

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION
PRACTICE AT THE LOCAL LEVEL IN GHANA. A STUDY OF THE
AMENFI CENTRAL DISTRICT

BY

MABEL LOVELYN ASOMAH

(16001302)

DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE FACULTY OF HUMANITIES; CHRISTIAN
SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE
IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION

SEPTEMBER 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature Date

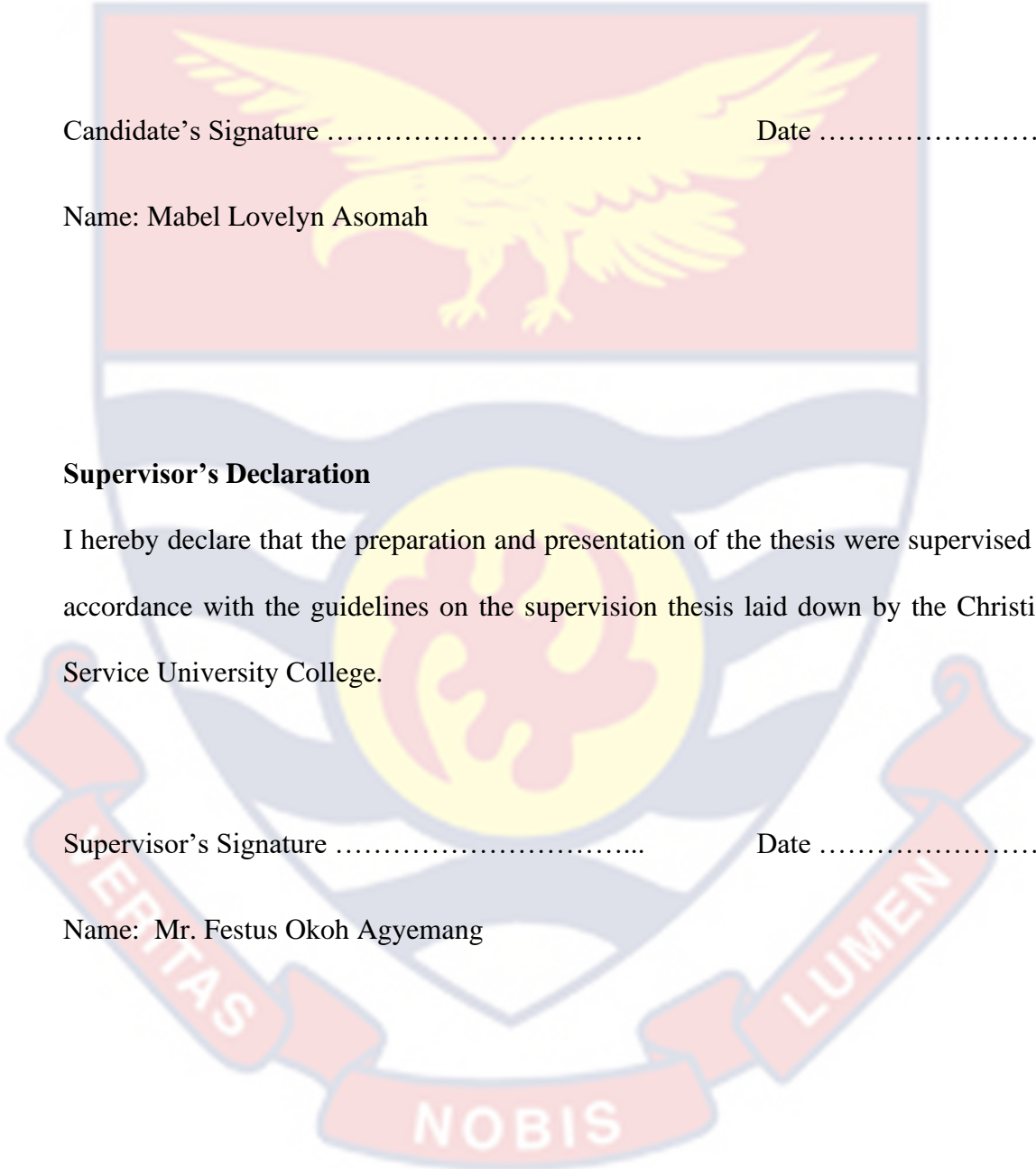
Name: Mabel Lovelyn Asomah

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on the supervision thesis laid down by the Christian Service University College.

Supervisor's Signature Date

Name: Mr. Festus Okoh Agyemang



ABSTRACT

The increase in demand for greater accountability and the quest for evidence-based policies have made governments across the world to step up efforts regarding monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programmes and projects. In order to ensure judicious use of resources and good governance at the local levels, government must ensure accountability, improve co-ordination and reduce corruption. This study examine the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation activities on the performance of Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly. The study adopted the exploratory research design. Case study approach as a research design was also used. Institutions were interviewed to support the secondary data from literature. The study revealed that institutions such as NDPC, DPCU, are responsible for undertaken M&E in the district. DPCU carry out M&E with the active participation of other stakeholders. It was revealed that CDA has outlined their M&E procedures and they were functional. Inadequate financial and human resources were challenges faced by M&E. Lack of an effective communication strategy to inform policy development and planning is also a challenge of monitoring and evaluation in ACDA. Based on the challenges, the study recommended that the implementing agencies or units of various development programs should consider it imperative to specifically make human, budgetary and material resources allocations for M&E. There should also be regular supervision of M&E system by RCC and NDPC. Capacity building plan, program review schedules and reflection plans are developed and followed as done for the other core tools when setting up an M&E system for the Assembly.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First, I would like express my profound gratitude to the Almighty God for seeing me through my graduate studies. It was a rough journey but His unfailing mercies kept me. I would also like to thank my family, especially my husband for his unwavering support. Their encouragement both in words and finances made this a success.

To my supervisor Mr. Festus Okoh Agyemang, I would like to say a very big thank you for his support and constant correction. Mr. Festus played an important role for the success of this work and his efforts cannot go by unappreciated.

Also, I will like to acknowledge the staff of the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly whose cooperation in providing the necessary data made this work possible. My sincere thanks go to Mr. Michael Baidoo (DPO), Mr. Desmond Ackah (Ass. DPO for their important contributions. Their readiness to provide all the information they had for the successful completion of the special study is above-reproach.

Lastly, I am thankful to all my colleagues especially who showed solidarity and supported me throughout the process. I'm really grateful.

DEDICATION

I whole heartedly dedicate this work to almighty God, who has shown me and keep showing me immense love. Indeed my family has been a blessing in my life, and I can never forget that.



