



**ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MONITORING AND
EVALUATION SYSTEM IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTY
GOVERNMENT PROJECTS: A CASE OF KIRINYAGA COUNTY,
KENYA**

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ABSTRACT

This research project was about the assessment of the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation system in the implementation of County government projects. Effective monitoring and evaluation implies the ability of the M & E system to aid in the successful implementation of a project by achieving its objectives. The study was based on four objectives; one, to assess how monitoring and evaluation planning influences the implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government, two to examine how funding for M & E influences implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government, three, to determine how technical expertise for M & E influences implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government and lastly to establish how stakeholders' participation in M & E influences implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government. As much as standards dictates that projects must be monitored for proper control, there is also need for stakeholders to get the accountability for their resources used in the project, performance of project and also benefit of the project implemented. Therefore, the researcher undertook an in depth review of the existing literature on the variables of interest. From the existing literature it's evident that participatory planning for monitoring and evaluation at the onset of a project is key to the implementation of projects as it allows incorporation of all the elements of monitoring and evaluation, the indicators and the funding needs as well as the persons responsible for the M & E activities. To actualize the plan, reviewed literatures indicate need of proper funding and technical expertise of the staff and the people involved. Previous also indicate the importance of stakeholders' participation in giving divergent viewpoints but affirms that stakeholders should not be allowed to have greater control and that the management should remain in charge. The study was undertaken in Kirinyaga County and adopted a descriptive

survey design with questionnaire as the main data collection tool and the target population drawn from the county government employees. The researcher employed a stratified random sampling to draw the sample. From the data analyzed, it was evident that all the four variables of M&E planning, M&E funding, M&E Technical expertise and Stakeholder participation had influence on the implementation of project at the County Government of Kirinyaga with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.601, 0.600, 0.644 and 0.676 respectively, an indication of a moderately strong correlation. The researcher also summarized the findings, drew conclusions and given recommendations that County government should ensure all projects have M & E plan prepared at the onset of the project through a participatory process; the county government should ensure adequacy and proper management of M & E fund; expansion of the technical expertise of the M & E knowledge base in the county through workshops and seminar trainings and lastly to ensure controlled participation of stakeholders by putting up a system for identifying and managing stakeholders where only key stakeholders should be allowed to take part in M & E. The study was intended to inform both the county and national government of how effective monitoring and evaluations is vital in the implementation of projects undertaken by the County Governments and the importance of the M & E data in strategic planning for the county development projects.

Key Words: Project implementation, monitoring and evaluation planning, monitoring and evaluation funding, Technical expertise for monitoring and evaluation, stakeholders' participation in monitoring and evaluation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

M & E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
LAC	-	Latin America and Caribbean
IDB	-	Inter – American Development bank
ADRA	-	Adventist Development and Relief Agency
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
ERS	-	Economic Recovery Strategy
NIMES	-	National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation Systems
MED	-	Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate
PER	-	Public Expenditure Reviews
APR	-	Annual Progress Reports
UNDP	-	United Nation Development Programme
IFAD	-	International Fund for Agricultural Development

PPM&E	-	Project Planning Monitoring and Evaluation
OECD	-	Organization for Economic Co – operation and Development
NGO	-	Non – Governmental Organization
CVI	-	Content Validity Index
CDF	-	Constituency Development Fund
SWOT	-	Strength, Weakness, Opportunity and Threat
HIV	-	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
AIDS	-	Acquired immune Deficiency Syndrome

Background of the Study

Project management as a discipline reinforces much activities in the economy. Projects drive businesses both in the industries and other economic sectors. Project management implies laying emphasis on the process of making decisions and operationalization of certain strategies and schemes to ensure project success (Parker, 2002). He further affirms that an organization need to understand the project critical success factors in order to enhance project success, analyze these factors in a quantitative manner and systematically with great anticipation of the possible effects and finally getting the appropriate methods in handling them. This will ensure success of the project.

Projects implementation is usually preceded by a well-defined project plan meant to guide during the implementation stage. However, variations usually arise as activities progress (Gray and Larson, 2003). According to Jugdev and Muller (2005), since implementation of project is a complex process, it is usually good to have collective and broad attention capturing a wider aspects of various variables like budgetary allocation, human factor and technical aspects. More often each project has a unique set of success factors critical to it and paying attention to these factors and addressing them increases the chances of successful project implementation. The business environment in today's economy has great uncertainties. This is similar to implementation of projects which is susceptible to all kinds of external and internal influencing factors like unexpected occurrences, ever ballooning requirements, mutable constraints and decreasing resource flows clearly indicating that undertaking a project without taking keen interest to manage these factors efficiently and effectively, results in a high likelihood of project failure (Jugdev and Muller, 2005).

When governments choose to undertake things in the right way which result into achievement of results that were intended, then there is need to provide this information to policy makers to effectively help in the policy making process. An established monitoring and evaluation systems

offers a way of putting up together and integrating the information into a policy cycle thereby aiding the basis of comprehensive and rigorous governance and responsible public policies.

Monitoring and Evaluation in Latin America and Caribbean (L.A.C) was recognized by World Bank and International American Development Bank (I.D.B) in their program of promoting and strengthening the use of monitoring and evaluation, set up the network of Monitoring and Evaluation within LAC. There has been promotion of knowledge and discussion meetings for practitioners on critical issues about institutionalizing the Monitoring and Evaluation systems especially both at the sub-national and national levels over the network for monitoring and evaluation platform. (World Bank, 2010).

According to World Bank (2010), immense demand and supply for standardized monitoring and evaluation has been on the rise. The demand has been necessitated by the increased need for transparency and effectiveness in the public sector, rising information background and system needs for program quality improvement while supply has been necessitated by increased accessibility of Monitoring and Evaluation technologies with other instruments for monitoring and evaluation. Top agencies for monitoring and evaluation have been created by most countries with supported regulatory and legal structure that ensures monitoring and evaluation on regular basis to give information and also allow for the embrace of new innovative tools for Monitoring and Evaluation that supports the planning exercise and budgeting process (World Bank, 2010). Tools in benchmarking have been used in Brazil for proper planning and monitoring of development projects and plans. A list of options for evaluations has also been used in other parts of the world as Mexico. This comprises seven distinct breeds in evaluation ranging from process, policy, indicators, strategic, consistency, results and impacts and this has enabled greater utilization of information from Monitoring and Evaluation especially by the presidency, finance ministry and congress (Gray, 2009)

The overall efficiency in the planning, implementation and management of projects can be enhanced through effective Monitoring and Evaluation. This is due to the fact that many projects do derive their existence from the socio – economic and political needs of a particular community. It is therefore the role of the monitoring function to establish the extent to which the project plan is being observed and how nonconformities are identified and dealt with on time (PMI, 2004). According to Ogolla & Moronge (2016), unbiased and logical valuation for unfinished and finished projects, policies and programs in their design, operationalization and outcomes can only be achieved through effective evaluation. Many organizations in the charitable and development growth sector have given primacy to Monitoring and Evaluation of their activities. This has led to innovative dimensions in M & E, set targets and indicators for M & E, monitoring for performances and management of results/impacts which has enhanced sufficient and excellent evaluation of project progress and impact on a country's development (Ogolla&Moronge, 2016).Monitoring and Evaluation has emerged as a key economic policy

development and performance management tool which is aimed at reducing economic risks and uncertainties. Economic policy makers need the information generated from M&E to improve their economic policies while donors and stakeholders need M&E results to ensure accountability of resources while at the same time improving the overall effectiveness of their policies (Mackay, 2007; UNICEF, 2009)

Before the launching of the vision 2030 for Kenya in the year 2008, the blue print for development was based on the economic recovery strategy (E.R.S). After the launch, the vision 2030 was considered the main guide for development in Kenya. Its creation led to the incorporation of the national integrated monitoring and evaluation systems (N.I.M.E.S) (Republic of Kenya, 2012). At this time, the responsibility for Monitoring and Evaluation was distributed between the then customized body at the Ministry of Planning accountable for lead projects in vision 2030 and the Monitoring and Evaluation Directorate (M.E.D). The monitoring and evaluation systems in Kenya still experiences various bottlenecks regardless of immense labour by the government in the umbrella of National Integrated Monitoring and Evaluation System through the Annual Report Progress (A.R.P) and Public Expenditure Review (P.E.R). this however, has since been changed by the enactment and adoption of the new constitution in the year 2010 which gives both the central and devolved government structures with strengthened Monitoring and Evaluation arrangements (Republic of Kenya, 2012).

