MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF DISEASE-SPECIFIC HEALTH PROJECTS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA

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MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEMS AND THE PERFORMANCE OF DISEASE-SPECIFIC HEALTH PROJECTS IN HOMA BAY COUNTY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of monitoring and evaluation systems on the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study employed descriptive research design. The target population for this study was the stakeholders of disease specific health projects in Homa Bay County. In order to arrive at the number of respondents, the researcher applied the principle of saturation point. On the other hand, qualitative data was gathered from other stakeholders such as the County Health officers, NGOs implementing HIV/AIDS projects and health experts. Data collected from the semi-structured questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. On the other hand, the qualitative data collected was analyzed using content analysis. The study found that M&E output, efficiency and sustainability had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study concluded that outputs in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are tangible products or services produced as a result of program or project activities. Monitoring and evaluation is a way of improving efficiency and effectiveness of a project, by providing the management and stakeholders with project progressive development and achievement of its objectives within the allocated funds. Sustaining the M&E system recognizes the long-term process involved in ensuring the longevity and utility of an M&E system which involves demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, incentives and capacity. The study recommended that the organization should identify specific and measurable indicators to measure outputs so that progress towards achieving outputs can be tracked over time. Ensure indicators are achievable based on available resources and capacity. The organization should ensure adequate skilled staff and financial resources are available for the development of an effective M&E system. The organization should consider the opportunities and threats for its sustainability performance and impact, such as changing contexts, expectations, or regulations and then update and refine its process accordingly, and plan for continuous improvement and learning.

Key Words: *Monitoring and Evaluation Systems, Health, Disease*

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INTRODUCTION

The targets of public health actions have expanded exponentially in the past decade. Public health targets have also gone beyond infectious diseases and now encompass chronic diseases, emerging pathogens and also social contexts that influence health disparities. This has complicated the monitoring and evaluating (M&E) process of public health intervention projects especially primary health care in the rural areas where populations are disadvantaged and vulnerable. Scholars note that monitoring and evaluation of primary health care interventions in order to determine their effectiveness, output and outcomes highly depend on the information system's capacity to generate reliable and relevant data for consumption by different levels of decision makers especially at the community level (Koplan, 1999).

Monitoring and evaluation has become an increasingly important dimension of global health projects (Feachem and Sabot, 2007). The absence of M&E activities and the ineffective implementation of performance-based funding models ruin the implementation of projects and the main aims set at the onset. It becomes difficult or even impossible to achieve high standards set by high performing projects. It is also noted that M&E systems improve the quality of decision-making. Further, it enhances efficiency, serves as an anticorruption mechanism and lastly, builds the capacity for understanding projects success (Basinga et al., 2011).

Monitoring and evaluation has been critical in the performance of intervention projects. In Rwanda for instance, a study examining the linkage between monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices and public projects performance in Rwanda with reference to Science and Technology Skills Development (STSD) project pointed out that there is a correlation between monitoring and evaluation plan to action and strategic plans with a project's efficiency, completion timeline and cost effectiveness (Muhayimana, & Kamuhanda, 2020). Conversely, in Nigeria, the failure of the Nigeria National Response Management Information System (NNRIMS) to effectively monitor and evaluate the country's response to HIV has been linked to the nascent nature of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) sub-systems within many institutions (Ogungbemi, et al., 2012).

In Kenya, challenges have been acknowledged in not only the implementation but also in monitoring and evaluation of maternal health and health related projects. Some of the mentioned areas that have led to failure to deliver intended objectives include supervision, auditing, human resource capacity, databases, and research and surveillance (Micah and Luketero, 2017). These, among other challenges, have affected the output, effectiveness and sustainability of health related projects in the country. Therefore, this study intends to focus on disease health projects, which is a critical area of human development.

In measuring public health project performance, contemporary public health emphasizes a community-based approach to health promotion and disease prevention. However, many community-based programs have had only modest impact. Most notably, HIV prevention programs have been an exception. According to Merzel, and D'Afflitti (2003), the effectiveness of HIV programs appears to be related to extensive formative research and an emphasis on changing social norms. It is no wonder then that current trends in the field of health promotion emphasize community-based programs employing multiple interventions as the main strategy for achieving population-level change in risk behaviors and health. Another source of success for the HIV health projects emanate from the use of an ecological model that is based on the premise that an individual's behavior is shaped by a dynamic interaction with the social environment, which includes influences at the interpersonal, organizational, community, and policy levels. As such, quality can only be assured through a health project that emphasizes a social environmental approach to health promotion interventions.

To Santos, et al. (2014), public health projects have a different focus since they are primarily concerned

with the provision of conditions in which people can be healthy, and are essential for populations' welfare. In their examination of the model of success factors that would strengthen the factors that create value, Santos, et al. (2014) find that desirable public health quality would and should be pegged on the identification and mitigation of health problems and priorities, the resolution of identified local and national health problems and priorities, to assure that all populations have access to appropriate and cost-effective care, including health promotion and disease prevention services (Santos, et al., 2014).

As such, Naidoo (2017) argues that as a system, monitoring and evaluation is the continuous checking of the project in question in order to ensure that the overall goals will be met. This is geared towards preventing the project's implementing agency from reaching the end of the year, project or contractual period and realizing that none of the given project's objectives have been met. The import of the monitoring and evaluation systems is that as continuous monitoring takes place, corrective action can be taken where necessary.

A viable monitoring and evaluation system must entail a planning component that outlines the framework for the entire project monitoring and evaluation process as well as determine the objectives and indicators of the evaluation process. In addition, the monitoring and evaluation must outline the organizational structures that map out the data collection process, the analysis and synthesis of the data to determine the action to be taken as well as the documentation, reporting and sharing of information (Aklil, 2018).