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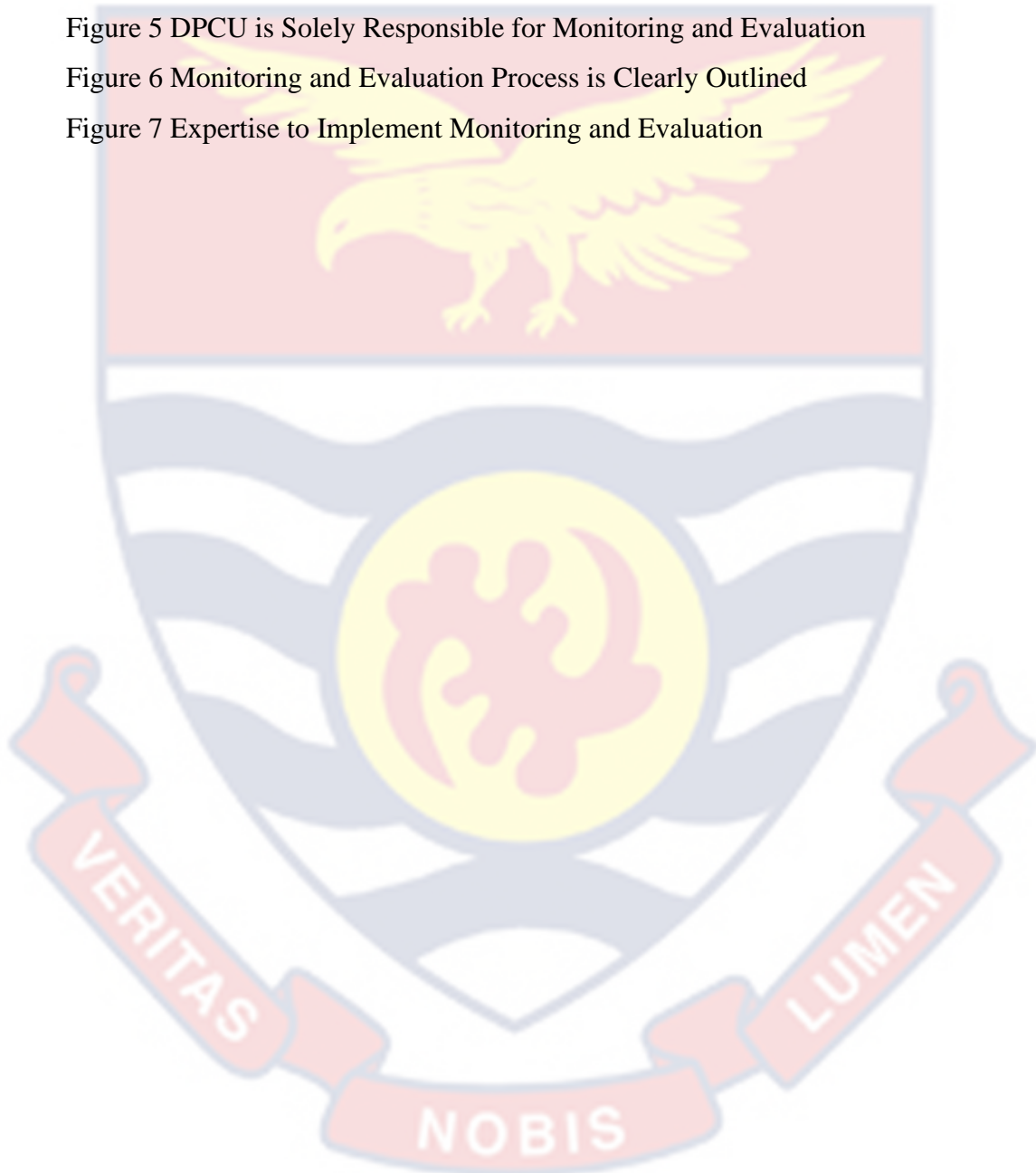
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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Meaning
ACDA	Amenfi Central District Assembly
APR	Annual Progress Report
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
CBO	Community Based Organization
DMTDP	District Medium Term Development Plan
GES	Ghana Education Service
HIV	Human Immune Virus
JICA	Japanese International Co-operation Agency
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
MDA	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission
PM&E	Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation
RCC	Regional Coordinating Council
DPCU	District Planning Coordinating Unit
NDPF	National Development Policy Framework
USAID	United States Agency for international Development

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

An effectiveness monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system and practice is key element for the growth and development of the various sectors of an economy (UNDP, 2009). It is important in provision of quality data for decision making in the implementation of programmes. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems and frameworks with their indicators help to measure progress in the implementation of policies, plans, programmes and projects in order to achieve the purpose of the system. Gorgens and Kusek (2009) support that Monitoring and Evaluation encompasses of two processes which are different yet complementary. This means that, these processes involve systematical collection and analysis information of ongoing project and compares the project outcome or impact against the project objectives and goal.

Okuta (2019), stated that monitoring and evaluation is conducted to achieve several purposes. These purposes include to learn what works and does not; to make informed decisions regarding programme operations and service delivery based on objective data; to ensure effective and efficient use of resources; to track progress of programmes; to assess extent the programme is having its desired impact; to create transparency and foster public trust; to understand support and meet donor needs; and to create institutional memory. According to UNDP (2009), monitoring emphasises on the implementation process and asks the key question how well is the program being implemented while evaluation analyses the implementation process. Evaluation on the other hand seeks measures how well program activities have met objectives, examines extent to which outcomes can be attributed to project objectives and describes quality

and effectiveness of program by documenting impact on participants and community. According to Kusek and Rist (2004), monitoring and evaluation as a management tool have existed since the ancient times. However, in recent times the requirements for M&E systems as a management tool to show performance has grown with demand by stakeholders for accountability and transparency through the application of the monitoring and evaluation by the NGOs and other institutions including the government. Wholey (2010), supports that monitoring and evaluation is used in government to increase transparency, strengthen accountability, and improve performance, whereas performance management systems establish outcome oriented goals and performance targets, monitor progress, fuel performance improvements, and communicate results to higher policy levels and the public (Wholey et al, 2010).

African governments' dependence on M&E as part of their efficiency-building process reflects a recognition that, change cannot be pushed ahead without appropriate tools for producing strategic management information (Engel and Carlesson, 2002). Good M&E systems and activities, according to Naidoo (2011), strengthen an organization's reflective capacity as well as encourage openness, accountability, and a learning culture. Cook (2006), explicates that monitoring and evaluation increase transparency, accountability, and performance management in the public sector and at the local level. From the forgoing, it could be gathered that monitoring and evaluation is a core element in the process of achieving programme objectives and goals. In relation to that, it is vital that effective M&E systems is established to help in project implementation and as well improve programme or project management.