Following the promulgation of the new constitution in Kenya 2010, the Kenya government adopted two levels of government that is National Government and County Government. The two levels of government are inter-dependent and distinct in functions with a total number of counties at 47 (Kenya Law reports, 2010). According to Mwangi, Nyang'wara& Ole Kulet (2015), project or program successful implementations has a great bearing on the growth and development of the native groups of a region or country. Going by this, monitoring and evaluation for a country's development project should be critically managed to positively impact on the socio – economic and political standing of the natives of a country or region. Project M & E is considered entirely and broadly accomplished when its fullness position can be determined. Also M & E role is an essential instrument which is important for confirming that the main goals and objectives are achieved as planned (Mwangi, Nyang'wara& Ole Kulet, 2015).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The chapter sought to review the arguments in the previous works of literature that relates to effectiveness of M & E systems in implementation of County Government projects in Kenya with the main aim of bringing out the possible aspects of M & E which can augment implementation of projects in the government as well as other organizations. This covered the

general overview of project implementation, empirical literature on the variables, theoretical framework of the study, conceptual framework, research gap and the summary of the chapter.

General overview of project implementation

Agenda for development in countries has always been pegged on various programs and projects which were majorly geared towards enhance the standards of living for the beneficiary societies whether in qualitative or physical standings. (Chikati, 2009). The olden day projects have had impressions on the communities and positively added to some of the changes that have profited the regions and generally the community and enhanced the conditions for living of various people. (Cleland and Ireland, 2007). A major characteristic of projects brings out the distinctions in terms of it duration, purpose and the scale of operation. Projects signify dedication of all resources for the generation of definite yield within a specific duration, cost structures. However how much dissimilarities may exist in projects, project comprehensive management and implementation techniques remains shared unanimously in the world (Chikati, 2009).

Usually, projects complete undergo through various phases ranging from idea conception to close out and this happens under an estimated time schedule and cost to meet the set objectives. During these phases, projects convert resources to expected products or service or organization procedure or course. Hence a finalized project gets incorporated in the register of competence by the mother organization of such projects (Chikati, 2009).He further points that, implementation is the execution of planned activities by transforming the project resources to a finished product and service which are quality to the target end user and that this process entails developing a design, procurement, fabrication, installation and commissioning of the project.

Always it is important to consider that when the structures of processes in the system aren't perfect then there is likelihood of project failure in meeting the objectives as the process of implementation becomes bumpy. The manner in which a project is executed always has a bearing on its success. The process of implementing a project is always an intricate procedure as it contains several factors that have effect on it. Some of these factors may include and not limited to management of resources, systems operations, culture of the organization and organizational leadership (Kerzner, 2001). In most cases, projects are usually started in environments which are stormy, volatile and non-static. This makes most projects to experience bottlenecks and perils during their implementation thereby resulting into failure to meet the expected standards regardless of the resources pumped into it (Kelly &Magongo, 2004).

Internal and external factors playing around the project organization might influence the effective implementation of projects. Some of these factors like ineffective management of the project, non-participation of beneficiaries in the identification and development of the project design, inadequate consideration to external surrounding at designing stage and ineffective or lack of link between activities of the project and its purpose are considered to have great impact on the project's success. However, success of a project can be enhanced by consideration of the

socio-economic and political environs under which the project is being implemented (Batten, 1989).

According to Kerzner (2001) there are three criteria for successful project implementation from an organization's point of view. First, project must be implemented to completion bearing the least and jointly accepted scope of alterations but Maylor (2005) also observes that the stakeholders have different views about projects. Secondly, he observes that implementation should be done in a manner it does not disturb the major course of activities in an organization since projects helps its daily operation and thrives to ensure they are efficiently and effectively undertaken. Lastly, projects should be finalized minus altering the organization's culture despite argument by Baguley (1995) about project's exclusive concern with change. During project implementation, project team manager has a role to ensure that changes are effected solely on essential areas and points. Unnecessary changes would meet resistance which would lead to project failure (Kerzner, 2001).

Various approaches to successful project implementation are categorized into four groups based on time (Wideman, 1996). This involves internal project objectives, benefit to customer, project direct contribution and the future opportunities offered by the project. Planning the project involves drawing out a roadmap to see if the project proposed is of any real benefit (Bryde, 2003). It is the basis of these benefits that the project is approved and in consideration of the business benefits, objectives requirements, governance and project scope. These inform the project decision on the methodology to be used in its management and also enable the project manager to develop a detailed project schedule, task and budget allocations. Project execution begins by knowing the stakeholders detailed requirements. Evaluation of the project helps in identifying the success of the implementation of every project task (Bryde, 2003). Findings from the evaluation process are documented for use in the future projects. Evaluation majorly check whether the project activities were completed within the triple constraint, that is, time scheduled, budget and quality requirement planned for.

Making a project work involves properly implementing, monitoring and modifying the project, as well as closing out the project and evaluating the results. Everyone involved in this process must understand the project statement and objectives, for productive communication among team members (Longman & Mullins, 2004). This requires the implementing organization to identify and understand their weaknesses and strengths before implementation of the project as well as the bottlenecks that are likely to hamper smooth implementation. According to Meredith (1995) intensive planning for the project activities and the design stage which entails modelling the design that covers design database, design application and design for communication are highly vital for the implementation of the project.

Monitoring and Evaluation planning and its influence on Project Implementation

A plan for Monitoring and Evaluations simply implies an elastic roadmap to the various project phases usually aids documentation of activities of the project, provide solutions to monitoring

and evaluation questions and indicate advancement towards the overall goal of the project and its specific objectives. As a roadmap, the plan outlines the specific objectives and the overall goal while capturing the questions for evaluation, plan for implementation, matrix of results expected, the timelines, monitoring and evaluation data gathering instruments and procedures to be used. (PMI, 2004). According to Kagiri and Wainaina (2008), prior to commencing the project implementation process, organizations and project team needs to perform an in depth planning to encompass project work environ, timelines, resources to be put in, before actual implementation of the project starts, project organizations should undertake detailed implementation planning which should cover the project physical work, time plan, input resources, organizational and management systems, output generation, cost planning and monitoring and evaluation.

Project monitoring and evaluation activities can produce useful results if they are incorporated in the project design stage (PMI, 2004). They further explain and affirm that planning for a project as well as designing it are activities that cannot be separated hence to bring about Monitoring and evaluation that is sustainable and relevant, there must be team up among the project stakeholders, project patrons and the project designing team to come up with cohesive and inclusive monitoring and evaluation plan (PMI, 2004).

According to PMI (2004), all projects at every level, whether it is a lone project or various projects put together requires an effective monitoring and evaluation plan in existence. The M & E plan in the project checks project implementation process and ascertain whether it is meeting its set overall goal and objectives hence keeping the project designers and other major stakeholders informed through the monitoring and evaluation results. The plan also gives guidance to the M & E designing, shows what data is yet to be gathered and the best means to gather the data with a suggestion on the ways of utilizing the results for higher efficient operation which is also effective. An all-inclusive planning for monitoring and evaluation is necessary for projects to offer a description of the general and specific objectives for the project which are geared to a particular, questions for monitoring and evaluation, methodology as well as the project design, the nature of the data that will be collected and by which means, the resources required, implementation for the plan with specific timeline for each component of the plan. (Family Health International, 2004).

