

Resource Allocation, Evaluational Capacity Building M&E Results Utilization Among Community Based Organizations in Meru County in Kenya

Dr. Cavens Kithinji

Pan Africa Christian University

Prof. Christopher Gakuu

Senior Lecturer Department of Extra Mural Studies, University of Nairobi

Prof. Harriet Kidombo

Senior Lecturer Department of Educational Studies, University of Nairobi

doi: 10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p283 [URL:http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p283](http://dx.doi.org/10.19044/esj.2017.v13n16p283)

Abstract

Building capacity for evaluation has become a big concern in the effort of ensuring that evaluations are meaningful. Part of this capacity includes making sure that M&E activities have resources needed to carry them out. This study sought to establish the influence of allocating resources for M&E activities on the utilization of M&E result at the project level in Kenya's Meru County. The study used a mixed mode approach in methodology and it was both a descriptive survey and a cross-sectional survey and used both descriptive and inferential analysis of the data collected. The study sampled 186 respondents from a targeted population of 430 employees working in Non-Governmental organizations and other community based organizations in the county. The study showed that resources were allocated for various M&E activities to a great extent. The study also noted high level of M&E results utilization at project level by project employees and all the indicators of resources allocation had positive correlation with M&E result utilization. It was noted that for every unit increase in resource allocation, there was an increase of 26.1% in M&E result utilization score which is a percentage that would justify allocating resources for M&E activities by project organizations.

Keywords: M&E Resource Allocation, M&E activities, Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB), M&E result utilization

Introduction

Evaluations are a costly venture and there is need for justification of this cost. It was estimated that over the last decade, internationally, several

billions in US dollars were spent on evaluations, but there has been little to show for this amount of money because meta-evaluations have shown that a third of evaluations are not worth their investment (in terms of utilization) and another third are of uneven quality (Quesnel & Québec, 2010). To understand the value of M&E, Patton (1999) suggested that we equate the value of M&E to its utilization. In a training session at the inaugural meeting of the African Evaluation Association in Nairobi, Kenya, September 1999, he said that the value of an evaluation has to at least equal its cost and should be evaluated according to its utilization. He argued that M&E result utilization should be integrated from the moment stakeholders and evaluators begin interacting and conceptualizing the evaluation decisions, since these decisions would affect utilization in a major way. This points to a demand-driven M&E where the stakeholders plan what they are seeking in any particular evaluation process. It was acknowledged in this meeting that training stakeholders in evaluation methods and processes attends to both short-term and long-term evaluation uses. Making decision-makers more sophisticated about evaluation can contribute to greater use of evaluation over time (Patton, 1999).

In resource allocation, competing interests determine what is allocated for what in an organization. Sometimes M&E doesn't get enough due to the importance attached to it. In M&E, resources are set for use continuously in monitoring activities and periodically for evaluations. In some instances we have seen projects allocate resources for monitoring only. This casts doubts on such an organization's willingness to learn from the benefits of evaluations as we know them. Monitoring and evaluations activities need time and money. Finances are used to pay salaries for M&E personnel, training in M&E related issues, buying software and hardware resources and so on. Taylor-Powell et al. (2008) argues that resources necessary for M&E may also include what is used to hire evaluation and ECB expertise, buy evaluation reference materials and facilitate evaluation champions. But we need to validate that indeed what we invest in M&E improves its results utilization.

A well-funded M&E process will leave little to chance in their effort to collect quality data that would help improve utilization. Besides this, scholars have argued that there is need to create ownership of M&E process so that clients and stakeholders do not feel that evaluation has been designed by funding agencies and so it is addressing their interests rather than the concerns and priorities of the client (Guijt, 1999; Segone, 2008). This signals the need to rethink evaluation as a process and seek solutions to problems inherent in M&E process. To bridge the gap between data gathering in an M&E process and utilization of this information, organizations have to build capacity for evaluations. Among the key areas evaluation need is allocating

resource. The significance of M&E to funding agencies, Governments, programs/project and stakeholders in general has been emphasized in study literature and reports. This study sought to find out if increased resource allocation as an M&E capacity building strategy has influenced on M&E result utilization.

Literature review

Resource allocation arises as an issue because the resources of a project are always limited in supply and because any given resource can have many alternative uses. Based on experience and specifics of each M&E system, it is possible to determine the amount of necessary resources in regards to each M&E step. The most effective M&E systems are the ones that match the system's purpose and design with the project's ability to implement it in terms of its capacity. A part of this capacity is the resources allowed for use in M&E (Cristina, 2012). These may be categorized into three; (a) financial capacity to do M&E; (b) Human capacity to do M&E (People, skills and knowledge) and (c) Physical capacity to do M&E (equipment, technology and machines) (UNAIDS, 2008).

Financial capacity to do M&E is critical for any work to be undertaken. Credibility of information gathered from M&E system that is underfunded would be questioned more so on the quality of that information. More likely is the fact that crucial data may have been left out. As Woodhill (2005) points out, utilization of such data may not be meaningful.

Human capacity to do M&E refers to the ability of persons mandated to carry out M&E activities. This ability includes a variety of skills and knowledge to steer each step in an M&E system. Organizations need to invest in skilled personnel to run M&E either by; 1) hiring already trained people, which may be very difficult for most projects to achieve because few people are skilled in conventional M&E; 2) training the people you need either on-the-job or through external courses; 3) hiring external consultants for focused inputs (IFAD, 2002). Ability to gather and interpret data to make it usable and the ability to themselves use the same is the key element of investing resources in M&E personnel (Briceño, 2010).

