



Article History
Received: 2024-01-05
Accepted: 2024-06-20
Published: 2024-07-24

Issue no: 1 | Vol no: 6 | July 2024:8-20

Influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia

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Cite this article in APA

Mohamud, A. A., & Nyandoro, K. (2024). Influence of monitoring and evaluation practices on the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. *Editon consortium of journal of economics and development studies*, 6(1), 8-20. <https://doi.org/10.51317/ecjeds.v6i1.507>

Abstract

This study investigated the influence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices on the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. The research addressed significant challenges in water project sustainability, exacerbated by climatic and socio-economic factors in the region. Utilising a descriptive research design, data were collected through questionnaires administered to 132 participants involved in 250 water projects across Kismayu. The analysis combined qualitative content analysis with quantitative methods, processed using SPSS software. The results indicate that stakeholder engagement, appropriate M&E expenditure, and timely execution of M&E activities are critical to the sustainability of these community water projects. Stakeholder involvement was found to enhance project oversight and decision-making, while adequate funding for M&E activities ensured comprehensive monitoring and evaluation processes. Timely M&E activities allowed for early identification of issues and prompt corrective actions, thereby improving project outcomes. The study concluded that robust M&E practices are essential for the long-term sustainability of donor-funded water projects. By providing detailed insights into the effective implementation of M&E strategies, the research offers valuable recommendations for enhancing the impact and durability of similar initiatives in other regions facing comparable challenges. Strengthening stakeholder involvement, ensuring sufficient funding for M&E activities and adhering to scheduled timelines are recommended to optimise project sustainability and success. These results contribute to the broader discourse on sustainable development and provide practical guidance for policymakers, non-governmental organisations, and other stakeholders involved in community water projects.

Key words: Community projects, monitoring and evaluation, project sustainability, stakeholder engagement, water management.



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INTRODUCTION

The imperative for ensuring the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia, stems from the pressing global need to address water insecurity and promote equitable access to clean water sources. With over 663 million people worldwide lacking access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities, achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 has become paramount (UNICEF & WHO, 2015). Somalia's exceptional water scarcity, coupled with environmental fragility and socio-economic challenges, underscores the urgency of enhancing the region's resource management and water security (UNDP, 2009). The World Bank Group's estimation that only 32% of Somalia's population has access to improved water supply highlights the critical nature of the issue (UNDP, 2009).

Effective project management, particularly in the realm of community water projects, relies heavily on robust monitoring and evaluation (M&E) mechanisms to ensure accountability and performance improvement (IFRC, 2011). The adoption of comprehensive M&E methodologies, as demonstrated in countries like Spain, France, and China, has proven instrumental in driving sustainable outcomes across various sectors (Mrosek et al., 2006; Roger & Tim, 2008; Angus & Mohammed, 2014). These experiences underscore the significance of structured M&E frameworks in tracking progress, optimising resource allocation, and aligning project objectives with broader sustainability goals.

However, in developing nations like Somalia, the sustainability of water projects faces multifaceted challenges, including inadequate infrastructure maintenance, limited local capacity building, and insufficient resources beyond the initial funding period (Khan, 2012). Studies conducted across various African nations emphasise the importance of community involvement, financial mechanisms, and institutional management practices in ensuring project viability and long-term success (Habtamu, 2021; Jansz, 2011). Additionally, the absence of sustainable financial mechanisms and community engagement poses significant challenges to the long-term success of water projects (Gatari et al., 2016).

The precarious sustainability status of water projects in Africa, as highlighted by Habtamu (2021), underscores the need for further research into the determinants of project viability in rural areas. Insights gleaned from studies such as Jansz (2011) shed light on critical factors affecting sustainability, including community involvement and financial support. Moreover, Gatari's et al. (2016) examination of water project sustainability in Rwanda offers valuable insights into the interconnected nature of factors influencing project outcomes and highlights the need for integrated strategies.

In conclusion, ensuring the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia, requires comprehensive and proactive monitoring and evaluation practices. By adopting evidence-based approaches and leveraging lessons learned from global experiences, stakeholders can enhance project outcomes, promote equitable access to clean water, and contribute to the broader goal of sustainable development in the region.