Coming up with a plan for Monitoring and Evaluation requires a proper program knowledge understanding of the program, inputs, processes, output and outcomes (Cooke, Bill &Uma, 2001). The inputs required for planning include resourced personnel, mandate and the directives of coming up with the plan for monitoring and evaluation supported with appropriate technological arrangement. (Kalali, Ali &Davod K, 2011). The process involves advocating for the monitoring and evaluation requirements, analyzing the need for tactical information, getting into an agreement with stakeholders and acquiring their commitment especially on the M & E aspects like the indicators, reporting arrangements and the reporting tools, setting up mechanism for the review of the monitoring and evaluation plan and finally getting ready the documentation for the final endorsement (Gusfield, 1975). The final result for this process will be a comprehensive plan for monitoring and evaluation describing the system for monitoring and

evaluation as well as items of the plan, support of the all stakeholders and final endorsement by the authority (Jody & Ray, 2004).

According to Pfohl (1986), plan for monitoring and evaluation should be developed at the early phases of developing the project. This is supported by Mugambi and Kanda (2013) by their argument that monitoring and evaluation should be planned for nearly after the design phase is complete to give time for arrangement for enough time, personnel and enough resources prior to implementation of project and also this allows the project players check how realistic and practical it will be for them to achieve all that they have intention of measuring. intend to measure. Program or project changes can affect the M&E plan performance in terms of assessing the progress of activities as well as evaluation of the project impact. Therefore, it is critical to change the M&E plan as the program or project changes so that performance can be accurately measured. Having an internal M&E capacity facilitates adjustments to the M&E plan since flexibility and regular review of program results is necessary (World Bank, 2010).

The initial stage for the monitoring and evaluation planning entails identifying availability of monitoring and evaluation expertise in the M & E team, analysis of all the support organizations, the beneficiary targeted plus other possible players in monitoring and evaluation. this allows for recognition of the gaps that exist between the requirements for monitoring and evaluation and the available resources, both human and non-human hence this guide the capacity building needs for the enhancement of technical ability to carry out monitoring and evaluation (Ibeto& Justine, 2013).

For the activities of monitoring and evaluation to have the special considerations it deserves as a function and not as marginal in the project management, there is need to have a well-defined plan for monitoring and evaluation (Gyorkos, 2003). He further reinstates that while planning the project, there is need to incorporate a well-defined plan for monitoring and evaluation as vital part of the whole plan of the project. He also posits that the plan for M & E needs to contain M & E activities, responsible persons for the activities, rate of the activities, enough budget and finally arrangement for the usage of the M & E outcomes.

There is need for project team to fully comprehend the various kinds of M & E that are inherent in the project for proper prior planning for the needs of comprehensive monitoring and evaluation (Mwangi, Nyang'wara& Ole Kulet, 2015). According to Mugambi& Kanda (2013), the users of monitoring and evaluation needs to be incorporated in developing its plan. They further argue that involvement of project staff and key stakeholders in the planning for M&E safeguards the viability, knowledge and possession of the monitoring and evaluation structure. In some cases, timing of the monitoring and evaluation planning may be determined by donor requirements but still additional M&E planning may be undertaken after a project is approved and funded (Mugambi& Kanda, 2013). They further indicate that project monitoring and

evaluation structure constructs from the primary analysis and designing and this is pegged near term, middle term and strategic objectives plus indicators as per the logical framework, stakeholders' anticipation, required information and finally other useful aspects like timelines and budgets.

Funding for Monitoring and Evaluation and its influence on Project Implementation

According to Kaburu (2012), funding refers to the finances set aside for the M & E activities which include funds to ensure regular collection of evaluation data, for staff motivation as well as funds to ensure that the recommendations of the evaluation reports are fully implemented and that this should be ideally, 10% of the project cost. This has been supported by Mwangi, Nyang'wara & Ole Kulet (2015) who argues that the M & E process needs to have a budget allocation of more than 2% of the project budget where they propose 5% - 10% allocation from the project overall budget.

According to Gyorkos (2003) and McCoy (2005), the project's financial plan needs to have a succinct and enough funding for M & E. Financial plan for M & E should be well separated from the overall budget of the project to ensure M & E gets proper consideration as it plays an important role in management of project. The Program Evaluation Standards also indicates that, evaluation planning budget could certainly be more carefully estimated and actual expenditure on the evaluation more carefully monitored (James et. al, 1999).

The problem of cost overruns during evaluation has been raised up by several evaluators. Musomba et.al, (2013) and Gikonyo (2008) say that compact and methodical study is costly. Finances are required for managing the information system, training and transportation services. The monitoring and evaluation budget should capture various aspects ranging from consultation fees for experts from outside, cost of travel, costs for investments which are not contractual, recurring labor, excursions and training for capacity building and other costs not directly related to operations which involve things like stipends, office stationery and meetings facilitation costs. In the recent past donors have put emphasis on ensuring that monitoring and evaluation is budgeted for before approving any proposals for funding. In contrast, implementing agencies put little or no emphasis at all towards M&E and most of them try to resist having structures that can support M&E in their organizations (Musomba et.al, 2013). Budgetary allocation is required to provide adequate financial resources for the evaluation process at the right time when it is needed. A monitoring and evaluation budget need to be developed and included in the main financial plan of the project to allow M & E be fully accepted and given special consideration in the implementation of projects (Gyorkos, 2003; McCoy, 2005).

According to PMI (2012), the decision makers in Kenya foresaw an all-inclusive monitoring and evaluation structure meant to enhance responsibility hence the need for preparation of needed information for ascertaining outcomes and effects of the policies by the government. The aim of

M & E Director resulted in forecasting of important means of actualizing the implementation of monitoring and evaluation systems in Kenya. When less input or resources is set for any activity, there is likelihood of the progress being slow due to resource constraint. On the same note, applying excess resources to a course also results into crowding which in turn lowers the productivity and give room for resource misuse or wastage which can otherwise be put into productive use in different activities. Hence a proper sharing and distribution of the rare resources to the various stages of development and monitoring and evaluation activities is a convincing chance in management that is able to enhance the performance of the schedule (John, 2007).

Financial provision for the M & E function directly influences M & E in a moderate manner and this in turn has an influence in the overall implementation process of the project (Mwangi, Nyang'wara & Ole Kulet, 2015). Budgeting for monitoring and evaluation ensure availability of funds and proper usage of the funds and this is based on the technicality of the expected results of the project that are to undergo evaluation plus the aim of the exercise (United Nations development program, 1997). Funds for monitoring and evaluation determines the duration and the personnel required (UNDP, 2000). Resources for evaluating a project are assigned direct from the M & E function in the overall project financial plan. Also, the final evaluation for the project outcome gets its portion of funding from interventions of programs that resulted to such results (IFAD, 2005). During the time for setting financial plan for M & E, project manager and the M & E team needs to pay attention to the When budgeting for monitoring and evaluation, the project organization should consider the range of activities to be carried out, the complexity of such activities and assurance required for time for the M & E (PP M&E, 2008).

Monitoring and evaluation will require considerably less funding at the initial stage of the project implementation compared to the later stages when the project nears completion. This is due to the complexity levels and the weight of activities in these different stages (Gusfield, 1975). This is supported by Kalali, Ali & Davod K (2011) who argues that the bigger the range of activities and their technicality, the lengthier timeframe and thorough working will be needed from the M & E team thereby increasing the overall cost of M & E. According to Pfohl (1986), the duration of evaluation is dependent on its aim where near term undertakings tend to be less costly as compared to far end activities hence the requirement to reduce expenditure and the duration. Ben (2002) recommends the project management team should provide all the monitoring and evaluation requirements to the evaluation team leader for faster feedback delivery that in turn reduces the time and cost of the process (IFAD, 2005).

Most organization mostly have limited financial allocation in respect of M & E. Due to their limited funds they face notably greater challenges to obtain and run monitoring and evaluation activities effectively (Uitto, 2004). It is important therefore that organizations need to be aware of all the possible means of funding accessible and readily obtainable for M & E by identifying key funding needs; understanding the variety of financing means accessible plus the means to

obtain them and also the providers of the funding to fulfil the known requirements for monitoring and evaluation (Thairu, 2014).