In building capacity for M&E several strategies and interventions have been suggested. Douglah et al (2003) listed a number of them that were used by development organizations around the world to improve the performance of M&E. They include; leadership development; sufficient allocation of resources; team-building; coaching; mentoring; exchange visits; technical assistance; and, short and long-term training. Besides this, they argued that based on indicators drawn from existing literature, demand for M&E increases when there is: (i) Well-positioned individual and institutional champions across the system; (ii) incentives that link performance data,

monitoring information and evaluation recommendations to resource allocation that is results orientated; (iii) commissioning of appropriate evaluations that use the recommendations, rather than focusing on monitoring.

In their guide for project M&E, IFAD suggest that the key areas to be considered from project's resources are financial capacity to do M&E and human capacity to do M&E. They say that budget limitations are consistently one of the greatest constraints to implementing M&E and they suggest financial allocations for areas such as direct M&E staff salaries; training and employing local M&E experts to consult and facilitate; indirect salary allocations of management and field staff to support M&E; outsourcing costs for services such as data collection, data analysis, or training; travel budgets to support M&E meetings, retreats, field visits, etc.; consulting budgets to support baseline, midline and endline evaluations, as well as action research; communications costs including website development, newsletters, etc.; publications and media development costs to ensure you have high-quality materials to share with various M&E clients (IFAD, 2002).

Physical capacity to do M&E include; equipment, technology and machines. These influences utilization of M&E result by the quality of data gathered and establishing communication channels to ensure that clients are kept informed of progress and initial findings in simple languages understandable by the intended users (Tilbury, 2007). Data arrangement and presentation may cause misunderstanding making it impossible to use.

The above is a clear demonstration that M&E systems will succeed when organizations consider having sufficient resources allocated to its functions. This was verified by a study by CLEAR (Centre for Learning on Evaluation and Results) of African monitoring and evaluation systems in 2012 in which they noted that the weight of resources allocated to monitoring systems in Ghana, Kenya and Benin is demonstrated by the extensive reporting mechanisms in place. They noted that lead agencies collate information from other departments and that this action is dependent on capacities of these departments to collect quality information. The study concluded that in all these cases, considerable human and financial resources are put into development of these departments (CLEAR, 2012). In this study, resource allocation was indicated by; M&E budgetary allocation, hiring qualified M&E Personnel, access to M&E reference material, allowing use of organizational asset for M&E activities, allocating funds for training in M&E and allocating fund to contract M&E experts.

However it is not clear if an increase in resource allocation for M&E would result to an increase in utilization of data collected from the same

M&E systems. As earlier said, M&E result utilization is seen as the justification for the cost of evaluations (Patton, 1999; Briceño, 2010). If we consider the view that the value of evaluation is in the utilization of its result, then most of this spending may have been in vain. The uneven quality has resulted to unreliable data, thus making utilization of the same minimal.

Utilization of M&E result is anchored on the learning aspect of it (Woodhill, 2005). This ability to learn from utilization of M&E result has been wanting. Some of the reasons why utilization of M&E results has been wanting has been argued to be lack of role model leadership, defensive communication, lack of transparency and lack of formal structures and processes to encourage reflection (Taut, 2007). Together with this Taut argued that have divergent M&E goals and agendas creates a culture of organizational power straggles that do not create a good environment for M&E result utilization. Where organizations have divergent purposes, skill is needed to seam them in a manner that would make utilization possible for all the purposes.

There are other reasons advanced by scholars explaining why M&E result utilization has failed. These include creating of ownership M&E process so that clients and stakeholders do not feel that evaluation has been designed by funding agencies thus the feeling that these evaluations address the interests of these agencies rather than the concerns and priorities of the client (Guijt, 1999; Segone. 2008). Further, they say that it is necessary for M&E to be careful about the timing so that findings are often available when they are needed thus making them relevant. There is need to ensure flexibility and responsiveness to the information needs of key stakeholders; to ensure strong methodology that is appropriate in the context of every evaluation in terms of time, budget pressures, information need and so on. Other reasons include; making evaluations simple, inexpensive and not making demands on already overtaxed program staff; building local expertise to conduct, review and use evaluations and building Communication channels to ensure that clients are kept informed of progress and initial findings in simple languages (Koppel, 1986; Mierlo, Arkesteijn and Leeuwis, 2010b; Seasons, 2003; Tilbury, 2007; Tilbury 2009). All these require resources to be spent in wise manner to make sure that these activities are not done in vain and that resources are not used in M&E only in total disregard of other project functions.

While Project M&E offers many potential benefits to project or program success, it could also result in a waste of time and resources and failure to notice problems if it is carried out poorly or inappropriately (Estrella and Gaventa, 1998). This alludes to the need of making M&E personnel well equipped in both Knowledge and experience in M&E activities. ECB has been proposed to offers this capacity (among them

financial, human and physical resources) since its activities would course change in individuals, M&E teams and the organization in general resulting to better M&E activities and project ownership which is a sign of possible project sustainability (Khan, 1998).

Cousins and Leithwood, (1986) analyzed sixty five studies from different sectors and listed the uses of M&E results as decision making, education (learning- influencing the way they operate) among others. Briceño, (2010), listed a number of M&E results users and the purpose for use among them were Governments, Development Banks, Aids agencies, evaluation bodies and academia. According to him the list of uses is long but among them is that M&E results are used for accountability and transparencies, visibility of projects, control of implementation, feedback into planning, generation of knowledge, revising processes, policy making and test innovations. Woodhill (2005) argues that, given the increasing demand for accountability in development agenda and their impact, there is now a call for learning-oriented M&E paradigm.