The imperative to ensure the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia, arises from the urgent global need to address water insecurity and promote equitable access to clean water sources. With over 663 million people worldwide lacking access to improved water sources and sanitation facilities, achieving Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 6 has become paramount (UNICEF & WHO, 2015). Somalia's exceptional water scarcity, exacerbated by environmental fragility and socio-economic challenges, underscores the urgency of enhancing the region's resource management and water security (UNDP, 2009). The World Bank Group estimates that only 32% of Somalia's population has access to improved water supply, highlighting the critical nature of the issue (UNDP, 2009).

Kismayu, situated in southeastern Somalia, is particularly relevant for this study due to its unique climatic challenges, including seasonal monsoons and recurrent droughts, which pose formidable barriers to sustainable water project management. This location provides a valuable case study for examining the effectiveness of monitoring and

evaluation (M&E) practices in such a challenging environment. The study aims to provide unique insights into how stakeholder engagement, M&E expenditure, and timely execution of M&E activities influence the sustainability of water projects in Kismayu. By focusing on this specific locale, the research aims to offer practical recommendations that can be applied to similar contexts globally, thereby contributing to the broader goal of sustainable development.

Effective project management, particularly in the realm of community water projects, heavily relies on robust M&E mechanisms to ensure accountability and performance improvement (IFRC, 2011). The adoption of comprehensive M&E methodologies, as demonstrated in countries like Spain, France, and China, has proven instrumental in driving sustainable outcomes across various sectors (Mrosek et al., 2006; Roger & Tim, 2008; Angus & Mohammed, 2014). These experiences underscore the significance of structured M&E frameworks in tracking progress, optimising resource allocation, and aligning project objectives with broader sustainability goals. However, in developing nations like Somalia, the sustainability of water projects faces multifaceted challenges, including inadequate infrastructure maintenance, limited local capacity building, and insufficient resources beyond the initial funding period (Khan, 2012). Studies conducted across various African nations emphasise the importance of community involvement, financial mechanisms, and institutional management practices in ensuring project viability and long-term success (Habtamu, 2021; Jansz, 2011). Additionally, the absence of sustainable financial mechanisms and community engagement poses significant challenges to the long-term success of water projects (Gatari et al., 2016).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Influence of Stakeholder Involvement in M&E on the Sustainability of Donor Funded Community Projects

Globally, stakeholder involvement in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices has been recognised as a critical factor in the sustainability and success of development projects. Studies from various countries demonstrate that early and continuous engagement of stakeholders, particularly beneficiaries, enhances

project outcomes by leveraging local knowledge and ensuring community buy-in (Chambers, 2009; Jones, 2011). For instance, in India, community participation in water projects significantly improved resource mobilisation and project sustainability (Proudlock, 2009). This global perspective underscores the importance of involving stakeholders at every stage of the project lifecycle to foster ownership and accountability.

In the African context, the impact of stakeholder involvement in M&E practices is equally pronounced. Effective stakeholder engagement has been shown to contribute to better project performance by facilitating the gathering and sharing of crucial information, thus allowing for informed decision-making and problem solving (Mbaabu, 2012). In Rwanda, for example, the inclusion of local communities in the M&E processes of water projects led to enhanced project sustainability and efficiency (Gatari et al., 2016). These examples highlight the pivotal role of stakeholder participation in ensuring that projects are responsive to the priorities and necessities of the communities they serve, thereby increasing their chances of long-term success.

In Somalia, the relevance of stakeholder involvement in M&E is particularly significant given the country's unique challenges. The socio-economic and environmental fragility of Somalia, compounded by a history of inadequate infrastructure and limited local capacity, necessitates a robust approach to stakeholder engagement. Effective M&E practices that actively involve stakeholders can address these difficulties by fostering a sense of ownership and commitment among local communities (Habtamu, 2021; Jansz, 2011). This approach not only enhances the sustainability of donor-funded projects but also ensures that the projects are aligned with the local context and needs.

Focusing on Kismayu, the study area, stakeholder involvement in M&E practices has been shown to positively impact the sustainability of water projects. Kismayu's climatic challenges, such as seasonal monsoons and recurrent droughts, require adaptive and responsive project management strategies. By involving stakeholders in the M&E processes, project managers can gather valuable insights and

feedback that help in fine-tuning project implementation to address these climatic adversities (Mbaabu, 2012). Furthermore, specific case studies from Kisumu have demonstrated that projects with high levels of stakeholder participation are more likely to achieve their objectives and maintain their operations beyond the initial funding period (Gatari et al., 2016).