Having an institutional policy in place can assist the program team in making the case for M&E expenses and can be used as a guide for planning. Nevertheless, M&E activities need to still be planned and budgeted. No formal formula is in existence that helps in coming up with the financial plan for monitoring and evaluation activities. Generally, organization set the budget in a manner that it is not less to interfere with the quality of M & E in terms of correctness and reliability of the outcome but it should not also turn away resources meant for the other project activities to the level of weakening the project implementation. Though, it may not be easy to estimate the cost of the M&E activities at the early planning stage, the starting point is to include estimated cost while developing monitoring and evaluation plan (Sedrakian, 2016)

Monitoring and Evaluation Technical Expertise and its influence on Project Implementation

Human resources management are very important in project management. Particularly, they are crucial for an effective M & E process. The knowledge and expertise of the project organization to undertake the process of evaluation, the worth and contribution of its personnel during the decision making time as well as the drive behind their implementation of the decision can hugely impact on the evaluation of a project (Vanessa and Gala, 2011). Foresti, O'Neil & Hudson (2007) further illustrate that this should not be just mere training by undertaking learning approach which are best practice and have a positive effect on the evaluation process within the organization.

For an organization to be able to sustain an M & E system which is a continuous process, it must formulate supply for personnel (Gladys et al, 2010). Capacity building will typically include: upgrading conceptual and analytical skills in monitoring and evaluation, selection of indicators, data collection methods, data management and design of reporting systems. Also and perhaps most important, capacity building will include developing a result oriented management culture that seeks out and effectively uses information in decision making (Hulme, 2000). It is worth noting that there is need for further training on the technical parts of monitoring and evaluation as well as emerging issues for the upcoming evaluators. This can however be achieved through workshops on the same. All kinds of official training as well as the informal trainings process and exposure to the job experience are key to building evaluation experts and they require two vital proficiencies, that is, cognitive capacity and communication skills (Gladys et al, 2010). Organizations must use the procedural means to develop an M & E system and this involves pumping enough resources into personnel training and allowing for their professional progress through government units, non-governmental units, higher institutions of learning, certified groupings and mentor exercises (Gladys, et. al, 2010).

Mukherjee (1993) says that meeting technical expertise capacity needs will be ensured by acquiring the appropriate personnel through acquisition of personnel with proper training,

personnel training, utilization of the consultation services from outside the organization for intensive and non-biased contributions and space for quality by eliminating deterrents and introducing motivations for study, keeping track of staff performance through regular evaluation, working towards reducing labor turn over and finally filling and keeping filled the coordination office with vastly qualified personnel. Transparent process of allocating job and responsibilities for personnel in M & E based of their qualification is key and those not well qualified should be trained first before being allocated responsibilities. Effective back up on the site should be ensured to the personnel working in the project fields individually(Ramesh, 2002 as cited in Musomba et.al, 2013).

The broader view of building the expertise of the employees is to enable them be better as an individual or for collective positive provision to the organization. Employees' contribution can be improved through being positively considered by the organization and raising the level of their anticipations and opportunity (Robinson& Pearce, 2004). Experts in the process of evaluation hold the essential proficiency needed to accomplish the role of giving essential services of guiding and advising the management on plan and building of suitable M & E system that is result oriented in its performance. Project evaluators usually have clear roles like providing help and supervision of the dimensions to which the results are achieved as much as the project manager is accountable to stakeholders for measuring the performance of the project (Gladys et.al. 2010).

The independence and relevance of evaluation can only be attained if it is done by bodies and personnel who are not under the direct regulation of the planners and implementers of the project being evaluated (OECD, 2002; Gaarder&Briceno, 2010).According to Venessa and Gala (2011), the capability and expertise of the staff in undertaking monitoring and evaluation hugely impacts on M&E process. Training gives employees the knowledge of the principles, methodology, and tools applied in M&E. It improves the organization performance of M&E activities. They further stipulate that the established structure of the organization guarantees arrangements are in place to actualize and protect the freedom, integrity and the usage of M & E for the overall realization of the project outcomes.

Stakeholders participation in M & E and its influence in Project Management

Stakeholders are groups of people, organization and institutions that will affect or maybe affected by the project. These stakeholders include the community-men, women and youth; project field staff, program managers, donors, government and other decision makers, supporters, critics, government and NGO'S (Davies, Newcomer &Soydan, 2006). Existing standards shows that the main aspect influencing the updating of M & E process is participation of M & E stakeholders. The participation of stakeholders should be incorporated at the initial phases of the M & E process, bringing on board the backing of eminent supporters and entice the

representatives of political entities with intent of knowledge and usage of tools to show efficiency(Jones, 2009 as cited in Musomba et.al, 2013).

Knowing and understanding the partners and all stakeholders is vital in projects. This can affect monitoring and evaluation in terms of funding, requirements and what information will be required by each stakeholder. For effectiveness and efficiency, a proper stakeholder analysis needs to be carried out in order to guarantee the SWOT of each stakeholder are identified. Communication of the M&E results will determine if the monitoring and evaluation would have an impact in the improvement of the project towards achieving results. (Davies, 1998).

Getting the views of the project stakeholders on the aspect of the project usually endows them especially in respect to what is done, why it is done and the way it is done hence this stimulate attachment and enhance important contribution by different groupings of stakeholders (Donaldson &Lipesy, 2003). The analysis and explanation of outcome phase of the impact evaluation, may be seriously enriched by the involvement of the targeted recipient of the outcome which in most cases are the main stakeholders in the intervention and the suited adjudicators in their specific condition (Proudlock, Ramalingam&Sandison, 2009). Patton (2008) stipulates that despite the vital role played by stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation, their involvement should be carefully considered since excess participation may result into excessive influence unto the process of evaluation and less involvement is likely result into dominance of the evaluation experts.

IFAD (2002) argues that stakeholder involvement is in excess of the support given by the beneficiaries in the implementation of M & E for results as it should cover every stakeholder and be solemnized at every stage in the M & E process under the overall project implementation process. They further stipulate that this should clearly capture monitoring and Evaluation systems. Hence, developing participatory monitoring and evaluation implies that when the essentials of monitoring and evaluation are comprehended, contributory monitoring and evaluation is demarcated and efforts are made for formal introduction. That can be done by providing main project stakeholders with right materials required to lead and aid the plan of the project in realizing the major and specific objectives, giving timely indicators for activities and procedures with hick ups which requires correction, endow key stakeholders through opportunity creation for critical analysis on the project course with support on selecting arear of enhancements, developing capabilityamid the people engaged in the M & E process and lastly stimulate and inspire knowledge midst the ones dedicated to make the M & E process triumph and check improvement to allow for responsibilities to be realized (IFAD, 2002)

Donaldson &Lipesy(2003) reports that management of stakeholders enable the project implementersto effectively understand the needs of the various stakeholders as well as promote inclusion and meaningful participation. Participation of the stakeholders needs to be incorporated

at initial phases of the M & E process (Jones, 2008 as cited by Musomba et al 2013). The stakeholder dimension is essential in project management as some stakeholders have high stakes in the project while others have significant influence over the project deliverables (Kenon, Howden& Hartley, 2010). According to Waithera and Wanyoike (2015) stakeholders' participation is critical to the effective operationalization of the M & E plan. Also Echoed byNjuki et al (2013) who found out that participatory monitoring and evaluation strengthens learning and change at both community and institutional level and that this enhances the success of M&E activities by promoting negotiation of outcomes that different stakeholders expect from the project. Stakeholders' participation in M&E also facilitates the assessment of project from multiple perspectives (Njuki et al, 2013)

According to Verma (2008), dominance of stakeholders on the activities of the project M&E can lead to negative outcomes as each stakeholder will tend to advance his or her interest at the expense of others leading to conflicts and that it is important for project teams to take control of all project activities including M&E. Proudlock, Ramalingam& Sandison (2009) however states otherwise by suggesting that stakeholders' participation in M&E activities improves the analysis of data and interpretation of evaluation results. Stakeholders also introduce diverse perspectives into the evaluation process.