Homa Bay County is one of the 47 counties in Kenya. This County has a population of 1,101,901 with 48% being males while 52% are females. The HIV prevalence in Homa Bay County is 4.5 times higher than the national prevalence rate of 26.0% (NACC, 2018). HIV prevalence in women is higher than men, which shows women are more vulnerable. The County by 2014 was one of the high HIV incidence counties with 16,597 new infections. Of the 16,597 new infections, 27.4% were children below 14 years and young people aged between 15 and 24 years. In addition, the proportion of HIV positive pregnant women who are receiving ARVs for PMTCT was 62% in 2014. The remaining 38% of HIV positive pregnant women gave birth to 2,164 HIV positive children that year (Republic of Kenya, 2015).

The County contributed to 10.4% of the total people living with HIV in the country and was nationally, ranked second highest. By 2015, a total of 158,077 people were living with HIV in Homa Bay. HIV projects by NGOs in Homa Bay County decreased their funding between 2017 and 2017 from KES 1.8 Billion to KES 1.7 Billion. The priority given by NGOs to HIV/AIDS response and intervention projects is decreasing and there is an existing gap. There is also need for NGOs to aggressively scale-up and put prevention interventions at the fore to reduce transmission and new infections (NACC, 2018). The County Integrated Development Plan notes that the HIV-AIDS prevalence rate stood at 27.1% and this disease coupled by the opportunistic diseases that accompany it are a major development challenge. The prevalence among those between 15 and 65 years complicates future growth.

Statement of the Problem

As systematic and continuous analytical tools for the progress of projects, monitoring and evaluation systems are critical in the performance of the projects due to the fact that they help structure the trajectory of a project's adjustments in order to realize the objectives of the given project. They are also critical in the incorporation of lessons learned in the project's implementation phase. In health projects, monitoring and evaluation systems are pivotal in not only informing decision making in a project's implementation process but also in assessing the given programme's effectiveness, and designing and conducting operational research that address implementation challenges (Lwanga, 2015).

In the health projects within African countries, a number of challenges have been documented. These challenges emanate from the inability to realize the projects objectives as conceptualized at the formulation stage; inefficiencies in service delivery;

and lack of sustainability in health projects targeting specific diseases (World Health Organization, 2009). This has led to massive failures in health projects and projects as noted by KNBS (2013) which argues that there is need for proper monitoring and evaluation of targeted projects and projects by government and development partners. This shows there is a deficit which makes progress towards achievement of desired outcomes hard to achieve. As governments and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) formulate and implement disease specific health projects in many African localities to deal with tropical and communicable diseases; these localities continue to suffer dire health associated effects resulting from various causes.

Kenya's Homa Bay County has experienced an influx of donor and government funded health projects targeting common diseases such as HIV-AIDS, Tuberculosis, malaria, reproductive health and vaccines which have ravaged the population of this County for decades. However, even with these initiatives, the county as of 2019 recorded one of the highest maternal deaths, largest burden of HIV-AIDS and is located within the malaria endemic zone that has intense transmission rates (Gatakaa et al., 2019). The CIDP reports that one of the cross-cutting challenges in the County is prevalence of HIV-AIDS and its associated diseases. This disease remains a major development challenge in the County and this has attracted projects targeting to manage and solve the crisis associated with it.

From the foregoing, there is a need to examine the influence of monitoring and evaluation systems not only as a means to desired outputs and outcomes but also as measures and enhancers of efficiency and sustainability of these disease specific health projects which to date, seem to be having little positive influence. In this regard, this study assessed the impact of monitoring and evaluation systems on the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County. The study concentrated on HIV/AIDS projects in the County.

Objectives of the Study

The overall objective of this study was to assess the influence of monitoring and evaluation systems on disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County. The specific objectives were;

- To assess the influence of M&E systems on the output of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County
- To analyze the influence of M&E systems on the efficiency of disease-specific service provision of health projects in Homa Bay County
- To examine the influence of M&E systems on the sustainability of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Literature

Constructivist Approach

Among the approaches employed in monitoring and evaluation systems is the constructivist approach to monitoring and evaluation. This approach is credited to proponents including Guba and Lincoln who hinged it upon the assumptions that first; people are the motor behind the development of novelties and societal change processes; secondly, that mutual understanding and exchange of experiences support collective learning, improvement and change. The third assumption is the need to focus heavily on monitoring and evaluation of the progress of the collective learning process (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

The strength of the constructivist approach to monitoring and evaluation is that it stimulates the exchange of perspectives for the project's successful delivery. It also ensures a good insight into how project implementation processes evolve. These insights are of value for the project's delivery process itself and the relationships within the project or network can be strengthened using the results of monitoring and evaluation. This approach is also pivotal in the collective learning process in a project's implementation. As such, when the outcomes of an intervention are unpredictable, the

process of change is intangible involving multiple pathways and interrelated factors, and the actors involved have different perspectives on the central problems and their causes, a common phenomenon in innovation projects. This type of learning can increase support for the project.

Program Theory

Another theory is the program theory. This theory was developed in the 1980s by methodologists from the evaluation community such as Huey Chen, Michael Quinn Patton and Carol Weiss. Early work centered on working through the challenges of evaluating complex community initiatives. In addition, the theory became a pragmatic means used for M&E especially when it comes to fixing problems, and carry out assessments to compliment findings. Human service programs by organisations are developed to provide solutions to society's needs. In order to accomplish this, the program theory takes a logical approach which supports stakeholders' engagement, management, and review of the outcomes. The theory also explains how programs work in terms of the transformation they bring. Transformation is measured by matching inputs verses the expected outputs (Mathison, 2005).