In this study, indicators consideration for M&E results utilization was limited to M&E results used in; planning for projects, inform decisions making and enhancement of project practices and use of M&E result to create knowledge and learning as may be verified by establishment of best practices.

Problem of the statement

Learning from evaluation is a key concern for many evaluators. This learning is dependent on the quality of evaluations conducted. This key component of utilization of M&E results has been wanting because of possible number of reasons. From this realization, evaluators have argued for the introduction of Evaluation Capacity Building (ECB) in which they have proposed allocating of resources to facilitate a number of activities aimed at raising this capacity among M&E practitioners and implement sound M&E processes (Baker & Bruner, 2006; Díaz-Puente, Yagüe, & Afonso, 2008; Adams & Dickinson, 2010). Evidently, a lot of resources have been spent for this purpose in Meru thus it is important to empirically establish the influence of these resources to justify further spending. This study sought to show the extent to which this allocation resources for M&E influences M&E result utilization in Meru County.

Study hypothesis

This study was guided by one hypothesis; M&E resource allocation has significant influence on M&E results utilization by employees among Non-Profit Organizations in Meru County.

Methodology

This study assumed a mixed mode approach to conduct a descriptive survey of the phenomena based on pragmatism philosophical framework for mixed-method approaches in research (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). The study sought to describe and understand resource allocation in M&E experience, ideas, practices and the values of the practice in utilization of M&E result. In this respect, it generated qualitative data (Thomas, 2006). The data was collected over a short period of time with an aim of making inferences on the influence of M&E professional development on M&E result utilization, thus making the study a cross-sectional survey (Imai & Nakachi, 1995; Levin, 2006). Quantitative data was also collected to conduct correctional analysis and testing of hypotheses.

Target Population

This study was based in Meru County of Kenya. The region has a number of sub-counties as , shown below.

Table 1: Administrative and political units, Meru County

Constituencies	Sub-counties	Area (km ²)	No. of divisions
Tigania East	Tigania East	557.6	3
Tigania West	Tigania West	567.3	4
Igembe North	Igembe North	939.7	3
Igembe South, Igembe Central	Igembe South	1,879.3	6
North Imenti	Imenti North	569.6	2
Buuri	Buuri	971.1	2
South Imenti	Imenti South	661.4	3
Central Imenti	Meru Central	790.2	5
Total		6,936.2	28

Source: Meru County Development Profile (2013)

The study was carried among 106 organizations that have been in carrying out projects for over three years with a target population of 430 personnel consisting of project managers, M&E managers/officers, project officers, data officers and Project implementing staff. These were involved directly in running the projects and were also responsible for carrying monitoring activities in terms of continuous data collection besides being involved in any mid-term or terminal evaluations whether done internally or in collaboration external evaluators.

Sample size and Sampling Technique

The size of the study sample is always critical in producing meaningful results (High, 2000). The overall sample size for this study was determined using a formula by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Using Cohen's (1988) statistical power analysis, the sample required to perform a

correlation analysis from a population of 500 would be 85 while that which is required to perform a multiple regression analysis would be 116 (Cohen, 1992). From this argument Chuan, (2006) argues that for a population of about 500, the sampling size can range from a minimum of 85 for performing correlation analysis to a maximum of 217 as recommended by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The sample size was 200.

$$S = \frac{x^2 NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1)+X^2P(1-P)}$$

$$S = \frac{(3.84)(430)(0.5)(1-0.5)}{(0.0025)(504-1)+(3.84)(0.5)(1-0.5)}$$

$$n = \frac{412.8}{0.12575+0.96}; n = 186.196 \sim 186$$

Stratified random sampling was used to ensure that all parts of a population are represented in the sample in order to increase the efficiency of the study and job positions were used as strata (Kothari, 2009; Kotlik & Higgins, 2001). Random sampling was used to ensure that each element in each stratum had equal probability to be selected for the study.

Research instruments

Based on pragmatism which allows use of various tools in data collection, the study used questionnaire, interview guide and document review to collect data. The mixing rationale of this study at instruments level was guided by two factors; instrument validity; aiming at maximizing the appropriateness and/or utility of the instruments used in the study and significance enhancement to maximize researchers' interpretations of data (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2006). Thus the three tools were used in the study with the questionnaire being the main tool while interview and document analysis was used to triangulate the findings of the study.

Validity of instruments

To ensure validity questions were formulated to test variables as conceptualized in the literature review and theories studied in this field (Hogan, Greenfield & Schmidt, 2001; DeVon et al., 2007). The study then proceeded to seek opinion from experts in M&E to review the appropriate indicators of the variables and verify consistencies of the questionnaire with the content area with emphasis laid on relevance, freedom from bias and qualities of items in the instruments (Kothari, 2009).

Reliability of instruments

The reliability of a research instrument concerns the extent to which the instrument yields the same results on repeated trials (Darr, 2005). It has been argued that there can be no validity without reliability and a demonstration of validity is sufficient to establish reliability (Lincoln, 1985;

Patton, 2001). Since the suitability of the questionnaire was assessed by experts, this increased reliability.