Participation of major stakeholders in the process of monitoring and evaluation is key as it allows for absorption of diverse viewpoints for consideration before release of the the outcome and this results can be accepted and be kept project lessons learned (Ramesh, 2002). According to Johnes (2008), involving the stakeholders in deliberations on M & E function regularly inspire them and encourages expressive involvement by different stakeholders thereby giving monitoring and evaluation team enough and pertinent information valuable for the process. Participation of stakeholders should start at the onset of monitoring and evaluation process and should encompasses major stakeholders and other concerned parties to make sure the M & E function is effective and delivers results. (Kerote 2007). Involvement of the right people in the entire process greatly enhance the outcome. It also improves the perception on recommendations, embracement and enforcement of the corrective measures in good time (Johnes 2008). Involvement of the stakeholders need special consideration since it has a strong influence on the efficiency and efficacy of the M & E process (Mwangi, Nyang'wara& Ole Kulet, 2015).

Theoretical Framework

Theories implies a belief or a structure of ideas intended to explain something based on general principles and supports in accepting and regulating a particular topic (Abrahams, 2007). The M & E speculative structure for project has been pronounced as a structure of orientation which allows people to understand their surrounding and know how to operate with it. This study is based on two main theories that is, human capital theory and stakeholder theory.

A. Human Capital Theory

According to Kessler & Lulfesmann (2002), this theory proposes the distinction of general training from explicit and definite abilities and talents. The human capital theory distinguishes between training in general and specific skills. The general connection between human capacity building and efficiency in production at the place of work is pegged on a factor pricing model (Weiss, 2004). Theorists under this model assert that there is importance in investing on worker's education and imparting of value of the worker. The human capital theory is based on the assumptions that training geared towards the organization like change management is expected to escalate the strategic production levels of the organization, an indication of a return on their investment on training. Organization workers are expected to have a healthier knowledge of the system to help them use it correctly to guarantee efficiency in relation to the project productivity (Bosworth, Wilson & Assefa, 1993). This results to fulfillment by the workers and has a resultant effect on the magnitude of their productivity hence performance of the project (Weiss, 2004). Sound consideration and input in the employee capacity development through training by any organization is likely to improve their knowledge in relation to their responsibilities, roles, duties and onuses hence refining the M & E functional activities. This improves the workers' productivity, flexible and ability to innovate. This theory relates to project team on monitoring and evaluation on performance of projects.

B. Stakeholder Theory

Arguments by Freeman (2004) posit that stakeholders are a category of people or single personalities who are likely to have some influence or be influenced by achievement of the aim and goals of the organization. Organizations usually produce externalities that affect different stakeholders and these tend to make them pile pressure for the organizations to lower the adverse effects and grow the ones which are constructive. This model further suggests that an organization should recognize all the parties with interest or whose interests are likely to be affected by their decision in order to reduce the harm and exploit the paybacks to the stakeholders (Freeman, 2004). Therefore, governments need to think beyond financial performance but have obligations towards society and its constituent groups whose actions are affected by their interventions, (Jones, 2008). He further affirms that monitoring and evaluation go beyond the traditional fiduciary duties to shareholder and extend to the customers, employees, suppliers and neighboring communities.

The monitoring and evaluation in particular has to meet the different needs of stakeholders, particularly when development projects are introduced in order to allow for proper implementation of those projects (De Brito et al., 2008). Public projects are owned collectively by members of political communities hence the pressure to meet the interest of all stakeholders (Boyne, 2002). In overall measures, the above observations point to affirmative association between stakeholders' involvement in M & E and project implementation. The above theory thus relates to participation of stakeholder in M & E process and its respective performance on project projects implemented by the county governments.

Conceptual Framework

This represents theorized structure pinpointing the association of the (Mugenda&Mugenda, 2003). The framework projects the perceived relationship of the dependent variable and independent variables in a diagram while also capturing the moderating variables.

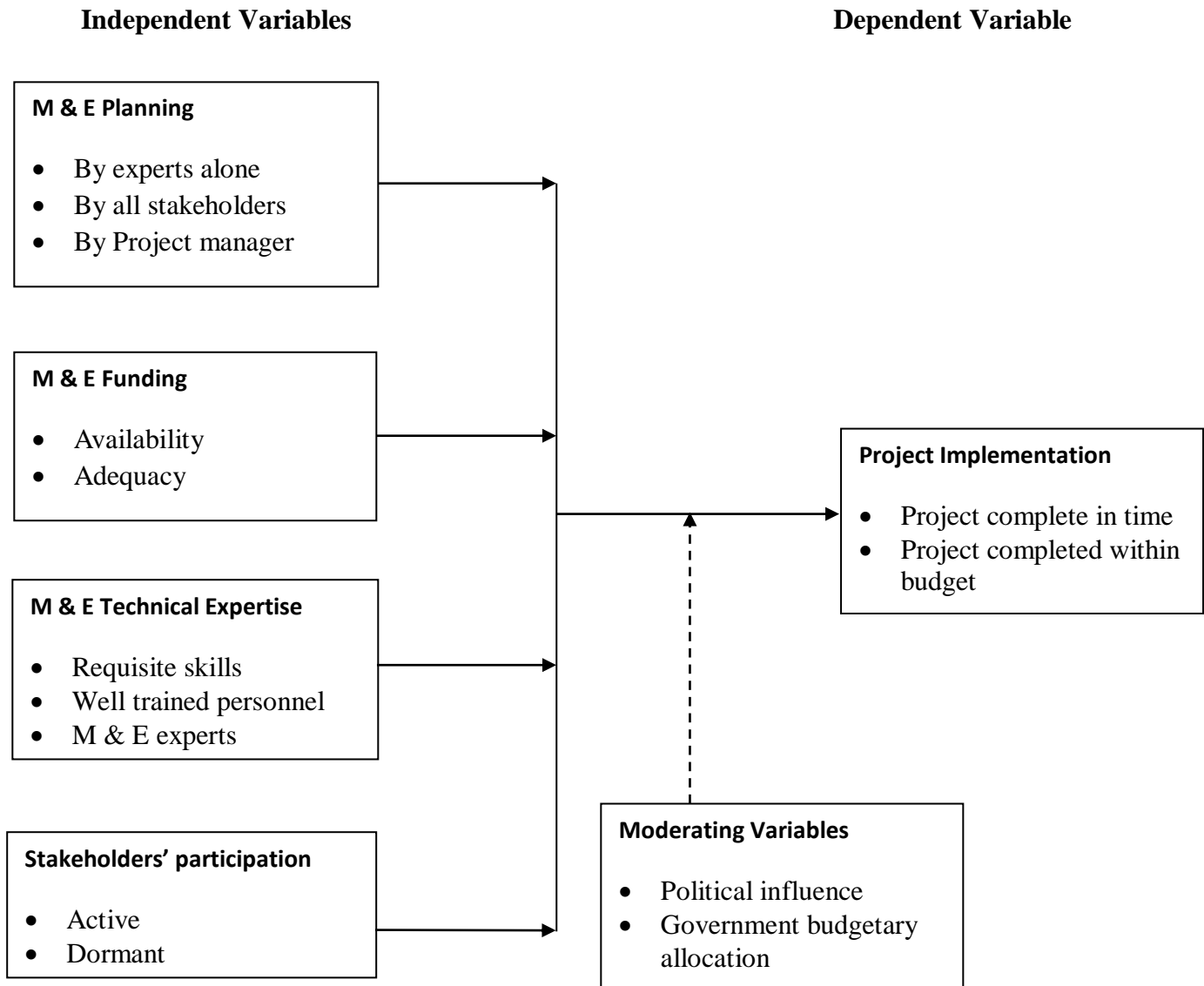


Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework.

The study has four variables of monitoring and evaluation that the researcher found critical to implementation of projects. M & E planning has been considered as a dire aspect for ensuring that projects are implemented successfully due to its significant role in enabling the process to take place through provision of the relevant information needed in terms of the monitoring activities, timing and cost of the activities.