Chen (2004) argues that the design and implementation of a program is based on assumptions, explicit and implicit, on the actions needed to solve a social problem and reason as to why the problem should respond to an action. The assumptions underlying a program are prescriptive and descriptive. The descriptive describe causal processes leading to goal attainment while prescriptive prescribe components and activities that enable functioning of programs. Therefore, we can conclude that program theory systematically configures actions required to solve a problem and why the problem responds to these actions.

Empirical Literature Review

Diaz, et al. (2018) examine the framework and strategy for integrated monitoring and evaluation of child health projects for responsive programming, accountability, and impact. These authors show that M&E is not integrated due to lack of resources, weak leadership and governance, and the fact that global initiatives support other parallel M&E. The study found that integration of health services is important to universal health coverage and for an effective health system. Experience regarding Integrated Management of Childhood Illness indicates M&E systems are always neglected. Currently M&E systems are advanced and integration into child health is important. This will aid in producing a health management information system that has single set of indicators and training. This study is however, limited as it does not conduct an empirical study. This gives opportunity to future studies to empirically investigate.

Oxman et al., (2009) studied the tools for evidence informed health policy making. They contend that evidence-informed health policy making aims to ensure decision making is well informed by best available research evidence. Systematic and transparent access to information is critical in policy making processes. also identifying relevant research, using it appropriately and appraising of the same ensures proper execution of health related activities by policy makers. Other scholars including Biesma, et al. (2009) studied HIV/AIDS control projects among other global health initiatives (GHIs), which have had profound effects on recipient country health systems in middle and low income countries. These authors show that the main challenges experienced include rapid scale-up of service delivery; stakeholder participation, and channeling funds to NGOs. However, the GHIs have increasingly met their intended purpose due to utilizing country systems. For better results, the authors argue that independent longitudinal evaluations are required especially at the lower levels (i.e. community and facility level) to track development and also provide necessary information.

Studies on impact oriented monitoring which explore monitoring and evaluation of international public health research projects were also reviewed. A study by Guinea et al. (2015) used a novel methodology on impact oriented monitoring (IOM)

which is critical in identifying and assessing the impacts of EU-funded research projects in the area of International Public Health. Its framework is based on the logic and payback categories used to categorize impacts of health research projects. The study found that for purposes of effectiveness, participants should know the monitoring tools to be used. Impact assessment should also be looked at as a positive point and not a burden in project management. The IOM methodology provides useful information for improving performance of existing projects and form a basis for policy planning.

Kwast's (1998) studied the impact of quality of care in reproductive health projects. The need for responsive reproductive health projects to women and their families has made monitoring and evaluation critical. Monitoring and evaluation of the various facets to make safe and improve safe motherhood is important to assess progress and also gather information for future planning and implementation. Experience in safe motherhood projects show outcome indicators are more feasible for short term evaluation compared to impact indicators. This study was conducted in the late 1990s and may therefore, lack a current perspective. This makes the current study important as it seeks to update the literature on M&E.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2009) reports on a framework for M&E of health systems strengthening. The report shows that there has been an increase in international funding for health projects globally. This has been accompanied by demand for statistics to track progress, performance, ensure accountability, and evaluate impact. In developing countries, there is a scarcity of data that will enable stakeholders to track progress for purposes of scaling-up health interventions and also strengthen health systems. This has created the need for national country health systems surveillance (CHeSS) platform for purposes of bringing together the M&E work in disease projects. The platform should also track human resources, logistics and also procurement and service delivery. But the main goal of the CheSS platform is improving availability, quality and usage of data for informing health sector reviews and planning processes. It also helps monitor health progress and system performances.

Bennett, Boerma and Brugha (2006) write on scaling up HIV/AIDS evaluation in Sub-Sahara Africa. They argue that the pandemic shows no signs of stopping as infections and deaths continue. An effective and expanded preventive treatment response can avert more infections and deaths as a result of HIV/AIDS. External funding to reverse the epidemic targeted a scale-up of prevention, treatment and care. But the increased funding has not achieved much in the anticipated outcomes. This leaves room for monitoring and evaluating the HIV/AIDS projects in order to determine their effectiveness in delivering healthcare to the affected.

According to Ishola and Cekan (2019) assert that Nigeria is one of the highest recipients of health aid for health interventions. However, the collaborative efforts of the main stakeholders in the implementation of these projects show there is still lack of efficient and effective health interventions. In addition, the projects are characterized by problems of sustainability, limited effectiveness and scarce impact. Bennet et al., (2015) write on issues of sustainability of health projects. They argue that capacity of programme partners is an important aspect and has been emphasised as a critical part in strengthening health systems and ensuring sustainability of the same. In the case of HIV/AIDS projects, the transitioning of such projects from donors to the government risks issues of financial disruptions that may undermine sustainability. An effective method of ensuring sustainability involves building the capacity of implementing stakeholders that may include government officials, NGO personnel, and the community. This is achieved through training to improve their technical and managerial skills.

Another study by Kevany et al. (2012) examines the contributions of monitoring and evaluation systems to health sector development and 'nation-building' in South Sudan. This study notes that in post-conflict

settings, M&E systems is important in ensuring health services are delivered. However, this objective is limited by various challenges that inhibit tangible outputs. Absence of standardized tools; lack of common understanding of indicator measurement; inadequate archiving systems; and also underutilization of M&E resources is some of the challenges affecting output. The study concludes that the development and implementation of M&E systems within post-conflict setting requires extensive adaptations to the conventional procedures. Flexible, adaptable and diplomatically sensitized M&E systems are therefore essential for successful completion of activities. This also contributes to broader international nation building and peace keeping. This study was conducted in a security challenged setting which is different from the situation in Kenya. Therefore, the current study will be based in a different setting.

