the ineffectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices within the Chepnyal Development Programme. In pursuit of the same logic, Farrow et al. (2020), suggest that triangulation aims at aligning and confirming results across various methods, while complementarity seeks to enrich and explain findings by integrating diverse approaches.

The target population comprised 107 project beneficiaries, 72 staff members, and 25 development committee members. Purposive sampling selected 18 beneficiaries and 9 development committee members for focus group discussions. All 72 staff members were selected using a comprehensive census approach, and in-depth interviews were conducted with 5 senior staff members. Quantitative data, gathered via semi-structured questionnaires, were analyzed using SPSS version 23, employing descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative data was collected through interview guides and analyzed thematically. Qualitative data was collected through interview guides and analyzed thematically. Correlations and a Generalized Linear Model were employed to determine the influence of Monitoring and Evaluation resources on the performance of chepnyal economic empowerment intervention.

Data presentation and interpretation of the findings

The study objective was determining the influence of M&E resources on the performance of economic empowerment interventions in West Pokot, county. The data was organized and presented in a 5-point Likert scale as portrayed in table 1.

Table 1: M&E Resources and Performance economic empowerment interventions

Statements	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Std. D
Sufficient allocation of M&E resources significantly influences for project success	28 (38.9%)	40 (55.6%)	2 (2.8%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (1.4%)	4.31	.850
The project lacks a detailed budget for M&E activities	24 (33.3%)	35 (48.6%)	12 (16.7%)	1 (1.4%)	0 (0.0%)	2.22	.953
Adequate allocation of time for M&E activities improves project performance	3 (4.2%)	3 (4.2%)	15 (20.8%)	37 (51.4%)	14 (19.4%)	4.29	.721
Staff roles do not correspond with their qualifications & expertise and this negatively affects project performance	3 (4.2%)	7 (9.7%)	6 (8.3%)	33 (45.8%)	23 (31.9%)	2.08	1.084
Staff are overwhelmed with responsibilities & have little time for M&E activities	2 (2.8%)	10 (13.9%)	13 (18.1%)	35 (48.6%)	12 (16.7%)	2.37	1.013
Adequate & skilled personnel for M&E significantly influences project performance	6 (8.3%)	8 (11.1%)	13 (18.1%)	29 (40.3%)	16 (22.25%)	4.28	.907
The project hardly provides staff with capacity development opportunities	33 (45.8%)	33 (45.8%)	1 (1.4%)	3 (4.2%)	2 (2.8%)	2.43	1.197
Provision of M& E resources influences project performance	33 (45.8%)	33 (45.8%)	3 (4.2%)	1 (1.4%)	2 (2.8%)	4.14	.737
Composite Mean						3.27	0.309

The outcome in table 1 shows that sufficient allocation of M&E resources significantly influences project success 38.9% strongly agreed and 53.6% agreed scoring a mean of 4.31 and a SD of 0.85. This presumes that respondents strongly agreed on this statement. This mean was higher than the composite mean of 3.27 which indicates a strong unanimity among the respondents on the positive impact of adequately allocation M&E resources in contributing to project outcomes.

Further, on the statement that the project lacks a detailed budget for M&E activities, the results showed a mean of 2.22 and a SD of 0.95. These findings imply that respondents generally disagree with the statement indicating that they believe that a detailed budget for M&E does exist within the project.

On the statement of whether adequate allocation of time for M&E activities improves project performance, the findings revealed that the majority of the respondents leaned towards the positive side, agreeing more with a mean of 4.29 and a SD of 0.72. This implies that the respondent believes that there exists a positive relationship between the allocation of time for M&E activities and project performance.

In addition, the respondents disagreed more with the statement that staff roles do not correspond with their qualifications and expertise and this negatively affects project performance with 45.8 disagreeing and 31.9 strongly disagreeing with a mean of 2.08 and a SD of 1.08. This mean score is below the composite mean of 3.27. This implies that most respondents believe that staff roles are in line with their qualifications and expertise, which could in turn impact project performance positively.

Similarly, on the statement as to whether staff are overwhelmed with responsibilities and have little time for M&E activities and this affects project performance scored relatively a low mean of 2.37 and a SD of 1.04. Overall this trend indicates a leaning towards disagreement with the statement. This presupposes that there is a dominant opinion among respondents that staff are not excessively burdened with responsibilities to the extent that they are unable to prioritize M&E activities, and this is not seen as a significant factor negatively affecting project performance.