Funding for M & E was another important aspect. It involved apportioning of the right amount of budget to the operationalization of the monitoring and evaluation plan with emphasis on all the

M & E activities. It's about setting aside financial resources for M & E will be assessed to determine how adequacy and availability of funds for M & E influence implementation of projects. Technical expertise in M & E has been identified as critical to the implementation of projects since it plays vital part in enabling monitoring and evaluation process to be carried out through provision of the knowledge and proficiency needed to accomplish it.

Finally, stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation is another variable to the study. It has been selected with the recognition of potential it bears on the implementation of projects. Stakeholder participation in M & E plays a major role as it involves people who may be affected by decisions made about a project M & E or can influence the implementation of a project M & E. Finally, within the wider spectrum of the project implementation other factors may impact on the implementation process of project by the county governments; and the same have been identified in this study as to include politics and government policy. This relationship has been captured in fig. 2.1 by dotted arrow.

2.9 Research Gap

Variable	Author and Year	Findings	Knowledge Gap
M & E Planning	Family Health International (2004)	An all – inclusive planning for M & E is necessary for projects to offer description of the general and specific objectives of the project.	The literature majorly concentrated on M & E for projects related to care and treatment of HIV/AIDS
Funding for M & E	Mwangi, Nyang'wara & Ole Kulet (2015)	Budgetary allocation to monitoring and evaluation program affects monitoring and evaluation process moderately	The literature was limited to constituency development projects without giving consideration to other government funded project
M & E Technical Expertise	Mushori (2015)	Technical expertise as a factor influence effective M & E of county government funded infrastructure project	The literature narrowed on infrastructure projects by the county government
Stakeholders Participation in M & E	Ogolla & Moronge (2016)	Stakeholder involvement affect project. The key stakeholders were found to be beneficiaries, implementing staff and the government	The literature was limited to government funded water projects.

2.10 Summary of the Chapter

The chapter reviewed information from past studies on M & E and its effectiveness on project implementation by the county government. The study has also presented both theoretical and conceptual frameworks on which the study is based. Following the review of the literature, it is clear there are several means the effectiveness of M & E influence project implementation. Implementation process is considered effective if the project is completed within the triple constraints of project management, that is, within time schedule, within budget constraint and with quality ensured to beneficiaries' satisfaction. Effective M & E is a technical exercise designed for use to ensure successful project implementation. Eventual aim of the monitoring and evaluation function in projects is to offer valuable information to those in charge of decision making for proper project implementation in which case can be achieved effectively through proper planning for M & E, adequate and timely funding, acquisition of the right technical expertise as well as participation of the project's interest groups in the process of monitoring and evaluation.

DATA ANALYSIS, PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION

Project Implementation in Relation to Monitoring and Evaluation

The extent to which employees agreed with the statements were coded using the Likert scale of: **1-Very large extent, 2-Large extent, 3-Neutral extent, 4-Small extent, 5-No extent at all**

Table 1 Project Implementation and Monitoring and Evaluation

Project Implementation	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Standard deviation
Effective M & E informs Duration the project implementation	8.6%	43.2%	17.3%	25.9%	0%	3.7489	.76847
The quality of the project is not compromised by effective M&E.	25.9%	34.5	34.5%	0%	0%	3.7617	.82859
Effective M & E in project implementation ensures beneficiary satisfaction.	8.6%	8.6%	0%	25.9%	51.8%	2.9149	1.00064

The study sought to determine project implementation in relation to monitoring and evaluation at County government of Kirinyaga. Table 4.5 shows the rating of the various statements on effect of project implementation in relation to monitoring and evaluation. The respondents were asked to respond on items reflecting on project implementation in relation to monitoring and evaluation. From table 4.5 majority of 43.2% respondents agree in large extent that effective M

& E informs duration the project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. Majority both in neutral extent and a large extent with a percentage response of 34.5 agreed that the quality of the project is not compromised by effective M&E at County government of Kirinyaga. 51.8% agreed that County government of Kirinyaga considers that effective M & E in project implementation ensures beneficiary satisfaction in a no extent at all.

Influence of Monitoring & Evaluation Planning on Project Implementation

The study sought to determine how M & E planning influences project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. From the respondents’ response on whether they usually have M & E plan for their project, majority said yes and is normally prepared majorly at the proposal level while others immediately when it is the beginning of implementation of the project. Majority said that all stakeholders take part in preparing of the plan but there were also others who said that it may be prepared by the project manager or M&E experts upon requisition of the same. Table 4.6 shows the rating of the various statements on influence of M & E planning on project implementation. The respondents were asked to respond on items reflecting on M & E Planning. From table 4.6 majority of 43.1% respondents agree that the project M & E plan should be prepared during the planning stage of the project at County government of Kirinyaga. Majority of 75% respondents agreed that planning for M & E should consider all project activities and allow for adjustments at County government of Kirinyaga. Finally, majority of 37.5% respondents were not so sure of whether County government of Kirinyaga should ensure there is an M & E plan before starting any project. The mean and standard deviation of each item is presented in table 4.6 respectively. The mean score of M & E planning was 3.89872 with a standard deviation of 0.736735. The score of M & E planning is close to 3 and below among the independent variables. The respondents were asked about their opinion about improvement of knowledge after M & E Planning program. They were of opinion that employees were expected to add more value to project implementation and these programs had a positive effect on both individual and county performance. The respondents were also of opinion that M & E Planning activities have increased innovation and idea generation through new skills acquisition, polished experienced and update on changing trends or preferences to suit consumer specific needs.

The extent to which employees agreed with the statements were coded using the liker scale of

SD=strongly disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A = Agree SA= strongly agree,

Table 2 Monitoring & Evaluation Planning and Project Implementation

Project Implementation	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Standard deviation
The project M & E should be prepared during the planning stage of the project.	11.4%	31.7%	37.3%	5.6%	0%	2.8468	.70555
Planning for M & E should	33.5%	41.5%	7.6%	17.4%	0	2.5574	.84725

consider all project activities
and allow for adjustments

County governments should
ensure there is an M & E plan 11.6% 16.4% 37.5% 22.3% 12.2% 3.1191 .36200
before starting any project.

Influence of Monitoring & Evaluation Funding on Project Implementation

The study sought to determine how M & E funding influences project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. From the respondents’ responses on whether they usually have M & E funding to ensure that there is smooth implementation for their project, majority said yes though there were some who were not so sure and 10% of the total project budget is allocated to monitoring and evaluation. Majority said that there were not so sure if the budget allocated to the monitoring and evaluation is adequate for the full implementation of the project. The study also sought to find out the influence of M & E funding on project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. Table 4.7 shows the rating of the various statements on influence of M & E funding on project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. 86.1% agreed that the project M & E budget should have adequate provision for proper implementation of the projects. Majority of 61.3% agreed that monitoring and evaluation funds should be more carefully estimated and actual expenditure carefully monitored. Finally, 82.2% respondents were in disagreement that County government put emphasis on ensuring that monitoring and evaluation funds is planned for before approving any project. The mean and standard deviation of each item is presented in table 4.7 respectively. The mean score of monitoring and evaluation funding was 3.57319 with standard deviation of 0.878882 thus indicating that funding are moderately done on projects at County government of Kirinyaga. This points out that the issue of monitoring and evaluation funding was low and should be improved further to improve its implementation.

The extent to which employees agreed with the statements were coded using the liker scale of

SD=strongly disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A = Agree SA= strongly agree,

Table 3 Monitoring & Evaluation Funding and Project implementation

Project Implementation	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Standard deviation
The project M & E budget should have adequate provision for proper implementation of the projects.	25.9%	60.2%	8.9%	3.0%	5.0%	3.2426	.82859

Monitoring and evaluation funds should be more carefully estimated and actual expenditure carefully monitored.