Additionally, other studies focus on macro health projects in maternal and child health services in Rwanda. Gertler, et al. (2011) examine a critical health programme on Millennium Development Goals pertaining to the use and quality of child and maternal care services in health-care facilities in Rwanda. This study randomly assigned 166 facilities and 2158 households and collected information on particular parameters. The study concluded that pay for performance scheme in Rwanda had an effect on services with the highest payment rates. They also needed the least effort from the service provider. This study shows a success in M&E systems. Paina and Peters (2012) try to understand pathways for scaling up health services in complex adaptive systems. They argue that efforts to scale up health services in developing countries are well behind expectations of Millennium Development Goals. They argue that the Complex Adaptive Systems lens provides a model for pathways to scale up. This system provides relevant lessons for design and implementation of health policy and projects for scaling up health services. Anticipating unintended consequences that undermine scaling up efforts are also put into perspective so as to develop and implement projects that are problem-solving oriented and adaptive.

METHODOLOGY

This study employed the descriptive research design. The target population for this study was the stakeholders of disease specific health projects in Homa Bay County. Specifically, the stakeholders in HIV/AIDS related projects were involved. Questionnaires were administered to this group for purposes of collecting data. Qualitative data was gathered from other stakeholders such as the County Health officers, NGO officers implementing HIV/AIDS projects and health experts. The data to be employed in the study was collected in two phases. The first phase entailed the secondary data collection while the second phase entailed the collection of the primary data. For the primary data, the researcher collected first hand data from selected participants who were involved by use of a semi-structured questionnaire. Interviews were also conducted and in this case an interview guide was used. Data collected from the semi-structured questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Qualitative data collected was analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis can be defined as the manifest and latent content of information through classification, tabulation, and evaluation of its key symbols and themes to help the researcher to ascertain its meaning and probable effect (Stemler, 2015). This study employed content analysis through three key steps. The first step entailed the development and application of codes. The second step entailed the identification of themes, patterns, and relationships. The final step involved synthesizing and summarizing data where the research findings were linked to the study's hypotheses.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Table 1: Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Statement	Yes	No
Monitoring and evaluation contributes to the success of our projects	41(83.7)	8(16.3)
There is monitoring and evaluation unit for the project	49(100)	0(0.0)
The purpose of the M&E unit contributed to the success of the project	20(40.8)	29(59.2)
There was M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools for the project	10(20.4)	39(79.6)
M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools helped in understanding project expectations	30(61.2)	19(38.8)
We have conducted or participated in a baseline survey for this project	38(77.6)	11(22.4)
There was data capturing system for the project	27(55.1)	22(44.9)

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 1. indicates that the majority 41(83.7%) of the respondents agreed that monitoring and evaluation contributed to the success of their projects while 8(16.3%) of the respondents disagreed. This finding is in line with Kissi, Agyekum, Asamoah and Andam (2019) who observe that through Monitoring and Evaluation, organizations can assess the effectiveness of their strategies, identify areas of improvement, and ensure that they are meeting their goals and objectives.

All the respondents agreed that there is monitoring and evaluation unit for the project. Majority 29(59.2%) of the respondents disagreed that the purpose of the M&E unit contributed to the success of the project while 20(40.8%) agreed. 39(79.6%) of the respondents disagreed that there was M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools for the project while 10(20.4%) agreed. This finding agrees with Odenyo and James (2018) study which focused on resource mobilization on sustainability of women group projects in Vihiga County. The findings on project staff capacity in handling project activities showed a positive influence of human resource training and success of women group projects. This means that for a project to perform better there are need to have the project team undergo training and attend seminars to sharpen their management skills.

The statement that M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools helped in understanding project expectations was agreed by 30(61.2%) of the respondents while 19(38.8%) disagreed. 38(77.6%) of the respondents agreed that they had conducted or participated in a baseline survey for this project while 11(22.4%) disagreed. 27(55.1%) of the respondents agreed that there was data capturing system for the project while 22(44.9%) disagreed on the same statement. Wachira and James (2018) in their study critical factors in implementation of community based projects in Kiambu County. In his study he found that people's or community participation projects influenced to a great extend the implementation and achievement of community based projects.

Table 2: Extent of Project Monitoring and Evaluation

Statement	VGE	GE	SE	NE
M&E budget plans enhance the project performance	20(26.0)	26(53.1)	3(6.1)	0(0.0)
M&E training on indicators/processes/tools for the project	16(32.7)	24(48.9)	2(4.1)	7(14.3)
M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools enhance the project performance	30(61.2)	14(28.6)	1(2.0)	4(8.2)
The baseline survey influence the project performance	34(69.4)	11(22.4)	0(0.0)	4(8.2)

Key: VGE-Very great extent; GE-Great extent; SE-Small extent and NE-No extent

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 2. indicate that 20(26.0%) of the respondents indicated to a very great extent that M&E budget plans enhance the project performance, 26(53.1%) great extent and 3(6.1%) small extent. The results are in line with Khake and Worku (2019) who indicate that implementation of an effective M&E requires a participatory approach in budgetary planning, allocation and review. Equally important involving those tasked with the M&E function in budgeting promotes ownership and improves delivery ofproject results.

The results show that 16(32.7%) of the respondents indicated to a very great extent that M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools for the project, 24(48.9%) indicated great extent, 2(4.1%) small extent and 7(14.3%) no extent. The statement that M&E training on indicators/processes/framework/tools enhance the project performance was indicated to a very great extent by 30(61.2%) of the respondents, 14(28.6%) great extent, 1(2.0%) small extent and 4(8.2%) no extent. The result agrees with Mavhiki, Nyamwanza and Dhoro (2020) who observe that M&E is gaining traction and seen as a tool for strategic learning especially in project management. As such project leaders as well as project sponsors are setting aside financial resources for monitoring and evaluation.