Influence of M&E Costs on the Sustainability of Donor Funded Community Projects

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) costs play a crucial role in ensuring the sustainability of donor-funded community projects, with adequate financial resources being essential for project success and longevity (Bruijn, 2007). Fragmented monitoring practices have historically led to accountability issues and unreliable performance data due to a lack of integration with project budgets (McCoy, 2005). To address these challenges, it is imperative to allocate sufficient funds for M&E activities within the overall project budget, thereby optimising project monitoring and evaluation functions (Gyorkos, 2003; Kamau et al., 2017).

Effective project management relies on proper financial allocation for M&E activities, as highlighted by McCoy (2005), who emphasises the necessity of sufficient funding to manage critical aspects such as information systems and training. Conversely, inadequate M&E costs can hinder project progress and impede economic growth, as demonstrated by Lee et al. (2007) in their research conducted in Kenya. Clear delineation of M&E costs within project budgets is crucial for optimising M&E functions and ensuring project success (Kamau et al., 2017).

Internal control mechanisms also play a pivotal role in shaping M&E costs and project performance, with deficient controlling environments potentially leading to adverse effects on M&E costs and project outcomes (Mohamed, 2018). Establishing robust internal controls is essential to streamline M&E processes, enhance resource allocation, and improve project effectiveness and sustainability (Mohamed, 2018). By implementing rigorous internal controls, organisations can mitigate risks and enhance

decision-making processes, ultimately contributing to the overall success of their projects.

Furthermore, decentralised M&E systems have been widely adopted to enhance accountability and transparency in project management, with countries like Canada leading the way in cultivating a "monitoring culture" characterised by results-based orientation and managerial accountability (Lahey, 2012; Klingebiel & Rammer, 2011). Decentralised approaches enable more accurate data collection and analysis by empowering local stakeholders and allocating resources efficiently (Lahey, 2012). By institutionalising M&E systems and adopting decentralised approaches, organisations can harness the collective expertise and resources of diverse stakeholders to drive project effectiveness and achieve sustainable development outcomes.

Influence of M&E Timelines on the Sustainability of Donor Funded Community Projects

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) timelines significantly influence the sustainability of donor-funded community projects by providing opportunities for informed decision-making and minimising wastage of time and resources through corrective actions during project implementation (Vanessa & Gala, 2011). Proactively scheduling and planning M&E activities allow project managers to identify issues promptly and take timely corrective measures, ensuring smooth project progress towards its objectives. Projects that prioritise good time management practices tend to achieve greater success compared to those with weak time management practices, as they can effectively handle unexpected delays and setbacks (Jones et al., 2012).

The duration of project implementation relative to its timeline is crucial for assessing project efficiency and effectiveness (Peterson & Fisher, 2009). Efficient project management requires striking a balance between adhering to project timelines and ensuring swift project implementation without compromising quality or objectives (Bredillet, 2006). Construction firms, particularly those in the energy sector, emphasise the importance of strict adherence to timelines facilitated by efficient procurement processes and timely availability of finances (Kariungi, 2014). However, project efficiency should

not overshadow the need to align projects with strategic objectives and provide desired outcomes (Berssaneti & Carvalho, 2015).

Competence in M&E is a critical factor in ensuring efficient project monitoring and evaluation processes (Sharma et al., 2013). Staff with the necessary skills and training are essential for effective M&E implementation (Amadi, 2014). In addition to technical capacity, proper job allocation and support for field staff contribute to successful project monitoring and evaluation (Vanessa & Gala, 2011). While organisations prioritise staff competence to drive operational growth, the specific relationship between competence and M&E performance requires further exploration (Emeti, 2015). Understanding the interplay between staff competence and M&E outcomes is essential for enhancing project sustainability and success in donor-funded community projects.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework guiding this study encompasses three main theories: the Theory of Change, the Realistic Evaluation Theory, and the Stakeholders' Engagement Theory. Each of these frameworks offers unique insights into how monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices can influence the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects.