Ahwoi (2010), states that local governance has undoubtedly gain prominence in African countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and many others. He added that there has

been a shift from a state-centric development administration to a local-level development planning and administration system. Local governance has the potential to advance a country's development by ensuring ownership, leveraging local resources, and enhancing local engagement. Ayee (2008), asserts that local governments, in essence, play a vital role in not only the delivery of public services, but also in the development of individuals. The monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system in the public sector is critical to the government's endeavor to preserve development through good governance. Looking at the crucial role of monitoring and evaluation, this study seeks to examine the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) practices in particularly at the local level and the role it plays on performance of the MMDAs.

Statement of the Problem

According to Towah (2019), the African Union indicated in its Agenda 2063 that they aspire to create an Africa where good governance, characteristics of democracy, the rule of law is entrenched. As a result, good governance has become a general culture on the Africa continent. African countries such as Ghana has been contending with the challenge of ensuring efficiency and effectiveness in the implementation of programmes both at national and local levels. Likewise, the Ghana National Development Plan (GSGDA II) supports that institutions should ensure transparency and accountability as well as active participation of citizens in governance at the local levels (MMDAs level). In order to promote of good local governance, MMDAs need to ensure accountability, improve co-ordination and reduce corruption. These are essential elements for good governance which ensure that government is deemed efficient and effective at all levels of government.

The National Development Planning Commission drafted the National Monitoring and Evaluation Plan sustain development through this department ensuring effective implementation of public sector monitoring and evaluation. Ojok and Basheka (2016) argues that the monitoring and evaluation practices at the local levels differ among institutions. This sometimes affects the efficiency and effectiveness of the M&E practices at the local levels.

Several researches have been undertaken to understand monitoring and evaluation practices organization. For instance, Towah (2019) established in his study on Impact of Good Governance and Stability on Sustainable Development in Ghana that monitoring and evaluation system is not geared towards comprehending the connectedness and attribution between the stages of development change, whereas Hauge (2003:13-16) in studying the Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities to Improve Government Performance in Uganda established that the quality of public service delivery is less than desirable and monitoring and evaluation system has remained overly centered on compliance with government requirements and regulations rather than end-results of policy, program and project efforts. According to a study by Acheampong (2015), in Ghana, monitoring and evaluation serves as a dynamic management position, however, finding a program that incorporates M&E best practices correctly in its implementation is difficult. Ojambo (2012), also concluded that national monitoring and evaluation system is not well-organized enough to explain cause and attribution between stages of development transformation. From the reviews above, it is obvious that studies on monitoring and evaluation have been national in perspective with limited studies focusing on the local level. However, it is at this level that major development interventions are undertaken. Moreover, there has not been such study in the Wassa Amenfi Central

District. Using national studies to represent the local level situation will be an error as situations at the national level are different from the local level. To contribute to addressing this gap, this study is being undertaken to assess the monitoring and evaluation activities of MMDAs in Ghana using the Wassa Amenfi Central District as case study. Wassa Amenfi Central District was chosen since it is one of the new districts in Ghana and there has not been any study done to understand how they undertake their activities.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to assess the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation activities on the performance of Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly. The specific objectives of the study were:

1. To assess the preparedness of the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly to undertake monitoring and evaluation.
2. To determine the coping strategies adopted by the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly in their bid to apply monitoring and evaluation in their activities.
3. To identify the challenges faced by the Wassa Amenfi Central District in coping with their monitoring and evaluation requirements

Research Questions

The study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Is the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly ready to undertake monitoring and evaluation
2. What are the coping strategies adopted by the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly in their bid to apply monitoring and evaluation in their activities.

3. What challenges are faced by the Wassa Amenfi Central District in coping with their monitoring and evaluation requirements

Significance of the Study

Despite the fact that, relevant policies and legislation are in place to guide MMDAs activities in Ghana, however, failure to formalize good governance and M&E efforts through appropriate policy leads to slow rate of development at both the local level and nationwide. Additionally, the maladministration makes the situation worsen. Consequently, the good governance dimension within local government needs to be thoroughly addressed as a mechanism for improved development.

Findings of the study could be useful for organizational learning and improved planning and implementation of programmes and projects by MMDAs. The result of this study may be adopted by government realistically to plan and formulate its projects policies that are geared to improving local governance in the country. It may further give a deeper insight to those who are charged with M & E to effectively implement the required processes.

This study might be beneficial to academicians, policy planners, and researchers by providing new areas of study and improvements. This is because it might serve as reference for further studies. Overall, the study recommendations might improve effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation in projects and programmes implementation especially by the MMDAs and provide comprehensive guidance on how to set up and implement a monitoring and evaluation system by avoiding the pitfalls that may lead to its failure. The study also identified areas related to M&E field that might require more research, hence a basis for further research.

Delimitation of the Study

The geographical scope of the study will focus on Wassa Amenfi Central District. It lies between latitudes 5° 20'N and 7° 10'N and longitudes 2° 9'W and 2° 27'W. The Municipality covers a total land area of 1,845.93 square kilometers (1,845.93 km²) with 131 communities. Manso Amenfi is the administrative capital of the District. It is bounded to North by Bibiani-Ahwiaso Bekwai District; to the North-West by Sefwi Wiawso Municipal; to the South by Ellembelle and Nzema East Districts; to the South-East by Prestea Huni-Valley District; to the East by Amenfi East District and to the West by Amenfi West District.

The contextual scope of the study emphasizes on the monitoring and evaluation activities undertaken at the local government level in Ghana. Also, it elaborates on the Monitoring and evaluation capacity of the municipal assembly. It also talks about the coping monitoring and evaluation strategies adopted by the District. This study again highlights the challenges faced by the Wassa Amenfi Central District in coping with their monitoring and evaluation requirements.

Limitations of the Study

After an initial informal discussion with the District Planning Officer it became clear, due to the limited capacity within the municipality that conducting an extensive randomized survey as initially envisaged would not be viable.