Since the study has majorly used Likert-type scales, it was necessary to calculate and report Cronbach's alpha coefficient for internal consistency reliability for all the scales used (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Alpha was calculated for each of the concepts to avoid inflating the value of alpha by including larger number of questions (Tavakol & Dennick 2011). Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient normally ranges between 0 and 1. The closer Cronbach's alpha coefficient is to 1.0 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale. There seems to be general agreement that an alpha coefficient of 0.7 and above is an acceptable reliability coefficient (Nunnaly, 1978; Santos, 1999; Gliem et al., 2003; Tavakol et al., 2011). In this study alpha coefficient for the main variables ranged from 0.728 to 0.872.

Descriptive Analysis of M&E resource allocation activities

The necessity of allocating resources to build capacity for an evaluation and conduct evaluation has been emphasized in a number of studies. This study sought to establish if the organizations in the region do allocate resources as a means of building capacity in M&E. In this respect, the study considered yearly budgetary allocation for M&E activities, hiring qualified M&E personnel and contracting M&E experts by organizations, buying and use of M&E reference materials in organization, allocation for training in M&E and Use of organizations assets in M&E activities as the main indicators of this variable. Table 2 gives the means of these indicators.

Table 2; Descriptive Statistics of Resource Allocation activities

Description	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Use of organizations assets in M&E activities	182	2.9066	.85208
Yearly budgetary allocation for M&E activities	183	2.8033	.80150
Hired qualified M&E personnel in organizations	183	2.6995	.86593
Buy M&E reference materials in our organization	183	2.6557	1.05693
Allocations for trainings	183	2.6687	.85246
Contracting M&E experts	183	2.6231	.75862
Composite mean	183	2.7262	.59947

Source; Primary Data (2015)

All the activities here had means that ranged from 2.6231 to 2.9066 meaning that they all were done to a great extent. The use of organization assets was first with a mean of 2.907 and standard deviation of 0.8521. Organizations assets considered here were any machines including computers and other office equipment, vehicles, office space etc. Since almost all M&E activities were done by the project officers, it was considered that they used these assets because M&E activities are mostly incorporated in the day to day project activities. All the documents reviewed

indicated that organizations allow use of organizations' assets but the mean of 2.907 is an indicator that employees feel that these could be used more to enhance evaluations.

Yearly budgetary allocations for M&E activities come second with a mean of 2.8033 and a standard deviation of 0.80150. From documents review, all organizations had some allocations for M&E. However from the interviews, it was established that most of the allocations were done only as salaries for M&E officers and data entry persons with other allocations set for terminal evaluations. Otherwise, it was clear that a number of employees who took part in M&E activities were ordinary project personnel and they carried out M&E activities as part of their routine duties. This means that it was not possible to distinguish which allocations were made with an aim of generally empowering the staff on routine responsibilities and that which was done for M&E action of data collection during M&E activities. The other activity that had allocations in most organizations was training though it was clear that the trainings were not specifically for M&E. This activity had a mean of 2.6687 and standard deviation of 0.85246. One of the M&E managers interviewed said *"in our organization, the trainings are mostly on general implementation and monitoring is a big part of this that."*

Hiring qualified M&E personnel in organizations had a mean of 2.6695 and a standard deviation of 0.86593. The activity had a fair share of records seen during documents review from the sampled population which indicated that organizations were hiring qualified M&E personnel to some extent. From the interviews, it was clear that organizations had tried to hire personnel that have some qualification in M&E. The numbers were low per organization which was explained by the fact that most organizations see this function as another project practice that need only one expert or experienced personnel to head the department and guides all the other project staff in carrying out M&E functions. Only in a few instances were these activities are done by consultants in conjunction with the project personnel. Resources allocated for these consultants had a mean of 2.6231 and standard deviation of 0.75862. With the paradigm change in M&E from just a transparency check to a broader purpose of knowledge generation for use not only in projects but a wider range of stakeholders, it is important to have personnel who are qualified to do the job.

Buying and use of M&E reference materials in the organizations had a mean of 2.656 with a standard deviation of 1.0569. The interviews revealed the importance of these M&E reference materials to an organization as one manager said, that *"they help evaluators to keep in touch with works done by others where one could learn from practices that have yielded reliable data."* From the interviews, it was realized that these reference materials were mainly workshops, seminar manuals and reports of these workshops.

There were no M&E reports from other organizations at all neither did organizations have books in M&E. This casted doubt on the level of sharing that these organizations do of their M&E reports. Only three managers had soft copies of M&E reports from other organizations but the reports were not circulated within the organizations. However, there were seminar reports on M&E and implementers manuals that had guidelines on M&E processes.

Allocating resources for conducting trainings in the organization was done to a moderate extent with a mean of 2.6687 and a standard deviation of 0.85246. This means that a number of respondents felt that there was much that needed to be done through training but there was no much allocation for it. This was evident from the analysis of document which revealed that trainings were done at the beginning of the projects and when a new dimension in project implementation was being introduced. Those interviewed revealed that there were very few training forums on M&E only and that in most cases it is a session in general training on implementation.

The respondents felt that organizations allocated resources used to contract M&E experts to a moderate extent with a mean of 2.6231 and standard deviation of 0.75862. This was explained by the fact that most of these organizations do contract M&E experts only as facilitators in a training session and during summative evaluations. Those interviewed give lack of funding as the main reason for this. However, it was indicated that M&E process would benefit more from these experts if, as one manager said, *“They are engaged in planning to give direction, and during the practice to monitor the actual activities periodically and overall interpretation.”*

The composite mean was 2.7262 and a standard deviation of 0.59947. This means that to a moderate extent, the organizations are allocating resources for M&E processes but these results also point out to the need for organizations to invest more in M&E especially training, contracting experts and buying M&E reference materials because they form the bases on which evaluators draw their arguments and confidence in what they do since they are backed up by other evaluators’ works.