The statement that the baseline survey influences the project performance was indicated to a very great extent by 34(69.4%) of the respondents, 11(22.4%) great extent and 4(8.2%) no extent. The finding concurs with Bamberger, Rao and Woolcock (2021) who indicated that baseline survey acts as a benchmark for assessing the subsequent activity efficiency and attainment of desired outcome, a very big contribution to influencing project performance. According to Chukwuani, Olugboji, Akuto, Odebunmi, Ezeilo and Ugbene (2022) indicate that baseline surveys assist in identifying the more important areas in a project which is important especially in a project with a number of goals.

Project Performance

The respondents were provided with indicators related to project performance to rate their success on project performance. The findings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Project Performance

Indicator	5	4	3	2	1
Time efficiency in the delivery of the project output	35(71.4)	2(4.1)	0(0.0)	2(4.1)	10(20.4)
Number of project outputs delivered	46(93.9)	3(6.1)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Cost of project	47(95.9)	0(0.0)	2(4.1)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)
Quality of the project	40(81.6)	9(18.4)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 3. indicate that majority 35(71.4%) of the respondents indicated on the statement that time efficiency in the delivery of the project output was most successful and 10(20.4%), number of project outputs delivered, cost of project and quality of the project were indicated by the respondents as the most successive. According to Shane, Molenaar, Anderson, and Schexnayder (2019) the project cost process is used to systematically plan, monitor, and control project costs and performance. A project's completion must be ensured to be on schedule, within budget, and to the satisfaction of all parties involved. Idrus, Sodangi, and Husin (2021) contend that quality can be assessed by determining the percentage of resources allocated to high-quality activities, maintaining the performance level over time, or achieving the project goals or benefits.

Project Sustainability

Table 4: Project Sustainability

Statement	VGE	GE	SE	NE
Post-project evaluation contributed to understanding of the drivers of sustainability in health projects	34(69.4)	11(22.4)	0(0.0)	4(8.2)
Projects build the technical and managerial skills of implementing stakeholders to ensure sustainability of HIV/AIDs health projects	24(48.9)	16(32.7)	2(4.1)	7(14.3)
Internal mechanisms been utilized compared to external consultants in ensuring continuous evaluation for sustainability of HIV/AIDs health projects	14(28.6)	30(61.2)	1(2.0)	4(8.2)

Key: VGE-Very great extent; GE-Great extent; SE-Small extent and NE-No extent

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 4. indicate that the statement that post-project evaluation contributed to understanding of the drivers of sustainability in health projects was indicate to a very great extent as indicated by 34(69.4%) of the respondents, 11(22.4%) great extent and 4(8.2%) no extent. This result concurs with Myers, B., Fisher, R., Pickering, S., & Garnett, S. (2019) who observe that project reviews and post-project evaluations provide valuable insights into the project and help identify the gaps that may have occurred during the project. It also provides an opportunity to analyse the project and determine what went well and what could have been done better.

The statement that projects build the technical and managerial skills of implementing stakeholders to ensure sustainability of HIV/AIDs health projects was indicated by the respondents to a very extent as represented by 24(48.9%). The findings concur with Bal, Bryde, Fearon and Ochieng (2021) study which investigated atakeholder engagement on achieving sustainability in the construction sector and found that stakeholder management skills are essential for any leader who wants to achieve successful outcomes in their projects, initiatives, or organizations.

Majority 30(61.2%) of the respondents indicated to great extent on the statement that internal mechanisms been utilized compared to external consultants in ensuring continuous evaluation for sustainability of HIV/AIDs health projects, 14(28.6%) to a very great extent, 1(2.0%) small extent and 4(8.2%) to no extent. The finding agrees with Luyet, Schlaepfer, Parlange and Buttler (2022) study which focused on a framework to implement stakeholder participation in environmental projects and found that stakeholder involvement can take different level and forms during the project execution. This can line up along with the project predefinition and initiation requirements, the organization strategic objectives through negotiation, consultation, partnership and project final goal.

Project Output

The respondents were asked to indicate the extent do HIV/AIDs projects meet their intended deliverables. The results are presented in Figure 1.

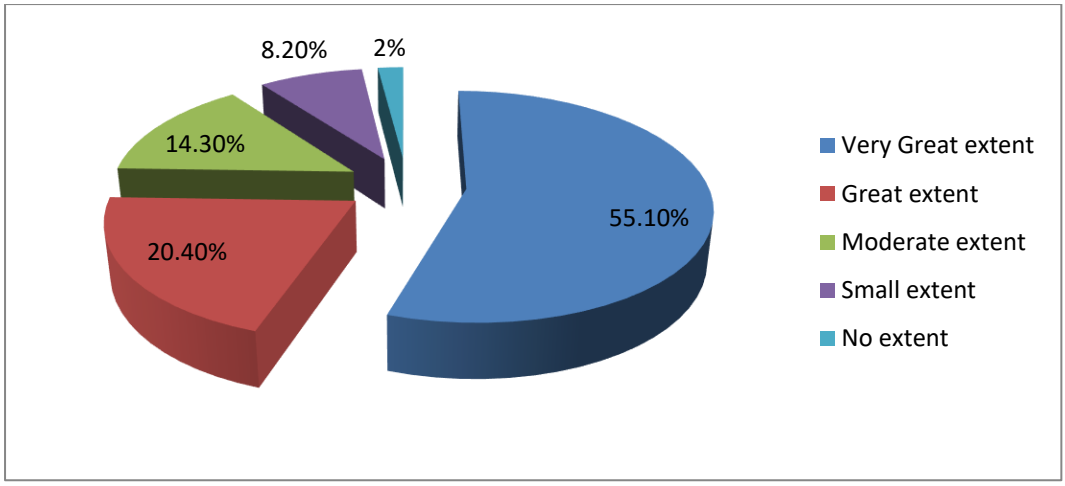

Figure 1: HIV/AIDs projects meet their intended deliverables
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Figure 1 indicates that majority (55.10%) of the respondents indicated to a very large extent that HIV/AIDs projects meet their intended deliverables, 20.40% indicated great extent, 14.30% moderate extent, 8.20% small extent and 2% no extent. The result agrees with Lim (2020) who observe that when deliverables are defined upfront, it's easier to budget the time, resources, and money needed to complete them. Overruns cannot always be avoided; having clearly defined deliverables helps cut down on surprises as the project progresses.