The research took cognizance of the challenge that limited capacity within the Wassa Amenfi Central District assembly resulted in a small sample size and that more data could be generated by including the municipal council and conducting interviews with the municipal council. It must be noted that contact was made with DPCU and other staff of the Assembly but due to their unavailability and busy schedules this

unfortunately could not be arranged. In order to address this, the researcher decided to conduct semi-structured interviews with selected municipal officials.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized in five chapters. The first chapter outlines the background of the study and the statement of the problem. It further outlines the objectives and research questions that guided the study then significance of the study. Chapter two also outlines the theoretical underpinnings of the study as well as the review of all the literature that is relevant to the study variables as well as a summary of the research gaps from all the reviewed materials. The chapter also contains the conceptual framework which outlines the association between the study variables. The third chapter presents the methodology employed in undertaking the research. It specifically outlines the research design and sampling techniques that was adopted, the target population, the data collection instruments and procedures as well as the data analysis methods adopted. Chapter four presents the analyses, inferences, and deductions from the obtained data are also presented. The overview of significant findings, recommendation, and conclusion are all found in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Creating a conceptual framework for a development process is essential for quantifying its expected impact, and for assessing the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation programs (Torero, 2014). The previous chapter introduced the study and also highlighted the problem as well as the objectives that the study seeks to achieve.

Following that, this chapter present relevant literature on monitoring and evaluation. It emphasizes on meaning of the concept. Functional Monitoring and Evaluation Systems are explored as well as how to make M & E systems functional. The chapter again elaborate on the factors that inhibit the successful implementation of monitoring and evaluation as well as the performance of M & E systems.

The Concept of Monitoring and Evaluation

Researchers have defined monitoring and evaluation in different ways. These varied definitions represent the important components of monitoring and evaluation. According to The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2002), monitoring means keeping track of what is being executed in order to take corrective action if necessary. Evaluation on was also described as deciding if the task at hand has progressed. This means that, the two approaches complement one other while having distinct goals and presentations. Gorgens and Kusek (2009), opine that government and organisations have faced increasing pressure from internal and external stakeholders to respond to demands for better governance, accountability, and transparency, as well as greater development effectiveness and the delivery of tangible results. Additionally, the demand for realistic and usable results-based monitoring and evaluation approaches to aid the management of policies,

programmes, and projects has increased due to the desire for better performance (Gorgens and Kusek, 2009). Therefore, governments and organizations (implementing agencies) must measure the effectiveness of their programmes/projects in meeting their aims and objectives. Hunters (2009), asserts that the establishment of functional monitoring and evaluation systems enables the assessment of program and project success in terms of specified goals.

Monitoring and evaluation are frequently misunderstood and depicted as the same thing, although they are two distinct sets of organizational activities and management roles that are interrelated, dynamic, and mutually supporting (Nabris, 2002). Consequently, planners and implementing agencies must have a good understanding of the notion and be able to distinguish between the two organizational activities when it comes to programme and project management. Monitoring and evaluation, according to the Global Fund, is an important management and learning tool for enhancing policy and program planning, implementation, and decision-making processes in the present and future (GIZ, 2013).

According to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2002), monitoring is "a continuous function that involves orderly collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and other stakeholders with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives, as well as progress in the use of allocated funds. Morra Imas and Rist (2009), emphasised that it is routine, continuing, internal activity used to collect information on a programme's actions, outputs, and results in order to assess its performance. That is, it involves activities such as data collection, recording, and analysis, as well as communication and information use for management control and making future decisions. According to Freeman (2003), it is "a day-to-day management task of obtaining and reviewing

information that shows how an operation is working and what aspects, if any, need to be rectified". Monitoring, as defined by Gage et al (2005:6), is "the routine surveillance of a program's activities by determining if scheduled actions are carried out on a regular, on-going basis," which is similar to McCoy, Ngari, and Krumpke's (2005:10) definitions.

GWM&ES policy framework (2007:6), described evaluation as "a time-bound and periodic activity aimed at providing reliable and useful information to answer specified questions in order to influence decision-making by staff, managers, and policymakers". The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) (2004), supports that monitoring is a time-bound management tool that seeks to analyse the relevance, performance, and effectiveness of current and completed programmes and projects in a logical and impartial manner, as well as providing answers to what was achieved, what was not achieved and the reasons. It can be realised that, evaluations determine whether a particular activity or programme is relevant, efficient, and effective, as well as whether it has a good influence and a long-term future. This concept is consistent with Randel's (2002) definition for evaluation as a periodic appraisal of a project's relevance and performance. Thus, evaluation means "the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program, or policy, including its design, implementation, and consequences," according to the OECD (2002). It can be realised that the main goal is to determine the goals' relevance and accomplishment, as well as the development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and long-term viability.

According to OECD (2002), monitoring and evaluation is a tool used to assess the performance and impact of policies, program, projects and institutions. This means that aim of undertaking monitoring and evaluation is to improve current and future outputs, outcomes and impact. It encompasses combining activities such as

observing changes, understanding why the change happened and how best to improve in the future.

Types of Monitoring

Monitoring encompasses orderly and routine collecting data during project implementation in order to establish whether an intervention is geared towards the achievement of the set objectives and goals. That is, in monitoring, data is collected throughout the life cycle of the project or programme. The types of monitoring according to Okuta (2019), are explicated in the following sub-sections

Process Monitoring/Physical progress Monitoring

Process monitoring is when routine data is collected and analyzed to ascertain whether the project or programmes activities are achieving the intended project results. It authenticates the progress of the project towards the intended results. Process or physical progress monitoring measures the inputs, activities and outputs. In other words, it answers the questions “what has been done so far, where, when and how has it been done?” Most of the data collected during project implementation usually serves this kind of monitoring.

Technical Monitoring

This type of monitoring entails assessing the strategies which are being used in project or programme implementation to establish whether the required results are being achieved. It involves the technical aspects of the programme such as the activities to be conducted.

In a potable water project for example, process monitoring may indicate that there is little or no uptake of chlorination as a water treatment strategy. Technical monitoring may establish that this could be a result of installing chlorine dispensers at

the water source and women are too time constrained that they have no time to line up to get chlorine from the dispensers. Consequently, it may prompt alteration of strategy where the project might opt for household distribution of bottled chlorine.

Assumption Monitoring

Any project has its working assumptions which must be clearly outlined in the project log frame. These assumptions are those factors which might determine project success or failure, but which the project has no control over. In that respects assumption monitoring is measuring these factors which are external to the project/programme. It is important to carry out assumption monitoring as it may help to explain success or failure of a project.

Financial Monitoring

Financial monitoring help to monitor project/ programme expenditure and comparing them with the budgets prepared at the planning stage. The use of allocated programme/project funds is vital for ensuring there are no excesses or wastages. Financial monitoring is also aid in ensuring accountability and financial efficiency (the maximization of outputs with minimal inputs).

Types of Evaluation

The effectiveness of a programme can be achieved and sustained through continuous evaluation. Therefore, programme management and staff need to undertake it rather than pay lip service to it. Evaluation has different types which are formative and summative evaluations.

Formative Evaluation

Formative evaluation is undertaken in the lead up to the project and during the project in order to improve the project design as it is being implemented (continual

improvement). Formative evaluation often propositions itself to qualitative methods of inquiry.