M&E result utilization

It was important to establish the extent to which M&E results were utilized in Meru County by employees in non-profit organizations. The indicators that were being measured included, the use of M&E results to inform decision making, use of M&E results to learn and enhance project practices, use of M&E result in planning for future project, M&E results used to establish best practices and use of M&E results to enhance project sustainability. Table 3 shows that the respondents perceived M&E results as being utilized at high levels in the region since the indicators had means ranging from 4.028 to 4.231 measured using a 5 point likert scale. The use of

M&E data to enhance project sustainability was viewed as the main use of M&E data in the region with a mean of 4.231 and standard deviation of 0.67434.

Table 3; Descriptive analysis of M&E result utilization data

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
M&E results enhances project sustainability	182	4.231	.67434
M&E results used in Planning for future project	182	4.192	.71399
M&E results used in enhancing project practices	182	4.088	.73805
Use of M&E results to make project decisions	183	4.071	.71128
M&E results used to learn and establish best practices (generate knowledge)	182	4.028	.86957
Composite mean	183	4.1038	.43568

Source; Primary Data (2015)

The use of M&E result in Planning for future projects came second with a mean of 4.192 and standard deviation of 0.71399. This shows that those concerned with planning projects depend to a great extent on the information from M&E process. Use of M&E results in decision making came fourth with a mean of 4.071 and standard deviation of 0.71128. The activity that had the least mean was the use of M&E result to facilitate learning and establish best practices with a mean of 4.028 and standard deviation of .86957.

The composite mean for M&E result utilization was 4.1038 and a standard deviation of 0.43568. Measured on a 5 point Likert Scale, this is a high indication that M&E results are utilized in the region to a great extent.

Interviews were conducted and document reviewed to triangulate the results from the questionnaire and the same trends were observed. Out of the document seen, these themes showing utilization of M&E data were picked out. The use M&E result in promoting project sustainability, planning future project, making project decisions, enhancing project practices and learning from M&E. Project sustainability was more frequent showing that the organizations were using M&E result more to determine sustainability of their projects.

The concept of sustainability was a major concern for almost all project stakeholders, as ten of those interviewed also agreed that they have to handle issues that may threaten project sustainability as a matter of priority. As one manager said, "*M&E information indicating high levels of community participation is an indicator of ownership of the project, meaning we expect higher chances of sustainability in these projects.*"

Those interviewed confirmed that they are able to designed better projects on the basis of past practices. The documents reviewed indicated that a number of project officers made reference to M&E reports in planning

for projects and making daily decisions. This being one area where M&E information needs to be used more regularly in comparison to other areas studied, it was noted that there is need to improve in this area. Most of the respondents interviewed said that utilization would improve if communication of M&E result would be done in a better way so that information needed would be available when these decisions are taken. As one M&E manager indicated, *“in most cases, M&E results are delayed thus most decisions are made using the raw data.”*

The use of M&E results to enhance project practices scored a mean of 4.088 and standard deviation of 0.73805. From the interviews, a project manager said that, *“M&E activities are designed to be undertaken by all employees of the organizations in as far as collecting data is concerned. The employees are encouraged to make use of the data collected to make adjustments to project activities on their own and inform the management.”* As the information is passed on to the manager, employees have already used it to improve their performance.

Practices in project management that are normally noted to yield better results than others in terms of their performance are distinguished by use of M&E tools. After they are distinguished, the employees, are impressed upon to use them. Another manager said that *‘employees may not associate change in project practice to M&E because sometimes the managers do not give reasons why these changes were taken and neither do they attribute them to M&E results.’*

Correlation analysis of the variables

Correlation analysis was done to explore the direction of the relationships between independent variable and dependent variable. This was determined by checking the positive or negative value before the (r) value. The strength of these relationships was considered by looking at the correlation value (r). The analysis is shown in Table 4.

The relationship between budgetary allocation for M&E and M&E result utilization was a low positive correlation where [r=.520, n=183, p=.0005<.05]. The value of $r^2 = .2704$ meaning that budgetary allocation for M&E helps to explain 27.04 percent of the variance in respondents’ scores on M&E result utilization scale. This shows some reasonable overlap between the two variables therefore this relationship is significant.

The relationship between hiring qualified M&E personnel and M&E result utilization was established as [r=.724, n=183, p=.0005<.05] which was also a high positive relationship. The value of $r^2 = 0.52418$. Hired qualified M&E personnel in organizations therefore helps to explain 52.42 percent of the variance in respondents’ scores on M&E result utilization scale. This is a high percentage showing that this relationship is very significant.

The relationship between buying M&E reference materials and M&E result utilization was [$r=.709$, $n=183$, $p=.0005<.05$] showing a high positive relationship. The value of $r^2= 0.5027$ meaning that M&E reference materials in organization helps to explain 50.27 percent of the variance in respondents’ scores on M&E result utilization scale. This shows that there is significant overlap between the two variables.

Use of organizations assets in M&E activities had a high positive correlation with [$r=.682$, $n=182$, $p=.0005<.05$]. The value of $r^2= 0.4651$ meaning that allowing M&E personnel use organizational assets explains 46.51 percent of the variance in the respondents score on M&E result utilization scale. This means that there is a respectable significant overlap between the two variables.

There was a moderate, positive correlation between allocating resources for training in M&E and M&E result utilization with [$r=.490$, $n=182$, $p=.0005<.05$]. The coefficient of determination is $r^2= .2401$ meaning that allocating resources for training in M&E helps to explain 24.01 percent of the variance in respondents’ scores on M&E result utilization scale. This shows that there is low significant overlap between the two variables.