The respondents were asked to rate the quality of activities you are involved in under the HIV/AIDS projects. The results are presented in Figure 2.

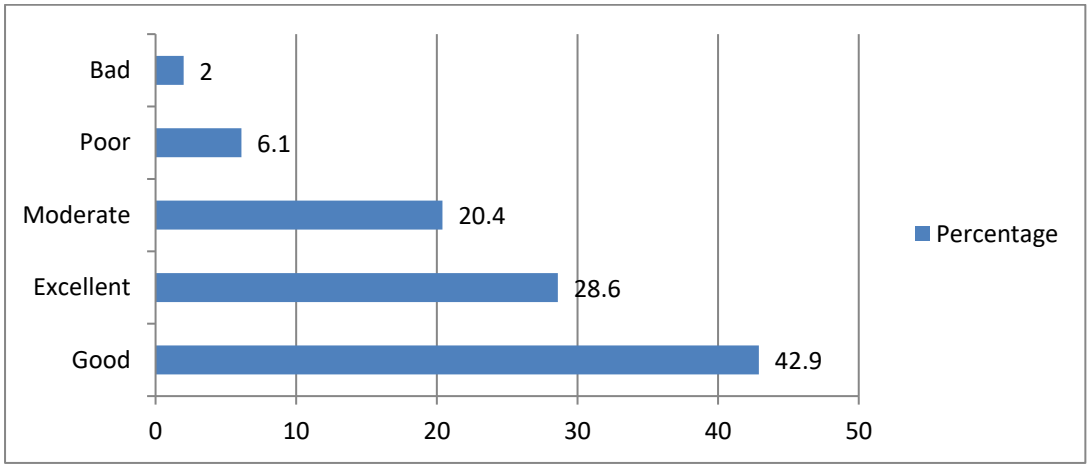

Figure 2: HIV/AIDS projects quality of Services
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Figure 2. indicate that majority (42.9%) indicated that the quality of activities you are involved in under the HIV/AIDS projects was good, 28.6% excellent, 20.4% moderate, 6.1% poor and 2.0% bad. According to Flanagan and Norman (2019) maintaining the project's final performance within the allotted budget, time, and scope, as well as adhering to the necessary technical standards for quality, operations, functionality, safety, and environmental protection, are all necessary.

The respondents were asked to rate the financial utilization of funds dedicated to the projects you are enrolled in. The findings are presented in Figure 3.

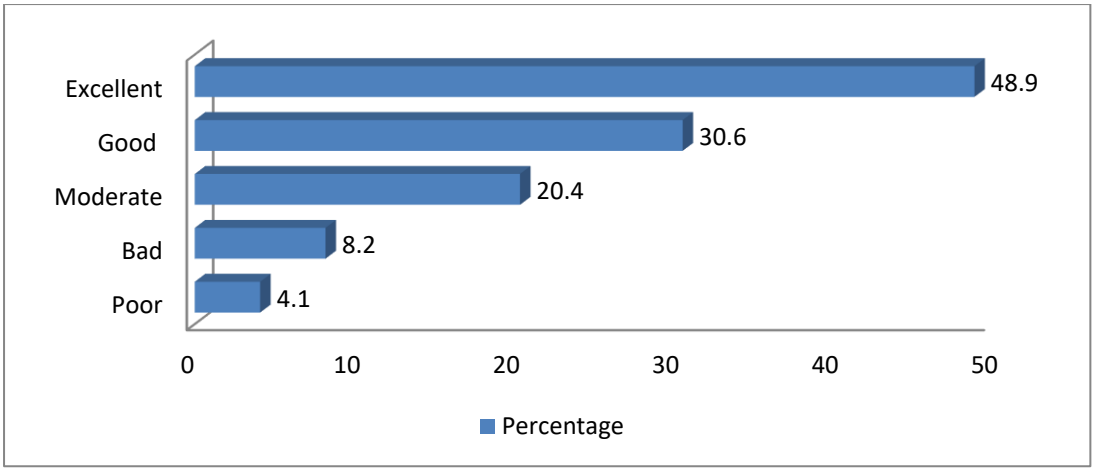

Figure 3: Financial utilization of dedicated funds to projects
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Figure 3. show that majority 48.9% of the respondents indicated that there was excellent financial utilization of funds dedicated to the projects they were enrolled in, 30.6% indicated good, 20.4% moderate, 8.2% bad and 4.1% poor. According to Grant (2019) in order to ensure that the financing proceeds are used for the intended purpose and as efficiently as possible, it is essential that the financial controller sets up and maintains adequate financial management arrangements in each stage of the project cycle which include; preparation and planning, implementation as well as completion and closing.