This type of evaluation is undertaken during the planning and designing of the programme. It provides immediate feedback for programme amendment and improvement. This type of evaluation is on-going. It helps to determine programme strengths and weaknesses.

Summative Evaluation

Summative evaluation is carried out during and following the project or programme implementation, and is associated with more objective, quantitative methods. This type of evaluation sometimes precede implementation programme. When all the planned activities have been executed, summative evaluation can be conducted to determine whether the programme has achieved its goals.

This type of evaluation summarizes the strengths and weaknesses of a programme. It may help programme implementing agencies and other stakeholders to determine whether the programme is worth continuing. It is done when the programme is ready for general use. It provides potential stakeholders with evidence of the value of a programme. It helps to check the effectiveness of the programme.

Different Approaches to M&E

There are several approaches that can be mentioned in M&E. According to Bamberger (2006), what M&E have in common is that they are aimed at helping policy makers and implementers to learn from what they are doing or have done, and from how we are doing it or have done it, by focusing on:

Efficiency: This tells us if the input into the project is appropriate in the light of the output. This could be in terms of, for example, money, time, staff or equipment.

Effectiveness: Here we measure the extent to which our project has achieved the objectives we set at the outset.

Impact: This tells us whether or not we have had an influence on the problem situation we were trying to address. We assess if our strategy was useful, and if it would be worthwhile to replicate the project elsewhere.

Relevance: This tells us the degree to which the objectives of the project remain valid as initially planned in our project proposal. It determines whether project interventions and objectives are still relevant, given the needs and priorities of the beneficiaries. Beneficiaries' priorities might change over time as a result of social, political, demographic or environmental changes. As a result, on conclusion, a project might not be deemed to be as important as it was when initiated.

Sustainability: This measures the prospects for the maintenance of a project's positive results after external support by donor agencies has been withdrawn. Many development projects are not sustainable because neither the organization involved nor the beneficiaries themselves have the financial capacity or the motivation to provide the resources needed for the activities to continue. As a result, donor agencies are interested in the long-term improvements brought about by any given project. They want to know how long they will need to support a project before it can run with local resources.

Setting up Programme M&E System

According to OECD (2002), governments, international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), philanthropic organizations and civil society groups worldwide have over the past two decades placed much attention on evidence-based programs and projects as well as increased accountability to stakeholders.

Kresnaliyska (2015), asserts that the prevalent of implementation of result-oriented policies and programmes has created the development of monitoring and evaluation systems which direct policymakers and implementers to achieve transparency and accountability in planning and effective utilization of public resources. The Global Fund (2009), specifies that M&E system serves as the cornerstone that offers strategic information required to make good decisions for managing and improving program performance, formulating policy and advocacy messages and planning programs better. ACF International (2011), indicated in their “*Food Security and Livelihood Monitoring and Evaluation Guidelines*” that M&E system for a programme should include processes, tools, staff, equipment and activities essential to collect, manage, analyze, report and disseminate M&E information. This means that, M&E system involves the integration of a number of components made up of processes and activities as well as basic M&E resources with the capacity to deliver on program’s ability to collect and manage data. A well-designed M&E system therefore comprises of detailed methodology or processes for collecting and using data including purpose/uses of data, type of data to be collected (both qualitative and quantitative), and frequency of data collection. Therefore, the description of a programme M&E system must specify: indicators to be tracked; meaning of key words; targets (mid-term and final); what tools will be used to collect data; the personnel who will gather, record and analyze the data, (for example, beneficiaries and other stakeholders); and the kinds of reports that will be prepared, including for whom, why and how often (NGO Connect, 2012). Freeman (2003), argues that, setting up M&E system involves more than just building a spreadsheet or database. He added that, in setting up an M&E system for a programme, there is the need to go through certain critical steps or

follow through some extensive processes which considered as an exercise that goes beyond a statistical task or just meeting an external obligation.

Kusek and Rist (2004), stated that setting up M&E system for a programmes or projects involves following specified outlined steps. There is however, no agreed specific number of steps required of programme designers and planners to set up M&E system, nevertheless, a number of steps have been suggested by different experts and specialist in the field of M&E to set up a programme M&E system. For example, Freeman (2003), outlined six steps, seven steps have been set out in both the *2008–2011 M&E system for BCPR* and in the FHI (2004) document on *Developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Work Plan* (FHI, 2004). Additionally, a discussion paper –*Recommendation for Adaptation M&E in practice*– by the GIZ (2013), indicates five key steps are described to aid setting up of a programme M&E system. Kusek and Rist (2001), identified that the several writers and specialist in the field of M&E have empathically points out that, choosing between the numbers of steps to follow in setting out the M&E system should not be a challenge, however, for the purposes of reducing vagueness as to the sequence and activities required at each step, it is better to have a comprehensive and elaborate step. Table 2.1 presents a ten-step approach for setting out M&E system by Kusek and Rist in 2001.

Table 1: Ten Steps to a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System

No	Step	Meaning
Step 1	Conducting readiness assessment	Step one focuses on determining the capacity and willingness of the government and its development partners to construct a performance-based M&E system.
Step 2	Agreeing on outcomes to monitor and evaluate	This step addresses the key requirement of developing strategic outcomes and goals that then focus and drive the resource allocation and activities of the government and its development partners
Step 3	Selecting key indicators to monitor outcomes	This is the means of assessing the degree to which the outcomes and goals are being achieved. Indicator development is a core activity in building an M&E system and drives all subsequent data collection, analysis, and reporting.
Step 4	Baseline data on indicators (where are we today)	This step stresses that the measurement of progress (or not) towards goals begins with the description and measurement of initial conditions being addressed by the goals.
Step 5	Planning improvement (selecting result targets)	This step recognizes that most goals are long-term, complex, and not quickly achieved. Thus there is a need to establish interim targets that specify how much progress towards a goal is to be achieved, in what time frame, and with what level of resource allocation.
Step 6	Monitoring for results	Building a monitoring system becomes the administrative and institutional task of establishing data collection, analysis, and reporting guidelines; designating who will be responsible for which activities; establishing means of quality control; establishing timelines and costs; working through the roles and responsibilities of the government, the other development partners, and civil society; and establishing guidelines on the transparency and dissemination of the information and analysis.
Step 7	The role of evaluation	This is a crucial step in this process, as it determines what findings are reported to whom, in what format, and at what intervals.
Step 8	Reporting your findings	Reporting your findings focusses on the contributions that evaluation studies and analyses can make throughout this process to assessing performance and movement towards goals and outcomes.
Step 9	Using your findings	This emphasizes that the crux of the system is not in simply generating performance-based

		information, but in getting that information to the appropriate users in the system in a timely fashion so that they can take it into account (as they choose) in the management of the government
Step 10	Sustaining the M&E system within your organisation	This step recognizes the long-term process involved in ensuring longevity and utility. There are five key criteria that are seen to be crucial to the construction of a sustainable system: demand, structure, trustworthy and credible information, accountability, and capacity

Source: (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

Another important aspect of an M&E system beside the steps or approach is the need for requisite M&E tools and documents (ACF, 2011). This must either supports in undertaking the proposed steps in setting up the M&E systems are produced as outputs or resultant products after going through these laid down steps. Ideally, there are crucial M&E tools/documents that are expected to be available in a functional M&E system.