34.5% 26.8% 20.9% 12.3% 5.5% 2.8468 .95893

County government put emphasis on ensuring that monitoring and evaluation funds is planned for before approving any project

4.6% 5.1% 8.6% 47.7% 34.5% 2.5574 .76847

Influence of Monitoring & Evaluation Technical Expertise on the Implementation of Projects

The study sought to determine how M & E technical expertise influences project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. From the respondents’ responses on whether they have technical skills for monitoring and evaluation, there were some who had the skills and also others had no any idea on monitoring and evaluation skills and also most have not undergone any training on monitoring and evaluation. Majority said that there is adequate supply of skilled human resources capacity for monitoring and evaluation for the full implementation of the projects. The study also sought to find out the influence of M & E technical expertise on project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. Table 4.8 shows the rating of the various statements on influence of M & E Technical Expertise on project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. 49.8% were in disagreement that M & E technical expertise is a huge determinant of how project’s lessons learned are produced, communicated and perceived. Majority of 61.3% agreed that M & E experts in the project should be given clear job allocation and designation befitting their expertise. Majority of 62.4% agreed that M & E skills play a key role in providing functional advice in the project implementation. Finally, a majority of 44.8% respondents were in disagreement that County government pays a lot of emphasis on qualifications of individuals during the recruitment process of M & E personnel. The mean and standard deviation of each item is presented in table 4.8 respectively. The mean score of monitoring and evaluation Technical Expertise was 3.836679 with standard deviation of 0.498682 thus indicating that Technical Expertise is moderately vital on projects at County government of Kirinyaga. This also suggest that the issue of monitoring and evaluation Technical Expertise was low and should be improved further to enhance implementation of county government projects.

The extent to which employees agreed with the statements were coded using the liker scale of

SD=strongly disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A = Agree SA= strongly agree,

Table 4 Monitoring & Evaluation Technical Expertise and Project Implementation

Project Implementation	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Standard deviation
M & E Technical Expertise is a huge determinant of how project's lessons learned are produced, communicated and perceived	17.3%	9.6%	23.3%	11.3%	38.5%	3.2426	.82859
M & E Experts in the project should be given clear job allocation and designation befitting their expertise.	34.5%	26.8%	20.9%	12.3%	5.5%	2.9589	.95893
M & E skills play a key role in providing functional advice in the project implementation.	17.3%	45.1%	18.6%	8.7%	10.3%	3.3660	.82420
The County government pays a lot of emphasis on qualifications of individuals during the recruitment process of M & E personnel.	8.6%	8.7%	38.5%	26.9%	17.3%	3.3660	.76847

Influence of Stakeholders Participation in M & E on Project Implementation

The study sought to determine how M & E stakeholder's participation influences project implementation at County government of Kirinyaga. From the respondents' responses on whether the stakeholders participate in the implementation of M & E, majority said yes and that they participate on a large extent on implementation of the project. Table 4.9 shows the rating of the various statements on influence of M & E stakeholder's participation on project implementation. The respondents were asked to respond on items reflecting on M & E Stakeholder's participation. From table 4.9, majority of 60.4% respondents agree that too much stakeholder involvement in M & E could lead to undue influence on the Project outcome at County government of Kirinyaga. Majority of 64.4% respondents were in disagreement that participation of stakeholders in M & E reflects the community needs and stimulate people's interest in the implementation of the project at County government of Kirinyaga. Finally, majority of 37.5% respondents were not so sure of whether County government of Kirinyaga community-based M&E framework reinforces the link between the project implementation and M & E. The mean and standard deviation of each item is presented in table 4.9 respectively. The mean score of M & E stakeholder's participation was 3.89872 with a standard deviation of 0.736735. The score of M & E stakeholder's participation is close to 3 and below among the independent variables. The respondents were asked about their opinion about improvement of knowledge after M & E stakeholder's participation program. They were of

opinion that stakeholders were expected to add more value to project implementation and that stakeholders' participation programs had a positive effect on both individual and county performance.

The extent to which employees agreed with the statements were coded using the liker scale of

SD=strongly disagree, D=Disagree, N=Neutral, A = Agree SA= strongly agree,

Table 5 Monitoring & Evaluation Stakeholders participation and Project Implementation

Project Implementation	SA	A	N	D	SD	Mean	Standard deviation
Too much stakeholder involvement in M & E could lead to undue influence on the Project outcome.	34.5%	25.9%	8.6%	18.6%	12.6%	2.8468	.70555
Participation of stakeholders in M & E reflects the community needs and stimulate people's interest in the implementation of the project.	8.6%	14.6%	18.2%	29.9%	34.5%	2.5574	.84725
Community-based M&E framework reinforces the link between the project implementation and M & E	11.6%	16.4%	37.5%	22.3%	12.2%	3.1191	.36200

Correlation Analysis: Relationships within the variables

Pearson rank correlation coefficients were computed for the various relationships in order to estimate the strength of the relationships between the constructs. Below are the hypotheses tested and the ensuing results.

The Research hypotheses

- i. H₀: There is no significant relationship between monitoring and evaluation planning and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government.
- H₁: There is significant relationship between Monitoring and evaluation planning and implementation of project in Kirinyaga County Government.

- ii. H₀: There is no significant relationship between funding for monitoring and evaluation and implementation of project in Kirinyaga County Government
H₁: There is significant relationship between funding for monitoring and evaluation and implementation of project in Kirinyaga County Government
- iii. H₀: There is no significant relationship between Technical Expertise for M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government.
H₁: There is significant relationship between Technical Expertise for M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government.
- iv. H₀: There is no significant relationship between Stakeholders' participation in M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government.
H₁: There is significant relationship between Stakeholders' participation in M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government

Table 6 Correlations between the independent and dependent variables
Correlations

		Monitoring and evaluation planning	Funding	Technical Expertise	Stakeholders' participation	Implementation of project
Monitoring and evaluation planning	Pearson Correlation	1	.669	.696	.612	.601
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
	N	95	95	95	95	95
Funding	Pearson Correlation	.669	1	.645	.621	.600
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000*		0.000*	0.000*	0.000*
	N	95	95	95	95	95
Technical Expertise	Pearson Correlation	.696	.645	1	.656	.644

	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000*	0.000*		0.000*	0.000*
	N	95	95	95	95	95
Stakeholders' participation	Pearson Correlation	.612	.621	.656	1	.676
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*		0.000*
	N	95	95	95		95
Implementation of project	Pearson Correlation	.601	.600	.644	.676	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	0.000*	
	N	95	95	95	95	95

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

Results from the correlation analysis revealed strong positive correlation between Monitoring and evaluation planning, Funding, Technical Expertise, Stakeholders' participation and Implementation of project. The correlation coefficients between Monitoring and evaluation planning, Funding, Technical Expertise, Stakeholders' participation and Implementation of project were; 0.601, 0.600, 0.644 and 0.676 respectively. These results indicate good positive correlation between the dependent and independent variables as they were significantly different from 0 since the p values < 0.05. However, all of them contribute differently with Stakeholders' participation in M & E contributing more to Implementation of project. On the basis of these, the hypotheses that:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Monitoring & evaluation planning and implementation of project in Kirinyaga County Government is hereby rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between funding for M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government is hereby rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Technical Expertise for M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government is hereby rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Stakeholders' participation in M & E and implementation of projects in Kirinyaga County Government is therefore rejected and the alternative hypothesis accepted.

It can therefore be deduced on the basis of these results that measures taken to improve Implementation of project that focus on enhancing the Monitoring and evaluation planning, funding, participation of stakeholders and Technical Expertise are significantly important. This also reveals that Implementation of project becomes less complicated and adequate in the County which can in turn increase the developments of County.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of Findings

Several factors of effective monitoring and evaluation of projects influences the seamless implementation of projects within the counties. It is therefore paramount for project implementers as well as other participants and stakeholders to have adequate knowledge of these aspects in order to give them due consideration right from the commencement of the implementation process. The M & E team and experts must understand the context of the and contents of M & E for various projects being undertaken. Failure to fully understand the M & E requirements may result in ineffective and inefficient results which might have a dire repercussion on the whole implementation process.