Project Efficiency

Table 5: Project Efficiency

Statement	VGE	GE	SE	NE
HIV/AIDS health projects deliver intended objectives within their set timeliness	14(28.6)	21(42.9)	5(10.2)	9(18.4)
HIV/AIDS health projects in this County efficiently utilize local resources	27(55.1)	11(22.4)	4(8.2)	7(14.3)
HIV/AIDS health projects engage in genuine collaboration with locals to benefit from local structures and creativity	32(65.3)	17(34.7)	0(0.0)	0(0.0)

Key: VGE-Very great extent; GE-Great extent; SE-Small extent and NE-No extent
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 5. indicate that 14(28.6%) of the respondents indicated that HIV/AIDS health projects deliver intended objectives within their set timeliness to a very great extent, 21(42.9%) great extent, 5(10.2%) small extent and 9(18.4%) no extent. The results agree with Herroelen and Leus (2019) who observe that the project schedule is used to communicate to all stakeholders when certain work elements and project events are expected to be accomplished. The project schedule is also the tool that links the project elements of work to the resources needed to accomplish that work.

The statement that HIV/AIDS health projects in this County efficiently utilize local resources was indicated to a very great extent by 27(55.1%) of the respondents, 11(22.4%) great extent, 4(8.2%) small extent and 7(14.3%) no extent. The finding is in line with Park (2020) who indicated that resource management can guarantee that you'll not only have the right resources to achieve your objectives, but

you have the right resources that will take your projects to the next level.

The statement that HIV/AIDS health projects engage in genuine collaboration with locals to benefit from local structures and creativity to very great extent by 32(65.3%) of the respondents and 17(34.7%) indicated to a great extent. The result concurs with Pinha and Ahluwalia (2019) when stakeholder engagement is done effectively, it improves communication channels between parties, creates and maintains support for the project, gathers information for the organization, reduces the potential for conflict or other project crippling issues and enhances the reputation of the organization and ultimately, the project.

The study further sought to establish the overall satisfaction with the outputs of the HIV/AIDs projects within Homa Bay County. The findings are indicated in Figure 4.

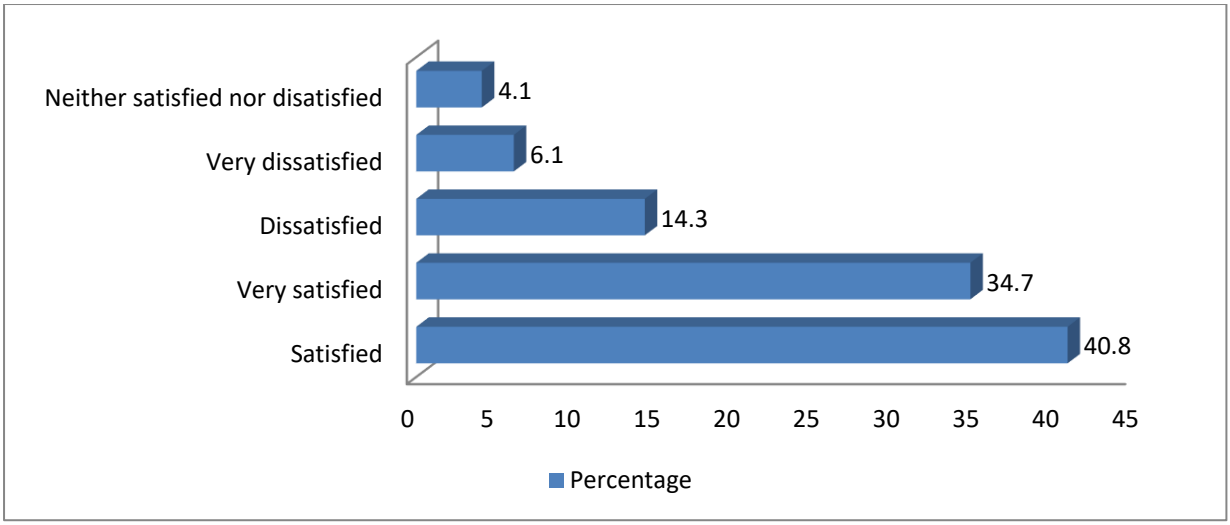

Figure 4: Beneficiary Satisfaction with HIV/AIDs projects
Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results as indicated in Figure 4. indicate that majority (40.8%) of the respondents were satisfied with the outputs of the HIV/AIDs projects within Homa Bay County, 34.7% indicated that they were very satisfied, 14.3% dissatisfied, 6.1% very dissatisfied and 4.1% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. According to Karna (2020) customer satisfaction is based on understanding, defining, assessing and managing customer needs so that their expectations are met. This concept implies compliance with the requirements to ensure that the project produces the output it should create.

Regression Analysis Results

Regression analysis was done to estimate the relationship between dependent variable and Independent variables. The results are presented in Tables 6, 7 and 8.

Table 6: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.798[a]	.636	.631	.454

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The adjusted R-squared adjusts for the number of terms in the model. Importantly, its value increases only when the new term improves the model fit more than expected by chance alone. Therefore,

from the findings in Table 6, the value of adjusted R square is 0.631(63.1%) which is the extent to which the dependent variable was influenced by the dependent variables. Therefore, other variables not studied accounts for the remaining 36.9% on project performance.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed to check if the means of the four variables were significantly different from each other. The results are demonstrated in Table 7.

Table 7: Analysis of Variance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	228.895	3	7.632	31.988	.000[b]
	Residual	30.736	45	.239		
	Total	259.631	48			

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The findings show that the model was significant as the level of significance attained was at 0.000 which is less than 0.05. In addition, the statistical F value was at 31.988 which is greater than the statistical mean value of 7.632 at 5% significance level showing that the model significant. Showing a good fit of the model on how independent variables studied influenced the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya.