Further, the statement that adequate and skilled personnel for M&E significantly influences project performance scored a mean of 4.28 and a SD of 0.91. This indicates a strong agreement with the statement with the mean being relatively higher than the composite mean of 3.27, implying there is largely held belief among the respondents that availability of sufficient and skilled personnel in M&E activities is essential for ensuring the success of the project.

Regarding the statement that the project hardly provides staff with capacity development opportunities, a mean score of 2.43 and a SD of 1.19 was observed. Given that this mean is lower than the composite mean of 3.27, it indicates that respondents tended to disagree more with the notion that the project hardly provides such opportunities. This suggests that there is evidence that the project does offer capacity development opportunities for its staff members.

About the statement that allocation of M& E specific budget enhances project performance, 45.8 strongly agreed and 45.8 agreed to score a mean of 4.14 and a SD of 0.74 was observed. This mean exceeds the composite mean of 3.27, showing a strong consensus among the respondents on the importance of allocating a specific budget for M&E and its positive influence on project performance.

Correlation Analysis

Pearson's correlation analysis was conducted to determine the relationship between M&E resources influence on the performance of economic empowerment interventions' in West Pokot County.

Table 2: Correlation between M&E Resources and Performance

		Performance	M&E Resources
Performance	Pearson Correlation	1	0.118
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.322
	N	72	72
M&E Resources	Pearson Correlation	0.118	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.322	
	N	72	72

Source: Research Data (2024)

The above correlation analysis reveals a positive correlation between M&E resources ($r=0.118$, $p= 0.322 >0.05$) and performance. This indicates a weak positive linear relationship between the two variables, suggesting that as M&E resources increase, there is a slight tendency for performance to also to increase.

Generalized Linear Model (GLM)

Due to the ordinal nature of the dependent variable performance, GLM was used to determine the relationship between M&E Resources and the performance of economic empowerment interventions’ in West Pokot County.

Table 3: Model Summary

Dependent Variable: PERFORMANCE
 Method: Generalized Linear Model (Newton-Raphson / Marquardt steps)
 Sample: 72
 Included observations: 72
 Family: Normal
 Link: Identity
 Dispersion computed using Pearson Chi-Square
 Convergence achieved after 0 iterations
 Coefficient covariance computed using observed Hessian

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	z-Statistic	Prob.
RESOURCES	0.073045	0.073237	0.997379	0.3186
C	3.063545	0.241692	12.67542	0
Mean dependent var	3.302083	S.D. dependent var		0.295767
Sum squared resid	6.123911	Root MSE		0.291641
Log likelihood	-13.45698	Akaike info criterion		0.429361
Schwarz criterion	0.492601	Hannan-Quinn criter.		0.454537

Deviance	6.123911	Deviance statistic	0.087484
Restr. deviance	6.210937	LR statistic	0.994765
Prob(LR statistic)	0.318581	Pearson SSR	6.123911
Pearson statistic	0.087484	Dispersion	0.087484

Source: Research data (2024)

Model Convergence and Fit

The model achieved convergence after zero iterations, indicating that the initial values provided were optimal, and the solution was immediately found.

Regarding the goodness of fit, several vital metrics were evaluated:

Log Likelihood: The log-likelihood value of (-13.45) reflects the probability of the observed data given the model parameters. While the absolute value is not directly interpretable, it is a basis for calculating other fit indices and comparing models.

The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) value of 0.42 is a key indicator of the model's balance. It suggests a good fit to the data, with lower AIC values indicating a better balance between model fit and complexity. This crucially penalizes for the number of parameters, ensuring that the model remains simple and avoids overfitting.

Schwarz Criterion (BIC): The BIC value of (0.49) is also low, further supporting the model's adequacy. BIC applies a stricter penalty for the number of parameters compared to AIC, making it useful for model comparison.

Hannan-Quinn Criterion (HQC): The HQC value of (0.45) is similarly low, indicating a good model fit. HQC provides a compromise between the penalties used in AIC and BIC.

Summarizing the findings, the model's fit indices (AIC, BIC, and HQC) are impressively low, underscoring a robust fit to the data. This indicates that the model is not only accurate but also maintains a desirable level of simplicity. The immediate convergence after zero iterations further reinforces the appropriateness and efficiency of the model specification.