Table 4; Correlations of Resource allocation activities and M&E result utilization

		Yearly budgetary allocation for M&E activities	Hired qualified M&E personnel	Buy M&E reference materials	Use of organizations assets in M&E activities	Allocations for trainings	Contracting M&E experts	M&E result utilization
Yearly budgetary allocation for M&E activities	Pearson Correlation	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)							
	N	183						
Hired qualified M&E personnel	Pearson Correlation	.216**	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003						
	N	183	183					
Buy M&E reference materials	Pearson Correlation	.066	.385**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.375	.000					
	N	183	183	183				
Use of organizations assets in M&E activities	Pearson Correlation	.196**	.343**	.307**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.008	.000	.000				
	N	182	182	182	182			
Allocations for trainings	Pearson Correlation	.132	.730**	.216**	.253**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.075	.000	.003	.001			
	N	183	183	183	182	183		
Contracting M&E experts	Pearson Correlation	-.019	.284**	.475**	.370**	.170*	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.801	.000	.000	.000	.021		
	N	183	183	183	182	183	183	

M&E Result utilization	Pearson Correlation	.520**	.724**	.709**	.682**	.490**	.432**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	183	183	183	182	183	183	183

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Contracting M&E experts had a moderate positive correlation with [r=.432, n=183, p=.0005<.05]. The value of $r^2 = 0.1867$ meaning that contracting M&E experts explains only 18.67 percent of the variance in the respondents score on M&E result utilization scale. This means that there was little significant overlap between the two variables.

Overall there was a moderate, positive correlation between resource allocation for M&E and M&E result utilization with [r=.399, n=183, p=.0005<.05] as shown in Table 5. The value of $r^2 = 0.1592$ meaning that resource allocation for M&E explains only 15.92 percent of the variance in the respondents score on M&E result utilization scale. This means that there was little significant overlap between the two variables. This low correlation could be explained by the fact that M&E result utilization is a function of many ECB variables besides resource allocation. Measured individually, like the activities of the same above, it could have score higher but in this case, it was measured as an activity in general ECB activities.

Table 5; Correlations of Resource allocation activities and M&E result utilization

		Resource Allocation activities	M&E Result utilization
Resource Allocation activities	Pearson Correlation	1	.399**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	183	183
M&E Result utilization	Pearson Correlation	.399**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	183	183

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Test of hypothesis

H0; *M&E resource allocation has no significant influence on M&E results utilization by employees among non-profit organizations in Meru County.*

H1; *M&E resource allocation has significant influence on M&E results utilization by employees among non-profit organizations in Meru County.*

The composite index for M&E result utilization was used as the dependent variable while composite mean for M&E recourse allocation was used as the independent variable. The indicators of this were yearly budgetary allocation for M&E activities, hiring qualified M&E personnel in

organizations, allocating resources for training in M&E, contracting M&E experts, buying and use of M&E reference materials in organization and Use of organizations assets in M&E. A linear regression model; $y = a + \beta_2 X_2 + e$ was used where;

- y= M&E result utilization
- a=constant
- β_2 = Beta coefficient
- X_2 = M&E resource allocation
- e= error term

The results presented in Table 6 show the correlation coefficient $r = 0.399$ meaning that M&E Resource allocation activities have a little positive influence on M&E result utilization at $P=0.0005<.05$. The value of R squared = 0.159, suggesting that M&E Resource allocation activities explain only 15.9% of the variation in M&E result utilization and 84.1% is explained by other factors not in the model. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 2.016, showing that there was no autocorrelation.

Table 6; Regression result of the influence of Resource Allocation activities on M&E result utilization

Model summaries	R	R-Square	Durbin-Watson	Unstandardized coefficient	
				B	Std. Error
(Constant)	.399	.159	2.016	3.747	.129
Resource allocation activities				.261	.045

$F(1,181) = 34.273, p=.0005<.05$

- a. Dependent Variable: M&E Result utilization
- b. Predictors: Resource Allocation activities

Source; Primary Data (2015)

The F ratio was significant with $F(1,181)=34.273, P=0.0005<0.05$. This means that resource allocation has statistically significant influence on M&E results utilization. From these result, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis thus concluding that M&E resource allocation has significant influence on M&E results utilization by employees among non-profit organizations in Meru County. The model figures were used to substitute the regression expression as follows; $Y = 3.747 + 0.261X_2 + e$ which means that for every unit increase in resource allocation, there was an increase of 26.1% in M&E result utilization score.

Discussion

These findings put emphasis on the provision of resources for carrying out M&E activities. The employees felt that this would increase the quality and frequency of M&E activities. If these resources are not sufficient, there is a possibility that the M&E process would suffer. From these

findings, the results agrees with woodhill (2005) who concluded that if resources are not sufficient for carrying out M&E activities, the data collected may not be meaningful enough for utilization.

These results show that allocation of resources for M&E is importance for the organization processes to benefit fully from M&E result utilization. Briceño, (2010) argued that ability to gather and interpret data to make it usable and the ability of the personnel themselves to use the same is the basis on which investing resources in M&E personnel is anchored. This means that it is necessary to allocate resources to facilitate development of these abilities. With 26.1% increase in result utilization coming from a unit increase in resource allocation, then organizations that value the benefits of M&E can argue for this increase in result allocation.