The Theory of Change, developed by Kurt Lewin in 1947, posits that change is a process requiring careful planning and the unfreezing of existing systems within organisations (Alvesson & Sveningsson, 2015). This theory is especially useful for understanding the dynamics of stakeholder engagement and M&E costs in the context of water project sustainability. It emphasises the need for organisations to adapt to rapid changes by altering their structures and processes to enhance sustainability. By applying this theory, the study aims to elucidate how stakeholder involvement and effective allocation of M&E resources can drive sustainable outcomes in water projects.

Realistic Evaluation Theory, introduced by Pawson and Tilley in 1997, focuses on understanding the mechanisms by which project outcomes are

achieved, considering both contextual factors and project interventions (Pawson & Tilley, 2004). This theory views projects as dynamic systems influenced by various internal and external factors, providing a comprehensive framework for examining how M&E practices affect project sustainability. It helps to identify the specific conditions under which M&E activities are most effective, thereby offering insights into the tailored strategies that can be employed to enhance the success of water projects in Kismayu and similar settings.

Stakeholders' Engagement Theory, articulated by Freeman in 1984, underscores the importance of managing stakeholders' interests and rights within organisations (Wicks & Harrison, 2015). This theory highlights the diverse range of stakeholders involved in projects and the need for strategic management to ensure project success. In the context of community water projects, this theory is crucial for understanding how different stakeholders, from local community members to international donors, can be effectively engaged to support project goals. By focusing on the relationships between project managers and stakeholders, the study aims to demonstrate how stakeholder participation can lead to improved project outcomes and sustainability.

These theoretical frameworks collectively provide a robust foundation for examining the influence of M&E practices on the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects. The Theory of Change offers insights into the planning and adaptation processes, the Realistic Evaluation Theory provides a mechanism-based understanding of project outcomes, and the Stakeholders' Engagement Theory emphasises the strategic management of stakeholder relationships. Together, these theories help to comprehensively address the complexities of ensuring sustainable water projects in Kismayu, Somalia.

Gaps in the Literature

A notable gap in the existing research lies in the exploration of the integration of stakeholders' involvement and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices within project management frameworks. While there is recognition of the importance of stakeholders' contributions in decision-making

processes and the allocation of funds for M&E activities, there is a lack of comprehensive studies examining how these two aspects intersect to enhance project success. Existing literature primarily focuses on either stakeholder engagement or M&E practices separately, overlooking the potential synergies that could arise from their integration. Understanding how stakeholders' inputs gathered through public participation channels can inform and optimise M&E activities within project budgets is essential for improving project accountability, performance monitoring, and the achievement of sustainable outcomes (Mbaabu, 2012). Therefore, future research efforts should aim to bridge this gap by investigating the mechanisms through which stakeholders' involvement can be effectively integrated into M&E frameworks to enhance project performance and sustainability.

Additionally, there is a need for research that delves deeper into the practical implementation of monitoring and evaluation processes within organisations, particularly in the context of government performance monitoring. While the literature highlights the fragmented nature of government monitoring practices and emphasises the importance of allocating sufficient funds for M&E activities within project budgets, there is limited empirical evidence on the actual strategies and best practices for achieving this integration. Studies often provide recommendations based on theoretical frameworks without offering concrete examples or case studies illustrating successful implementation strategies. Therefore, there is a gap in research that explores real-world examples of how organisations can effectively allocate resources for M&E purposes and integrate monitoring practices into broader project management frameworks to enhance accountability, performance, and sustainability (Bruijn, 2007; Gyorkos, 2003; McCoy, 2005). Closing this gap would provide valuable insights for policymakers, project managers, and organisations seeking to improve their M&E practices and achieve better project outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology adopted in this study reflects a comprehensive approach designed to assess the influence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

practices on the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. A descriptive research design was employed to systematically examine and elucidate the factors affecting project sustainability. This design is particularly suited for providing an accurate depiction of the characteristics, actions, and trends associated with M&E practices (Kothari, 2007).

Data were collected using a combination of closed and open-ended questionnaires administered to 132 participants involved in 250 water projects across Kismayu. The mixed-methods approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative data collection techniques, ensured a nuanced understanding of the subject matter (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions provided detailed insights into participants' perspectives and experiences, while the quantitative data from closed-ended questions allowed for statistical analysis and trend identification.