The study established that projects within the county usually have monitoring and evaluation plans which are mostly prepared at the proposal level through a participatory process by all stakeholders but also by experts on request. The study also found out that 43.1% of the respondents wants plan developed at the planning stage, 75% indicated that M & E should capture all project activities and be flexible. 37.5% of the respondents indicated they are not sure of the importance of putting in place the M & E plan before the project commence. The study established that there is a significant relationship between monitoring and evaluation planning and the implementation of project with a mean of 3.8987 and standard deviation of 0.7367 with Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.601.

The study revealed that funding for M & E activities in Kirinyaga County is usually 10% of the overall budget of the project though most of them were not sure if it is sufficient. However,

86.1% of the respondents pointed out that monitoring and evaluation should have adequate budgetary provision for effective implementation. 61.3% concurred that M & E funding must be carefully estimated and expenditure effectively monitored to avoid misappropriation for effective results. However, 82.2% of the respondents pointed out M & E funding planning should not be a pre requisite for approval of projects by the county government. The study showed a moderate relationship between monitoring and evaluation funding and the implementation of projects within Kirinyaga County with a mean score of 3.5732 and a standard deviation of 0.8788 with Pearson coefficient of 0.600. This is a pointer that funding for monitoring and evaluation activities is not to the optimal level for effective delivery of the M & E function and this negatively impacts on implementation of projects within the county.

The study found out that few of the respondents had knowledge of monitoring and evaluation while majority didn't have any M & E skills and they had not attended training and workshops on monitoring and evaluation. However most of the respondents agreed that the available M & E experts are adequately available for their roles. 49.8% of the respondents said that M & E expertise doesn't determine production and communication of project's lessons learned in Kirinyaga County. A majority of 61.3% support clear job allocation and designation of the M & E experts within the county while 62.4% of the respondents pointed out that monitoring and evaluation was vital for functional advisory role during project implementation. However, 44.8% did not support aspect of putting more emphasis on qualifications on recruiting M & E experts. The study showed a moderate relationship between monitoring and evaluation expertise and project implementation with a mean score 3.8367, standard deviation of .4987 and Pearson correlation of 0.644.

The study established that most stakeholders are usually incorporated in the implementation of Monitoring and Evaluation in projects within the county and they participate to a large extent. 60.4% of the respondents pointed out that excess stakeholder involvement in the M & E could lead to undue influence by the stakeholders thereby interfering with the project outcome. 64.4% of the respondents pointed out that participation of stakeholders in M & E does not reflect the needs and hence does not stimulate their interest. 37.5% of the respondents did not support or deny the fact that community based participation framework reinforces the link between M & E and project implementation. The study showed a moderately strong relation between stakeholders' participation in M & E and implementation of projects with a mean of 3.8987, standard deviation of 0.7367 and Pearson Correlation coefficient of 0.676.

Discussions

The study sought to determine the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation in the implementation of projects within the County Government of Kirinyaga. The first objective was to assess the influence of monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of projects. A hypothesis was set to establish if there was a relationship between monitoring and evaluation planning and project implementation. From the findings, there is a strong positive correlation between M & E planning and project implementation. The findings here agree with those of

Family Health International (2004) and Gyorkos (2003). The findings further indicate that the M & E plan should be developed at the early stages of projects which clearly agrees with Mugambi and Kanda (2013).

Second objective was to assess the extent to which Funding for Monitoring and Evaluation influences project implementation in the Kirinyaga County Government where test for relevant hypothesis was done. From the findings, it is clear that there is a positive relationship between funding for M & E and project implementation which is statistically significant. This is in tandem with the findings of Gyorkos (2003) and McCoy (2005) who argues that the budget and funding for monitoring and evaluation must be clearly defined and be enough for evaluation functions. This is however different from the findings of Mwangi, Nyang'wara & Ole Kulet who argued that funding for M & E moderately influences the overall project implementation process.

The third objective was to determine the influence of M & E technical expertise on the implementation of county government projects in Kirinyaga. A test of hypothesis was done on the same and it was clear that there is a positive relationship between M & E Technical Expertise and project implementation which is statistically significant. This is in congruence with the findings of Gladys et al (2010), Ramesh (2002) and Venessa & Gala (2011) whose findings considers technical expertise for M & E critical to the whole M & E function and resultantly on the project implementation.

The last objective was to assess the influence of stakeholders' participation in M & E on the implementation of the projects. From the review of the findings and the hypothesis tested, there is a strong relationship between stakeholders' participation in M & E and project implementation in Kirinyaga County and that there should be a proper management on the level of involvement of the stakeholders. This is in agreement with Davies (1998) and Verma (2008) who argued that over involvement of stakeholders in M & E may create unnecessary dominance which in turn may negatively influence the outcome of M & E hence the project implementation process.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions are made on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation on the implementation of county government projects within Kirinyaga County. Effective monitoring and evaluation is informed by various factors which work in collaboration to ensure successful implementation of projects. All the four aspects of effective Monitoring and evaluation that formed the independent variable have a bearing on the implementation of projects within the county. Project monitoring and evaluation plan was found to be very instrumental in the implementation of projects. Its preparation, which should be at the planning stages of the project, as well as the people involved in its preparation have been found to be crucial to its implementation and subsequently to the project implementation. The plan should be prepared by all stakeholders including the users and should contain all the activities that needs to be undertaken clearly outlined with the timing and persons responsible while giving

room for adjustment. Finally, the researcher concludes that there is need for the M & E plan to be communicated to all stakeholders and its importance emphasized.

On funding for monitoring and evaluation and its influence on project implementation, the researcher concludes that though there has been funding allocation to monitoring and evaluation function within Kirinyaga County, the same has not been adequate for effective delivery. Implementation of projects depends on effective monitoring and evaluation which is greatly influenced by the level of funding for M & E. The funds for M & E despite being estimated for every project, have not always been enough and no proper monitoring of expenditure has been ensured by the county officials.

Monitoring and evaluation expertise are key to the operationalization of monitoring and evaluation function for a successful delivery of a project. Despite the presence of experts in Monitoring and evaluation, the knowledge of monitoring and evaluation within Kirinya County government employees and stakeholders still remains scanty. Most of the employees and other stakeholders have not attended workshops and seminars on monitoring and evaluation which affects the quality of monitoring and evaluation outcome consequently influencing the project implementation and outcome. Project monitoring and evaluation experts should be given clear job allocation in their areas of specialization and should provide advisory role to the functional lines of the project organization for successful implementation.

Stakeholders' participation in monitoring and evaluation has a great bearing on implementation of projects within Kirinyaga County. All stakeholders must be identified as early as possible and brought on board at the planning stages to avoid conflict as the project is being implemented. This also incorporates them in the planning for the M & E function which informs their participation as the plan for M & E is implemented. Stakeholders should not be given excess powers in the monitoring and evaluation function and only those who are key to the project should be involved. Participatory framework is key for implementation of projects within Kirinyaga County.

Finally, the monitoring and evaluation system should be monitored periodically and reviewed with improvements. Monitoring should only be done on what is sufficient and necessary for a particular project management and accountability. Only information of interest should be gathered and evaluated for decision making to save resources and time hence timely implementation of projects within the county of Kirinyaga.

Recommendations

Following the findings of the study, the researcher recommends as follows:

1. The County Government to ensure that all projects have monitoring and evaluation plans at the onset which must be prepared through a participatory process. Key stakeholders to be

involved in the preparation of the plan and proper communication of the plan and its importance be done.

2. The County government of Kirinyaga to ensure adequacy and proper management of the funds allocated for Monitoring and evaluation to avoid shortages due to misappropriation. This can be done by appointing a qualified finance manager to specifically manage the funds for the M & E function of the County.
3. The County government of Kirinyaga to expand the expertise base for monitoring and evaluation to allow for efficient and effective delivery of the monitoring and evaluation function. Also, several workshops and seminar should be organized by the county government to update their M & E experts on emerging issues in the field of M & E as well as introducing the concept of M & E to other employees and stakeholders.
4. Stakeholders' participation should be controlled effectively by developing a system of identifying and managing the stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation function. Only key stakeholders to be involved to a large extent while other stakeholders should be kept informed.

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