Contrarily, Engela & Ajam (2010), also indicate six steps in developing M&E system. They indicate that the steps are:

- Establishing the purpose and scope: why do we need M&E and how comprehensive should our M&E system be?
- Identifying questions, information need and indicators: what do we need to monitor and evaluate
- Planning information gathering and organization: how will the required information be gathered and organized
- Planning critical reflection processes and events: how will we make sense of the information gathered and use it for improvement?

- Planning for quality communication and reporting: how and to whom do we want to communicate what in terms of our project activities and processes?
- Planning for necessary conditions and capabilities: what is needed to ensure our M&E system actually works?

Additionally, the UNWFP (2002), identified seven core tools of an M&E system. ACF (2011), also revealed five core tools of an M&E system and these are presented in table 2.2 below. This list is may not be comprehensive, nor is it intended to be. Some of these tools and approaches are complementary; some are substitutes but they are regarded as basic tools for an M&E system (World Bank and OECD, 2004).

Table 2: Core Tools of an M&E System

Core M&E tools identified by the UNWFP	Project logical framework summarizes the project plan and ways of measuring achievements;
	Project M&E plan summarizes M&E data to be collected, how, frequency and by whom;
	Project budget summarizes project costs including M&E budget resources (depending on project size, the M&E budget line(s) should account for 5–15% of the total budget);
	Reporting templates detail what needs to be reported on, frequency and to whom;
	Monitoring tools (e.g. questionnaires) detail the methods by which data will be collected.
Core M&E tools identified by the ACF	A logical framework
	An M&E plan for data collection and analysis, covering baseline, ongoing monitoring and evaluation.
	Reporting flows and formats.
	A feedback and review plan.
	A capacity building design.
	An implementation schedule.
A budget.	

Source: UNWFP, 2002; ACF, October, 2011

This means undertaking the exercise of setting out and implementing the M&E system should be in a participatory manner as it has an additional value of bringing in stakeholders' understanding, creating a learning environment by sharing understanding, and facilitates smooth data collection to ensure that results are valid and comparable (Freeman, 2003)

Making M&E System Functional

Functional M&E system serves as a tool which gears an organization or a country towards the achievement of its goals (Khan, 2003). That is, it provides warning system as well as a safeguard against organization's vulnerabilities. Making M&E system functional for an organisation does not imply it will automatically function to meet the organizational or programme objectives. Gorgens and Kusek (2009), added to it that, it is worth noting that a well functional and well recognised M&E System could give tremendous drive to the programme and performance of an organization. Effort is therefore needs to be placed in making M&E system effective and fully functional for quality product or service delivery. A number of quality features has been suggested by the World Bank (2004) and Khan (2003).

According to Senge (1990), a functional M&E system entails three groups of specific components. He explicated that, twelve core components can be recognised in an M&E system. However, encompassing components of a functional M&E system is presented by Gorgens and Kusek, (2009). Here they indicated twelve key components of a functional M&E system which offers a framework within which M&E system operates as presented in figure 2.1.



Figure 1 The 12 Components of a functional M&E system

Source: Gorgens and Kusek, (2009)

Furthermore, Senge (1990), categorised the twelve core components of an M&E system under three main types namely; the Enabling Environment which focus on people, partnership and planning. The second type, Data and Information also emphasis on data collection, capturing and verification. The third type is Use in Decision Making. This type indicates that the design should be based on understanding who is making what choices and when. It talks about the use of feedback in decisions, not simply reporting up and out.

Gorgens and Kusek (2009), again classified the first six components as relating to “People, Partnership and Planning” the next four relating to “Collecting,

Capturing and Verifying data” and the last one as “Using data for decision making”. They elucidated further that there exist a kind of interdependency among these components and indicated for example that, without aligned organizational structures, collecting routine data or getting people to work together would be difficult. They added that though there is the need to make each component functional, we also need to remember that the components depend on each other.

Khan (2003), affirmed that setting up a functional M&E system means to build the capacity of its personnel, equip them with necessary tools, provide resources and create cultural basis in the organization for Monitoring and Evaluation. A balanced combination of the above factors would produce a working environment most supportive of M&E function in order to manage projects effectively.

Factors that Derail the Implementation of an M&E

Görgens and Kusek (2009), reveal that Monitoring and Evaluation as a management activity is dynamic and as such it comes the likelihood of facing difficulties in the course of designing and implementation. Several of these challenges have been identified by specialist and writers on the subject. These amongst others include resistance or lack of interest from major partners, limited cooperation and political support and perhaps capacity constraints (GIZ, 2013). They added that experiencing these challenges may differ from programme to programme and it depends mostly on the setting within which the M&E system is been implemented. A cue is taken from how Khan (2003) describes some possible scenarios – as has been elaborated above – of how a programme or some organizational M&E systems can be classified. M&E is recognized to as a powerful management activity that can be applied by policymakers and decision makers to track progress and demonstrate the impact of a particular project, programme, or policy. Kusek and Rist (2004), indicated

that building an effective M&E system is easier said than done. That is, after building the system, sustenance becomes a problem as both building and sustaining the M&E system requires continuous commitment, time and resources, and where it is at the national level, a stable political environment. Some identified challenges associated with setting out and sustaining the M&E system of a particular organization or programme to be subjected to any of the four scenarios will include;

Political Factors

According to Kusek and Rist, it takes what they described as a “champion” – a leader – to institute a well and effective M&E system. This they believe is due to the fact that bringing information into the public domain can change the dynamics of institutional relations, budgeting, and resource allocations, personal political agendas and public perceptions of governmental effectiveness. Thus, the role of a political champion is relevant to ensuring the institutionalization and sustainability of functional M&E systems (Kusek and Rist, 2004).