These findings agrees with Tilbury (2007) who argued that for M&E results to be usable, they must be presented in arrangements and languages understood by the intended stakeholders. To him, there was need to allocate resources for carrying M&E activities and developing skills of personnel and other stakeholders through training. This puts the need for training not only on the project staff but also those who must use the M&E result to equip them with skills to make sense out of the data provided.

A report by IFAD (2002) concluded that organizations need to invest in skilled personnel to run M&E either by; 1) hiring already trained people; 2) training the people you need either on-the-job or through external courses; 3) hiring external consultants for focused inputs in M&E. There was an effort in the region where the activities of hiring qualified M&E personnel had a mean of 2.6995; allocation for training had a mean of 2.6687; and that of contracting external M&E experts had a mean of 2.6231. Though done to a moderate extent, this effort shows that organizations in the region have acknowledged the importance of these activities.

UNAIDS (2008) categorized resources for M&E into three to show their relative importance; (a) financial capacity to do M&E; (b) Human capacity to do M&E (People, skills and knowledge) and (c) Physical capacity to do M&E (equipment, technology and machines). Investing in these areas was seen as a mandatory step for any meaningful evaluations to take place. The importance of resource allocation has been validated in this study for the categories necessary for carrying M&E as seen in activities analyzed in Table 3; such as use of organizations assets with a mean of 2.9066; budgetary allocation for M&E activities with a mean of 2.8033 and hiring qualified personnel with a mean of 2.6995.

Taylor-Powell et al. (2008) argues that specific M&E resources necessary for M&E should also include those for evaluation and ECB expertise, evaluation materials and evaluation champions. This shows that the importance of setting resources aside to hire these experts and buy any

necessary materials for M&E. In this study, the respondent didn't feel like there were enough resources allocated which was reflected also in the relationship test. With the overall R squared value being 0.159 there is need to take the advice of Taylor and increase both the involvement of ECB experts and M&E reference materials to improve M&E result utilization.

Together, budgetary allocation, buying M&E reference material, hiring qualified personnel and use of organizations' assets help to build the skills and increase efficiency of personnel in M&E meaning that they are able to carry out M&E activities and M&E results in their organizations.

Conclusion

In the study, it was determined that budgetary allocation for M&E activities, hiring of qualified M&E personnel by organizations, allocating funds for engaging M&E experts, buying M&E reference materials, allocating resources for training in M&E and use of organizational assets to carry out M&E activities were practiced in the region to a moderate extent.

It was also evident that that allocating these resources for M&E activities has a significant influence on M&E result utilization. Though this influence was small it was significant in that the respondents felt if organizations take keen interest in prioritizing these allocation along other project expenditures, there would be a increase in M&E result utilization as a unit increase in resource allocation results to 26.1% increase in M&E result utilization. This is a considerable influence.

There were high correlations (r) values for each of the these activities but it is important to note that Hiring qualified M&E personnel and having M&E reference material were seen to explain 52.4% and 50.2% respectively of the respondents views on M&E result utilization score. This implies that professionalism in M&E is seen to make a lot of difference in usability of the data that M&E systems are producing.

Recommendations

Management of project organization need to pay attention to the provision of resources for M&E activities since these resources influences the usability of the data the systems collect. They should prioritize these allocations using empirical data on the need of each organization.

Development of professionalism in M&E is important in all sectors and allocating resources for this would be beneficial to all stakeholders who demand for M&E results. This calls for a broader policy thought out across the sectors.

A study to quantify the actual amounts of resources spent on various M&E activities need to be done and formula to measure utilizations of M&E

results developed. This is the only way to quantify the value of M&E result utilizations

References:

1. Adams, J., & Dickinson, P. (2010). Evaluation Training to Build Capability in the Community and Public Health Workforce. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(3), 421–433. doi:10.1177/1098214010366586
2. Baker, A., & Bruner, B. (2006). Evaluation capacity and evaluative thinking in organizations (Vol. 60). *Cambridge, MA: Bruner Foundation Inc.*
3. Briceño, B. (2010). Defining the Type of M&E System: Clients, Intended Uses, and Actual Utilization. Retrieved from <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/11079>
4. CLEAR, (2012). African Monitoring and Evaluation Systems; Exploratory Case Studies. Graduate School of Public and Development Management, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg
5. Cohen, J. (1988). Statistical power analysis for the behavioral sciences. Second Edition. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.
6. Cohen, J. (1992). Quantitative methods in psychology: A power primer. *Psychological Bulletin*, 112(1), 155-159.
7. Cooper, D. R., Schindler, P. S., & Sun, J. (2006). Business research methods. Retrieved from http://sutlib2.sut.ac.th/sut_contents/H139963.pdf
8. Cousins, J. B., & Leithwood, K. A. (1986). Current empirical research on evaluation utilization. *Review of Educational Research*, 56(3), 331–364.
9. Cristina S. (2012). Resource Allocation in Project Management. *International Journal of Economic Practices and Theories*, Vol. 2, No. 4, 2012 (October), e-ISSN 2247–7225
10. Darr, C. (2005). A hitchhiker's guide to validity. *SET: Research Information for Teachers*, 2, 55–56.
11. DeVon, H. A., Block, M. E., Moyle-Wright, P., Ernst, D. M., Hayden, S. J., Lazzara, D., Kostas-Polston, E. (2007). A psychometric toolbox for testing validity and reliability. *Journal of Nursing Scholarship*, 39(2), 155–164.
12. Díaz-Puente, J. M., Yagüe, J. L., & Afonso, A. (2008). Building Evaluation Capacity in Spain A Case Study of Rural Development and Empowerment in the European Union. *Evaluation Review*, 32(5), 478–506. doi:10.1177/0193841X08319015 dmechapter10.pdf. (n.d.).