The GLM analysis indicated a model predicting;

$$Performance = 3.06 + 0.073 Resources + \epsilon \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

However, the coefficient of resources was not statistically significant as the probability of 0.31 was greater than 5%. This further suggests that changes in resources are not associated with changes in performance. Importantly, the result indicates that even without any level of resources, performance would still exist to certain levels.

Qualitative data was collected through, questionnaire, interviews, and focused group discussions. The following were the qualitative findings derived from the data set and presented thematically.

Efficient Resource Allocation: Majority of the respondents reported that project resources are well utilized and apportioned to various activities as needed and inputted in the budget.

KI.3: “Resources are allocated in accordance with the needs of the project, ensuring that services..... As an accountant I monitor all financial budgets and reports to see if they align with programme activities as stipulated in the proposal. I can say finances are well managed and adequately allocated to budgeted programs”

Need for Increased Resources: Most of the respondents expressed the need for the team leader to increase resources for M&E including both monetary and human resources to enhance proper functioning.

KI.2: “I would recommend, assigning extra M&E personnel in the department to facilitate in-depth tracking and support to the project leaders on the ground”

Optimizing Resource Utilization: In their accounts respondents felt that there is a greater need to optimize available resources to effectively achieve set objectives. There is a recognition of the importance of evaluating activities and setting goals and objectives to ensure effective resource use and project success.

KI.5; “My opinion is that, staff should be evaluating their activities and whether their set goals and objectives are met. They should strictly follow the action plan and ensure they work as per the plan unless there are inevitable changes”

Challenges with current resource Levels: A few respondents articulated concerns with the existing resources levels and competencies voicing a call for some improvements.

KI.4: “Me I think that some funds should be allocated for staff trainings to build their capacity, yes we have staff but some of us don’t have the required standard to implement project activities”.

Summary of findings

The quantitative results revealed a positive but statistically insignificant relationship ($r=0.118$, $p=0.322 >0.05$) between M&E resources and the performance of economic empowerment interventions. The descriptive statistics revealed that 33.3% (24) strongly agreed while 48.6 % (36) agreed that the project lacks a detailed budget for M&E activities, scoring a mean of 4.29. Additionally, 45.8% (33) of the respondents strongly agreed and 45.8% (33) agreed that the project hardly provides staff with capacity development opportunities, with a mean of 2.4. Largely, 38.9% (28) of the respondents strongly agreed and 55.6% (40) agreed that sufficient allocation of M&E resources significantly influences project success scoring a mean of 4.3. The quantitative findings agree with the qualitative results. Respondents in the KI interviews accentuated the need for proper resource allocation and optimization. For instance, KI.2 stressed the need for the project leader to allocate more staff and time to effectively oversee M&E activities.

Both sets of findings converge to a greater degree in several ways. Firstly, the qualitative results revealed three key themes underlining the dire need to address resource-related issues; the need for increased resources, optimizing resource allocation and challenges with the current resources. Additionally, both respondent’s observations and descriptive results stressed the need to build the capacity of the project team to facilitate quality delivery highlighting it as a key area vying for attention and improvement.

The convergence analysis implies that the mere availability of resources might not be sufficient to guarantee project performance. Thus, other factors, such as the efficiency of resource utilization, the quality of the M&E

design and the skills and capacities of the project team, play a more critical role in translating resource allocation into positive project outcomes.

These findings are supported by the perspectives of several scholars (Wambua & James, 2018; Project Management Institute, PMI, 2021), who assert that while the importance of M&E resources in project performance is well-established, the mere availability of resources does not guarantee project success. Further, Amanda, (2017), affirmed that valuable resources directly contribute to the success of the project, emphasizing that resources must add value to the project, as opposed to just availing them.

Conclusion / recommendation

The study's findings underscore the importance of considering factors beyond the mere availability of M&E resources. While resources are essential for data collection and decision-making, their influence on project performance may depend on other factors such as resource optimization, efficiency and M&E design quality.

The study recommends that the project management team for the Chepnyal Development Programme should focus on improving resource utilization and enhancing the quality of Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) designs. This may involve investing in capacity-building initiatives for project staff to ensure effective and optimal resource use and delivery.

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