Table 8: Coefficients

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	0.611	.374		1.634	.000
	M&E output	0.807	.119	0.066	6.782	.001
	M&E efficiency	0.738	.127	0.118	5.811	.001
	M&E sustainability	0.779	.190	0.093	4.100	.001

Source: Survey Data (2023)

The results in Table 8. show that when M&E output, M&E efficiency and M&E sustainability are held at constant, the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya would be at 61.1%. The results also show that, when M&E tools, M&E budget, M&E processes and M&E framework are increased by one unit the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya would be increased by a factor of 0.807, 0.738 and 0.779. The resulting regression equation was as follows:

$Y = 0.611 + 0.807X_1 + 0.738X_2 + 0.779X_3$

Where Y= Project performance

X_1 = M&E output

X_2 = M&E efficiency

X_3 = M&E sustainability

The results in Table 8. also show that M&E output had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya as indicated by a t-value of ($t=6.782$, $p< 0.05$). These findings agree with the findings of Kevany et al. (2012) study which examines the contributions of monitoring and evaluation systems to health sector development and 'nation-building' in South Sudan. This study notes that in post-conflict settings, M&E systems is important in ensuring health services are delivered.

The study found that M&E efficiency had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County,

Kenya as indicated by a t-value of (t=5.811, p< 0.05). According to Ishola and Cekan (2019) assert that Nigeria is one of the highest recipients of health aid for health interventions. However, the collaborative efforts of the main stakeholders in the implementation of these projects show there is still lack of efficient and effective health interventions. In addition, the projects are characterized by problems of sustainability, limited effectiveness and scarce impact.

The study established that M&E sustainability had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya as indicated by a t-value of (t=4.100, p< 0.05). Another study by Kevany et al. (2012) examines the contributions of monitoring and evaluation systems to health sector development and 'nation-building' in South Sudan. This study notes that in post-conflict settings, M&E systems is important in ensuring health services are delivered.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study generally sought to examine the influence of monitoring and evaluation systems on the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The study specifically sought to assess the influence of M&E systems on the output, M&E systems on the efficiency and M&E systems on the sustainability of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County. Data was collected using questionnaires and analysed using descriptive statistics. The following is the summary of findings;

The study sought to assess the influence of M&E systems on the output of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County. The study found that M&E output had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. The respondents indicated to a very large extent that HIV/AIDs projects meet their intended deliverables, the quality of activities you are involved in under the HIV/AIDS projects was good and there was excellent financial utilization of funds dedicated to the projects they were enrolled in.

The study sought to analyze the influence of M&E systems on the efficiency of disease-specific service provision of health projects in Homa Bay County. The study found that M&E efficiency had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. HIV/AIDS health projects in this County efficiently utilize local resources and HIV/AIDS health projects engage in genuine collaboration with locals to benefit from local structures and creativity. The project beneficiaries were satisfied with the outputs of the HIV/AIDs projects within Homa Bay.

The study sought to examine the influence of M&E systems on the sustainability of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County. The study established that M&E sustainability had a positive significant relationship with the performance of disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County, Kenya. Post-project evaluation contributed to understanding of the drivers of sustainability in health projects and projects build the technical and managerial skills of implementing stakeholders to ensure sustainability of HIV/AIDs health projects.

The study concluded that outputs in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are tangible products or services produced as a result of program or project activities. Understanding outputs in M&E is critical to determining program or project effectiveness, tracking progress towards objectives, and providing accountability and transparency. Measuring outputs is important because they provide information on the quantity and quality of services provided, and can help to determine the effectiveness of program or project interventions. In addition, outputs can be used as a basis for calculating the cost-effectiveness of program or project interventions.

The study concluded that monitoring and evaluation i a way of improving efficiency and effectiveness of a project, by providing the management and stakeholders with project progressive development and achievement of its objectives within the

allocated funds. Effective monitoring and evaluation system mainly is determined by the ability to track performance and able to provide instant information for management decision making. Building an effective M&E system is one of the requirements by the project donors for them to check on the effective use of the funds, impact and benefits brought by the projects.

The study concluded that sustaining the M&E system recognizes the long-term process involved in ensuring the longevity and utility of an M&E system which involves demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, incentives and capacity. For effective M&E system sustainability the monitoring tool must be operational. It must strike a balance between theoretical and practical requirements, considering the specificities of this type of project. Indeed, a tailor-made tool sensitive to the type and context of the project appears to be the only way to face complexities, ensure a certain rigour and credibility of the results, and provide decision-makers with a real account of a given situation.

The study recommended that the organization should identify specific and measurable indicators to measure outputs so that progress towards achieving outputs can be tracked over time. Ensure indicators are achievable based on available resources and capacity. Ensure indicators are relevant to the specific outputs being measured, and should be linked to program or project objectives. Indicators should be time-bound, with specific deadlines or timeframes for achieving the output and also use the SMART criteria to ensure that indicators are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. This will help ensure that the data collected is useful, relevant, and provides actionable information for decision-making.

The study recommended that the organization should ensure adequate skilled staff and financial resources are available for the development of an effective M&E system. An effective M&E system also calls for the interaction between the employees, procedures, data, technology and key stakeholders, in order to ensure feasibility and ownership. The organization should get management and stakeholders engaged in and assuming ownership of the M&E work. Project management and staff responsibilities must be internalized, to avoid the perception that M&E is a standalone reporting task. Strengthen project capacity for planning and M&E, and create a learning culture.

The study recommended that the organization should consider the opportunities and threats for its sustainability performance and impact, such as changing contexts, expectations, or regulations and then update and refine its process accordingly, and plan for continuous improvement and learning. Integrate sustainability into the project cycle, from the initiation to the closure stages and align the project scope, schedule, budget, quality, and risk management with its sustainability indicators and goals and also learn from other project managers who have successfully implemented sustainability monitoring and evaluation in their projects.

Suggestion for Further Studies

The study suggests that other studies should be carried out that focus on other project management practices apart from the ones studied in order to address the gap of 36.9% identified from the regression results. In addition, the study suggests that other studies can be done that focus on other type of projects in apart from disease-specific health projects in Homa Bay County.

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