The sampling procedure followed the guidelines outlined by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), which recommend a sample size that exceeds the minimum threshold required for meaningful results. This approach ensures robust and representative data collection, facilitating comprehensive analysis. Participants were selected from various districts in Kismayu to capture a wide range of insights and perspectives, enhancing the generalisability of the findings (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

Data analysis involved both qualitative content analysis and quantitative processing using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics, such as means, variations, and percentages, were used to summarise and present the quantitative data. The qualitative data were analysed thematically, identifying recurring themes and patterns that provided a deeper understanding (Chatterjee & Hadi, 2015). This combination of analytical techniques allowed for a comprehensive examination of the influence of M&E practices on project sustainability, offering valuable insights for enhancing the effectiveness of donor-funded community water projects in similar contexts.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The subsequent section presents the outcomes of the investigation, encompassing the response rate and socio-demographic profiles of the study participants. Additionally, a descriptive examination is presented for each research objective, offering insights into the observed trends and patterns within the collected data.

Influence of Stakeholder Involvement in M&E on the Performance of Donor-Funded Community Projects in Kismayu, Somalia

The findings from the study on the influence of stakeholder participation in monitoring and evaluation (M&E) on water projects in Kismayu, Somalia, revealed multifaceted insights into stakeholders' perceptions and opinions. Figure 1 visually represents the data, illustrating respondents' perspectives on various aspects of stakeholder involvement in project M&E.

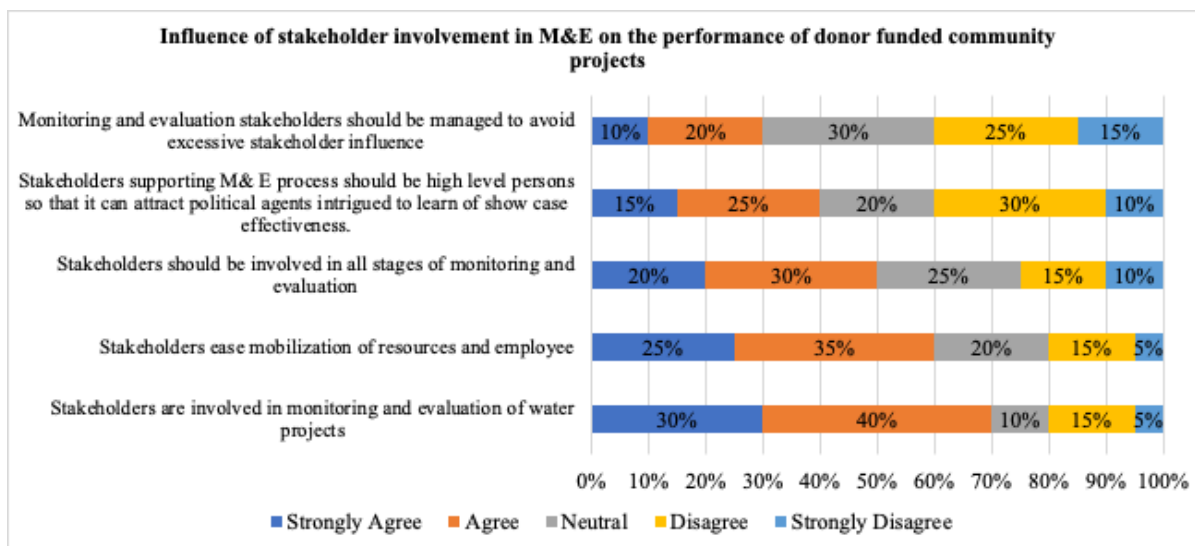


Figure 1: Percentages of Stakeholder Involvement in M&E

Firstly, the majority of respondents acknowledged stakeholders' active involvement in monitoring and evaluation activities, with 70 per cent either strongly agreeing or agreeing to their participation, highlighting the positive contribution of stakeholders in project oversight and decision-making. This aligns with existing literature emphasising the significance of stakeholder engagement in enhancing project effectiveness (Mbaabu, 2012; Chambers, 2009).

Secondly, stakeholders were perceived to play a crucial role in resource mobilisation and employee engagement, as indicated by 60 per cent of respondents either strongly agreeing or agreeing with this statement. However, a notable proportion expressed neutrality or disagreement, reflecting some ambiguity or divergence in opinions regarding the extent of stakeholders' influence in these areas (Shepard & Gonzalez, 2004; Jones, 2011). This

suggests a need for further exploration and clarification of stakeholders' roles in resource mobilisation within water projects.