- Retrieved June 10, 2014, from <http://www.sfcg.org/Documents/dmechapter10.pdf>
13. Douglass, M., Boyd, H., & Gundermann, D. (2003). Nurturing the development of an evaluation culture in public educational agencies. In *Annual Conference of the American Evaluation Association, Reno NV*.
 14. Estrella, M., & Gaventa, J. (1998). Who counts reality?: Participatory monitoring and evaluation: a literature review (Vol. 70). Institute of Development Studies Brighton. Retrieved from <http://led.co.za/sites/led.co.za/files/documents/151.pdf>
 15. Experiential Learning Theory: - experiential-learning-theory.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved June 10, 2014, from <http://www.d.umn.edu/~kgilbert/educ5165-731/Readings/experiential-learning-theory.pdf>
 16. Gliem, J. A., & Gliem, R. R. (2003). Calculating, interpreting, and reporting Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient for Likert-type scales. Midwest Research-to-Practice Conference in Adult, Continuing, and Community Education. Retrieved from <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/handle/1805/344>
 17. Guijt, I. (1999). Participatory Monitoring & Evaluation for Natural Resources Management and Research. Socio-economic Methodologies for Natural Resources Research. *Natural Research Institute*
 18. High, R. (2000). Important factors in designing statistical power analysis studies. *Computing News*, Summer issue, 14-15.
 19. Hogan, S. Daryl B. Greenfield, Lee A. Schmidt, N. (2001). Development and Validation of the Hogan Grief Reaction Checklist. *Death Studies*, 25(1), 1–32. doi:10.1080/07481180125831
 20. IFAD, (2002). *Managing for Impact in Rural Development; A Guide for Project M&E*. IFAD. Rome.
 21. Imai, K., & Nakachi, K. (1995). Cross sectional study of effects of drinking green tea on cardiovascular and liver diseases. *Bmj*, 310(6981), 693–696.
 22. Koppel, B. (1986). Benefit Monitoring and Evaluation Systems in Development Projects: Notes from Asia. *Impact Assessment*, 5(1), 9–24. doi:10.1080/07349165.1986.9725567
 23. Kothari, C. R. (2009). *Research methodology: methods and techniques*. New Age International. Retrieved from <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=8c6gkbKi-4C&oi=fnd&pg=PR7&dq=research+methodology,+methods>

24. Krejcie, R.V. & Morgan, D.W. (1970) Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational and Psychological Measurements*, 30, 607-610.
25. Lincoln, Y. S. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Sage. Retrieved from <http://books.google.com/books?hl=en&lr=&id=2oA9aWINEoC&oi=fnd&pg=PA7&dq=naturalistic+inquiry.&ots=0rstYgN7xm&sig=xAE5EkXzvuDSEZRZS-1lkiHtAOI>
26. Mackenzie, N., & Knipe, S. (2006). Research dilemmas: Paradigms, methods and methodology. *Issues in Educational Research*, 16(2), 193–205.
27. Mierlo, B. van, Arkesteijn, M., & Leeuwis, C. (2010b). Enhancing the Reflexivity of System Innovation Projects With System Analyses. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 31(2), 143–161. doi:10.1177/1098214010366046
28. Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Leech, N. L. (2006). Linking research questions to mixed methods data analysis procedures. *The Qualitative Report*, 11(3), 474–498.
29. Patton, M. Q. (1999). Utilization-focused evaluation in Africa. In *Training sessions at the Inaugural Meeting of the African Evaluation Association in Nairobi, Kenya, September*. Retrieved from <http://www.fivehokies.com/Evaluation/Evaluation%20Approaches/Participant%20Oriented/Utilization-Focused%20Evaluation%20Textbook%20-%20Quinn-Patton.pdf>
30. Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand
31. Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc
32. Quesnel, J. S., Senior Facilitator, U., & Québec, E. (2010). The Professionalization of Evaluation. *From Policies to Results*, 164.
33. Seasons, M. (2003). Monitoring and Evaluation in Municipal Planning: Considering the Realities. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 69(4), 430–440. doi:10.1080/01944360308976329
34. Segone, M. (2008). Bridging the gap. The role of monitoring and evaluation in evidence - based policy making. Retrieved from <http://www.popline.org/node/210066>
35. Taut, S. (2007). Studying Self-Evaluation Capacity Building in a Large International Development Organization. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 28(1), 45–59. doi:10.1177/1098214006296430
36. Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, 53–55.

37. Taylor-Powell, E., & Boyd, H. H. (2008). Evaluation Capacity Building in Complex Organizations. *New Directions for Evaluation*. Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICWebPortal/detail?accno=EJ824994>
38. Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American Journal of Evaluation*, 27(2), 237–246.
39. Tilbury, D. (2007). Monitoring and Evaluation during the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 1(2), 239–254. doi:10.1177/097340820700100214
40. Tilbury, D. (2009). Tracking Our Progress A Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for the UN DESD. *Journal of Education for Sustainable Development*, 3(2), 189–193. doi:10.1177/097340820900300215
41. UNAIDS. (2008) Guidance on Capacity Building for HIV Monitoring and Evaluation. Geneva UNAIDS.
42. Woodhill, J. (2005). M&E as learning: Rethinking the dominant paradigm. *Monitoring and Evaluation of Soil Conservation and Watershed Development Projects*. Retrieved from <http://www.capfida.mg/km/atelier/wageningen/download>