Technical Factor

As a professional field, M&E is comparatively new, as are M&E systems and therefore a critical challenge to the operationalization of the M&E system is the limited experience personnel and institutions. According to Görgens and Kusek, there is a great demand for skilled professionals and capacity in building M&E systems. They went on to mention that there is a dearth of skilled M&E professionals and a lack of harmonized training courses and technical advice available (Görgens and Kusek, 2009).

Misconception Factor

Another critical challenge has to do with the fact that there is a prevailing misconception about the purpose of M&E in most project interventions or government sectors –especially in developing countries– (Görgens and Kusek, 2009). Most project implementers have suspicions about the activities involve in M&E.

Budget, Time, and Data Collection

Budget, time, and data collection are other constraints related to M&E particularly the evaluation process. The number of interviews that can be conducted for an evaluation purpose can be limited by budget constraints, so is the possibility of choosing the right data collection methods. The ability to combine quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis, the size and professional experience of the research team, and the analysis that can be conducted are all bound by the budget. Time implication comes in when determining the life for the M&E processes–begin and ends, even how long researchers can be in the field, and time available for feedback from stakeholders. These factors invariably challenge the M&E system for most project interventions (The World Bank 2006).

Human Capacity and Performance of M&E

According to Ministry of Health – Kenya (2010:16), the efficiency and effectiveness of M&E system depends largely on both the capacity and performance of the people implementing it at different levels. Thus, human capacity is critical to ensuring a well-functioning M&E system. In other words, the M&E system cannot function effectively without skilled people who is well equipped to execute the M&E tasks for which they are responsible. Therefore, understanding the skills needed and the capacity of people involved in the M&E system (undertaking human capacity assessments) and addressing capacity gaps (through structured capacity development

programs) is at the core of the M&E system (Gorgens & Kusek, 2009:95). In its framework for a functional M&E system, UNAIDS (2008) notes that, not only is it necessary to have dedicated and adequate number of M&E staff, it is essential for the same staff to have the right skills for the work. Gorgens and Kusek (2009), suggest that, the existence of competent staff with M&E background on the programme and or an M&E Unit that coordinates programme M&E activities as human capacity building is the second on the list of Gorgens and Kusek (2009) in their 12 components of an M&E systems. Similarly, Khan (2003) indicates specifically that, a formal M&E system set-up, includes specific section and or person(s) assigned to carry out the M&E mandate. Moreover, M&E human capacity building requires a wide range of activities, including formal training, in-service training, mentorship, coaching and internships. Moreover, M&E capacity building should not only emphasis on the technical aspects, but also address skills in leadership, financial management, facilitation, supervision, advocacy and communication. This is to say that, the most important capacity in implementing change is human capacity development. This involves the development of skills and the effective use of managerial, professional and technical staff and volunteers (for example, through training) to achieve desired results.

Khan (2003), opines that, the human resource to carry out M&E functions are not different from other professionals and managers in the organization. She added that, it should therefore be part of an organization's human resource development policy to orient and train middle management for the M&E functions and also rotate them into various jobs for cross training aimed at better understanding and appreciation of the work done by other colleagues in the organization. Consequently, M&E functions must be seen as all-inclusive responsibility, particularly, when a

separate units, departments and individuals are allocated to the work to avoid internal conflict. This would help to create a culture of conscious monitoring and evaluation. She provided key approach in strengthening human capacity and performance in M&E as outlined below;

- Making arrangements to retain unit's experience and knowledge with continuous on the job cross training system;
- Creating opportunities for advance training and delegation of higher responsibility and space to work more independently;
- Intensifying interaction among departments at all levels of management for experience sharing, building team spirit and affiliation with the organization;
- Evolving standards for internal monitoring and evaluation of the quality of work and performance in the unit as well as means for sustained improvement in output, trouble shooting and conflict resolution.

A wide range of competencies and skills are needed to implement M&E activities at different levels of the health system. These skills and numbers will vary based on the complexity of the organizational function, M&E roles and performance expected at each level. Nonetheless, it is necessary to have dedicated and adequate numbers of M&E staff with competencies to deliver their mandate.

Political Influence on M&E

Kenya has a strong political culture which is ethnic based. Ethnic favoritism is one of the political strategies where the politicians manipulate the allocation of public expenditure with an aim of gaining mileage from the supporters. Since Kenya gained independence, there is a strong evidence of ethnic favoritism: districts that share the ethnicity of the politician receive substantial expenditure on projects such as roads

where they get up to four times the length of paved roads built (Burgess et al., 2013). Strong political support, together with a commitment to the smallholder sector for example, is at the heart of support of the dairy industry. Influential politicians have been enlisted as one of the key players in the success and failure of the dairy industry in Kenya (Atieno, 2014). Muriithi & Crawford (2003) identified several issues related to approaches to project management in Africa, including the need to cope with political and community demands on project resources. Politics both in the organization and in the country is motivated by the scarcity of resources and the interests of the leaders. Generally in Africa a number of decisions are politically motivated.

Pinto (2000) advises that successful project management is directly linked to the ability of project managers and other key players to understand the importance of organizational politics and how to make them work for project performance. Most of the people view politics with distaste; nevertheless, effective managers are often those who are willing and able to employ appropriate political tactics to further their project goals. All aspects of the project are reviewed during the project appraisal stage in order that the decision on whether or not to proceed can be made. One of the criteria that should be used in developing countries is the political impacts on the project (Cusworth and Franks, 2013).

During monitoring and evaluation phase, political influence should also be reviewed so as to determine whether the project will continue or not. Politicians use the sacred cow model as one of the entry points in attempt to control projects. The Sacred Cow Model involves a situation where a project is identified and suggested by a senior and powerful individual in an organization. These models are used by government funded projects in developing countries partly because these governments

earn political support from citizens based on the number and size of projects they undertake (Asaka et al., 2012). The governors who are the CEOs of the county governments are elected by the citizens. There is therefore likelihood that most of them may use sacred cows model in identification of some major projects. Monitoring and evaluation of projects that have been selected in this manner may also face political influence which may either positively or negatively affect the project performance.

Best Practices of Monitoring and Evaluation

According to Markos (2019), monitoring and evaluation plans that follows a set of accepted best practices are easy to implement and also provide information which will help to improve program performance. Jill Mathis et al (2001), indicated that the success of any M&E plan is dependent on the following seven accepted best practices in monitoring and evaluation.