Thirdly, while there was a consensus on the importance of stakeholder involvement throughout the monitoring and evaluation process, opinions were somewhat divided. Approximately 50 per cent of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that stakeholders should be engaged in all stages of M&E, while others expressed neutrality or disagreement. This underscores the complexity of determining the optimal level of stakeholder participation and calls for additional discussions and consensus-building efforts (Holmes & Moir, 2009; Patton, 2008).

Fourthly, views diverged concerning the necessity of high-level stakeholders' support in attracting political

agents interested in project effectiveness. While some respondents recognised this as important, others expressed scepticism or disagreement. This reflects varying perspectives on the role of high-level stakeholders in shaping external perceptions of project performance and highlights the need for nuanced strategies in engaging different stakeholder groups (Gorgens & Kusek, 2010).

Lastly, opinions varied on managing stakeholder influence in M&E activities, underscoring the challenge of balancing stakeholder involvement with avoiding excessive influence. While some respondents advocated for management of stakeholder influence, others expressed dissenting views. This indicates the importance of carefully navigating stakeholder dynamics to ensure effective project oversight while mitigating potential risks associated with undue influence (Eyiah-Botwe et al., 2015; Gray, 2001).

In conclusion, the findings underscore the pivotal role of stakeholder involvement in water project performance while highlighting the diversity and complexity of perspectives on the extent and management of stakeholder engagement in monitoring and evaluation processes. Further research and dialogue are warranted to foster a deeper understanding of stakeholder dynamics and inform the development of strategies for maximising stakeholder contributions to project sustainability and effectiveness.

Influence of M&E Costs on the Performance of Donor-Funded Community Projects in Kismayu, Somalia

The examination of the influence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) costs on project performance within donor-funded community projects in Kismayu, Somalia, shed light on various facets of financial management and resource allocation. Figure 2 visually represents respondents' insights on four key statements related to M&E costs and their impact. Firstly, the majority of respondents concurred on the significance of prompt payment for M&E staff, with 70 per cent either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement. This overwhelming consensus underscores the crucial role of timely remuneration in bolstering project performance and ensuring the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation processes (McCoy, 2005; Mohamed M, 2018).

Secondly, discussions surrounding the timing of M&E costs revealed a general acknowledgement of the importance of integrating these expenses during the project planning phase. While 60 per cent of respondents expressed agreement with this notion, divergent views were apparent, emphasising the need for further clarity and consensus-building efforts to enhance project outcomes and optimise resource allocation (Gyorkos, 2003).

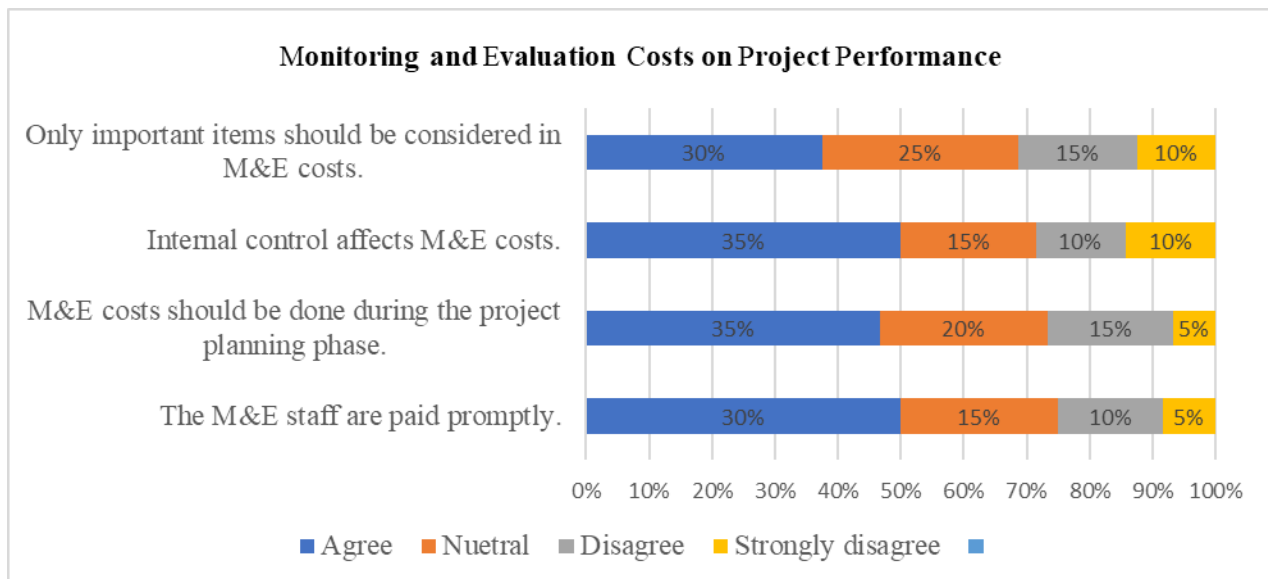


Figure 2: Percentage of M&E Costs

Thirdly, the influence of internal control mechanisms on M&E costs emerged as a critical consideration, with a significant proportion of respondents recognising the impact of effective internal controls in managing expenditures. However, the presence of dissenting opinions highlights the complexity of internal control dynamics and the necessity for tailored approaches to mitigate its influence on M&E costs (Bruijn, 2007; Harris, 2014).

Lastly, discussions on the inclusion of items in M&E costs underscored the importance of prioritisation and selective inclusion to optimise resource allocation. While a majority of respondents agreed on the importance of considering only essential items, variations in opinions suggest the need for clear guidelines and criteria to streamline cost considerations and enhance the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation activities (Lee et al., 2007; Klingebiel & Rammer, 2011).

In summary, the findings emphasise the pivotal role of effective financial management practices and clear guidelines in optimising resource allocation and enhancing project performance in donor-funded community projects in Kismayu, Somalia. While there is general agreement on certain aspects, such as prompt payment for M&E staff, divergent views exist regarding the timing and scope of cost

considerations, highlighting the complexity of financial decision-making in project management. These insights underscore the importance of ongoing dialogue and collaboration among stakeholders to ensure efficient resource utilisation and sustainable project outcomes.

Influence of M&E Timelines on the Performance of Donor-Funded Community Projects in Kismayu, Somalia

The investigation into the influence of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) timelines on project performance within donor-funded community projects in Kismayu, Somalia, revealed significant insights into project management and execution dynamics. Figure 3 visually encapsulates respondents' perspectives on four key statements related to M&E timelines and their impact on project outcomes. Firstly, a substantial majority of respondents agreed on the importance of initiating projects promptly according to the predetermined schedule. This consensus underscores the critical role of adhering to project initiation timelines in positively influencing water project performance (Kariungi, 2014). Moreover, the relatively low levels of disagreement suggest a shared understanding among respondents regarding the significance of prompt project initiation in achieving project success.

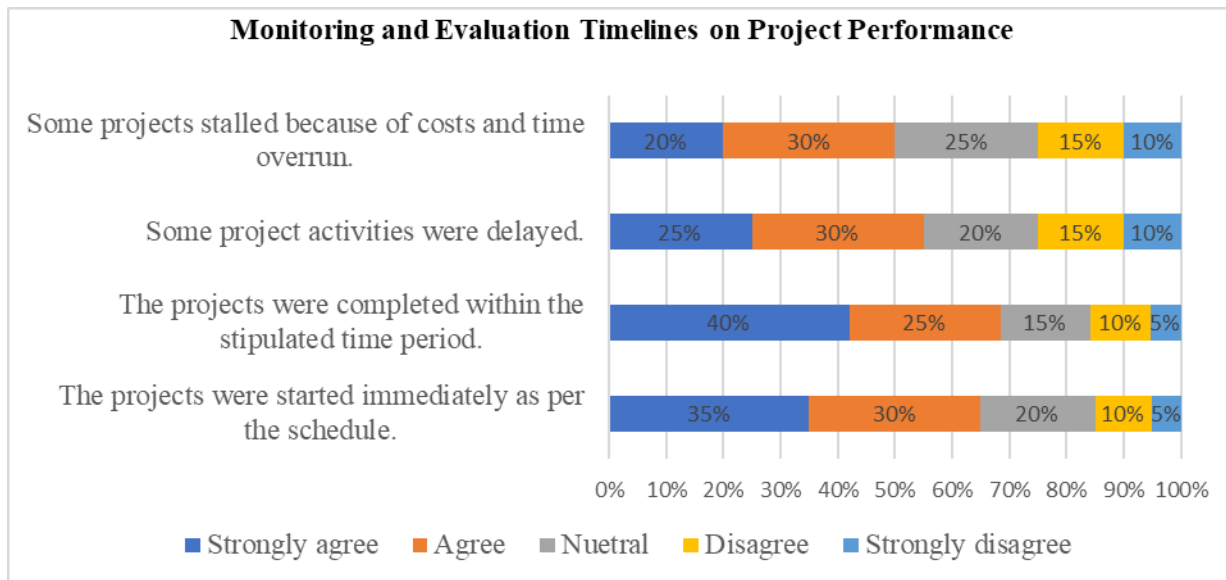


Figure 3: Percentage of M&E Timelines

Secondly, discussions surrounding the timely completion of projects echoed similar sentiments, with a majority of respondents emphasising the importance of adhering to project completion timelines. This consensus underscores the pivotal role of timely project completion in ensuring project success and sustainability (Bredillet, 2006). However, the presence of disagreement suggests the need for further exploration and discussion on factors contributing to project completion timelines, indicating potential areas for improvement in project management practices.

Thirdly, the prevalence of delays in project activities emerged as a significant concern, with a notable proportion of respondents acknowledging the challenges faced in adhering to project timelines. This consensus highlights the need to identify and address factors contributing to delays to ensure efficient project execution (Vanessa & Gala, 2011). However, the presence of differing views underscores the multifaceted nature of managing project timelines effectively, emphasising the importance of proactive measures and strategic interventions.

Lastly, discussions on project stalling due to costs and time overruns shed light on the detrimental impact of such occurrences on project progress and sustainability. While there was general agreement on the adverse effects of cost and time overruns, diverse opinions existed regarding the extent of their impact on project stalling (Jones et al., 2012). These findings underscore the importance of effective project management practices, timely decision-making and proactive measures to ensure adherence to project timelines and mitigate the risks of delays and stalling, ultimately contributing to the success and sustainability of donor-funded community projects in Kismayu, Somalia.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion: In conclusion, this study underscores the pivotal role of effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in enhancing the sustainability of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. The findings highlight that active stakeholder involvement, adequate M&E funding, and adherence to M&E timelines are crucial factors that significantly influence project outcomes. Stakeholder engagement ensures that projects are

responsive to community needs, while proper financial management and timely execution of M&E activities help in minimising delays and cost overruns. By implementing these strategies, policymakers and project managers can improve the effectiveness and longevity of water projects, contributing to sustainable development in Kismayu and similar regions.

Recommendations: The recommendations provided offer actionable strategies to improve the performance of donor-funded community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. Firstly, promoting and enhancing stakeholder participation is crucial for fostering community ownership and ensuring project sustainability. By actively involving stakeholders in monitoring and assessment activities through clear communication channels and inclusive decision-making processes, organisations can harness local knowledge and resources, leading to more effective project implementation and long-term impact. Furthermore, defining clear roles and responsibilities for stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle helps mitigate ambiguity and enhances collaboration, ultimately contributing to improved project outcomes. By establishing transparent guidelines for stakeholder engagement, organisations can ensure that each stakeholder understands their contributions and commitments, leading to a more cohesive and coordinated approach to project management. Moreover, strengthening internal control mechanisms and fostering resource mobilisation are essential for optimising project performance. Robust internal control measures ensure transparency and accountability in cost management, minimising the risk of budget overruns and delays. By implementing processes for monitoring and evaluating cost components and enhancing compliance with financial procedures, organisations can streamline project operations and maximise resource utilisation. Additionally, fostering partnerships and collaborations with stakeholders facilitates resource mobilisation, ensuring adequate funding and support for water projects. Exploring opportunities for public-private partnerships and leveraging stakeholder networks can provide additional financial resources and technical expertise, enhancing the sustainability and impact of community water projects in Kismayu, Somalia. Overall, these recommendations emphasise the importance of stakeholder engagement, effective resource management, and strategic partnerships in

achieving sustainable development goals and | improving water access in the region.

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