1. Link the M&E Plan to the Strategic Plan and Work plan
2. Emphasize Efficiency and Cost-effectiveness
3. Use Data from Multiple Sources
4. Employ a Participatory Approach
5. Draw on the Best Combination of International and Local Expertise
6. Disseminate the Results to a Broad Audience
7. Facilitate the Use of Data for Program Improvement

Capacity, Capacity Development and Monitoring and Evaluation in Context

According to OECD (2002), governments of developing countries have realized that capacity deficiencies in developing countries is a major constraint in achievement of policy goals and objectives. The international conferences on

sustainable development in Johannesburg and on financing for development in Monterey (2002) reaffirmed the importance of the systematic development of sustainable capacity in poor countries such as Ghana. Additionally, a report of the Commission for Africa in 2005 supports and linked capacity (defined as the ability to design and deliver policies) with accountability (how an entity or state answers to its people) as the key priorities to be addressed by developing states. Hauge (2003), reveals that past efforts at capacity development have been disappointing, despite an estimated 25% of donor support having been devoted to it. This was attributed to these reasons, the piecemeal nature of reforms; poor political commitment and leadership; reforms that were ill-focused on behavioral issues; 'short-termism'; destructive donor practices (especially with regard to aid management structures) and inadequate monitoring of the impacts of reforms. The Commission for Africa report argues for an explicit framework for monitoring the results of well-defined capacity building activities. Ojok and Bashaka (2020), mentions that the principal means of monitoring practices and capacities is the African Peer Review Mechanism (a product of the deliberations of UNECA, NEPAD and the OECD), to which 24 African countries (representing 75% of the continent's population) have signed up.

According to OECD (2009), there is some recognition of the importance of complementary approaches to building capacities in public sector environments. World Bank (2005c: 35-36), stated that, the World acknowledges the problems encountered and the failures in capacity building in terms of monitoring and evaluation as well as public sector capacities in difficult socio-political and institutional contexts. It strains that the lessons from inauspicious experiences point to a need more efforts to be put in with approaches that are likely to enhance the demand for better public sector performance, including tighter accountability, public financial

management and decentralization (UNDP, 2009). Only country 'ownership' of capacity enhancement processes can address the influence of political economy and cultural factors affecting demand for public sector performance. However, there is still a dearth of empirical work to guide capacity building strategies.

In his paper to the Learning Network on Programme based Approaches (LENPA), Lavergne (2005) indicates how the discussion in that donor forum has touched upon the importance of demand for performance. He describes technocratic approaches to diagnostic work on capacity that pay too little attention to the social and political dimensions of change, motivation, incentives, or to governance and accountability issues. He also notes not just a dearth of empirical work on 'capacity', but that this state of affairs also applies to 'performance'.

Empirical Review

Several studies have been conducted to better understand the requirement of monitoring and evaluation at the local levels and government institutions cope with it. According to a study by Ojambo (2012), district level monitoring and evaluation system is not well-organized enough to explain cause and attribution between stages of development transformation. In his study of the Development of Monitoring and Evaluation Capacities to Improve Government Performance in Uganda, Hauge (2003:13-16) revealed that the quality of public service delivery in Uganda is poor, and that the M&E system is overly focused on government requirements and regulations rather than the end-results of policy, program, and project efforts. The impact of accountability monitoring and assessment, management choices, and organizational learning on good governance, according to a study done in Oman, is statistically minimal. In other words, effective organizational learning governance has yet to be created, and decision-making will be limited unless the government pays

more attention to the monitoring and evaluation Department's report and data. According to Acheampong (2015), monitoring and evaluation is a dynamic management position, and finding a program that incorporates M&E best practices correctly in its implementation is difficult. That is, a high level of integration in development interventions has been established to be achieved by following key steps/processes and applying some basic M&E methods. Livelihood initiatives may be in various levels of integrating M&E systems with management activities as they are implemented. According to Khan (2003), the lack of an efficient and effective M&E framework for tracking development program objectives and evaluating success is a basic planning and implementation difficulty. This indicates that a poor M&E system in development program management, such as the chosen livelihood program, affects lawmakers, donor organizations, and program stakeholders, as well as delaying progress.

Theoretical Framework

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are indispensable tools for assessing the progress, efficiency, and impact of programs and projects (Hammood and Alishah, 2020). To comprehensively analyze the effectiveness of M&E process, a theoretical framework is essential, providing a structured foundation for understanding the complex interplay of factors influencing M&E practices. Theories that underpin monitoring and evaluation practices include the following;

Social-Constructivist Theory

According to Hammood and Alishah (2020), the social-constructivist theory suggests that knowledge is socially constructed through interaction and dialogue. Grand (2022), stated that in monitoring and evaluation setting, social-constructivist theory highlights the importance of engaging local stakeholders, including community

members, policymakers as well as project implementers. The involvement of these stakeholders in the monitoring and evaluation processes could aid in the achievement of holistic understanding of the local dynamics as well as ensuring that the assessment is contextually relevant and meaningful.

Institutional Theory

The Institutional theory emphasizes the impact of formal and informal institutions on organizational behavior and decision-making (Martinsuo & Geraldi, 2020). That is, at the local level, various institutions such as governmental bodies, NGOs, and community organizations play essential roles in M&E practices. This theory asserts that the effectiveness of M&E efforts depends on the alignment of these institutions, their capacity, and their adherence to established norms and standards.

Complex Adaptive Systems Theory

Grand (2022), mentioned that M&E practices at the local level often involve multiple stakeholders, diverse variables, and dynamic interactions. Sartas et al. (2020), stressed that the complex adaptive systems theory views local communities as complex networks of interconnected elements. This perspective recognizes the nonlinear relationships between different components of the system and emphasizes the need for flexible, adaptive, and iterative M&E approaches that can accommodate the evolving nature of these systems.

Outcome Mapping

Woodrow and Jean (2019), stated that outcome mapping is a methodology in relation to the concept of M&E that focuses on understanding the changes in behavior, relationships, and actions of individuals and communities. They added that, by utilizing outcome mapping techniques, this study aims to assess the effectiveness

of M&E practices in capturing and analyzing qualitative changes, providing a nuanced understanding of the impact of local programs and policies.

These theories provide a comprehensive lens for assessing the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices at the local level (Hammood and Alishah, 2020). These approaches ensure critical analysis, considering not only the technical aspects of M&E but also the social, institutional, and adaptive dimensions, which help to gain insights to enhance M&E practices for more impactful and sustainable outcomes at the grassroots level.

Conceptual Framework

According to Ouma (2013), conceptual framework consists of broad ideas and principles that are taken from pertinent field on survey and used to structure a successive presentation. That is to say that is it hypothesized model identifying the relationship between variables. The research establishes a conceptual framework that displays the issues relating to monitoring and evaluation activities and strategies. It explains the key variables (dependent and independent) and the relationship that exist between them in order to support the research and help in making meaning of subsequent findings. Employing monitoring and evaluation requirements and strategies comprises of several activities which involve the collaboration of stakeholders in every single activity.

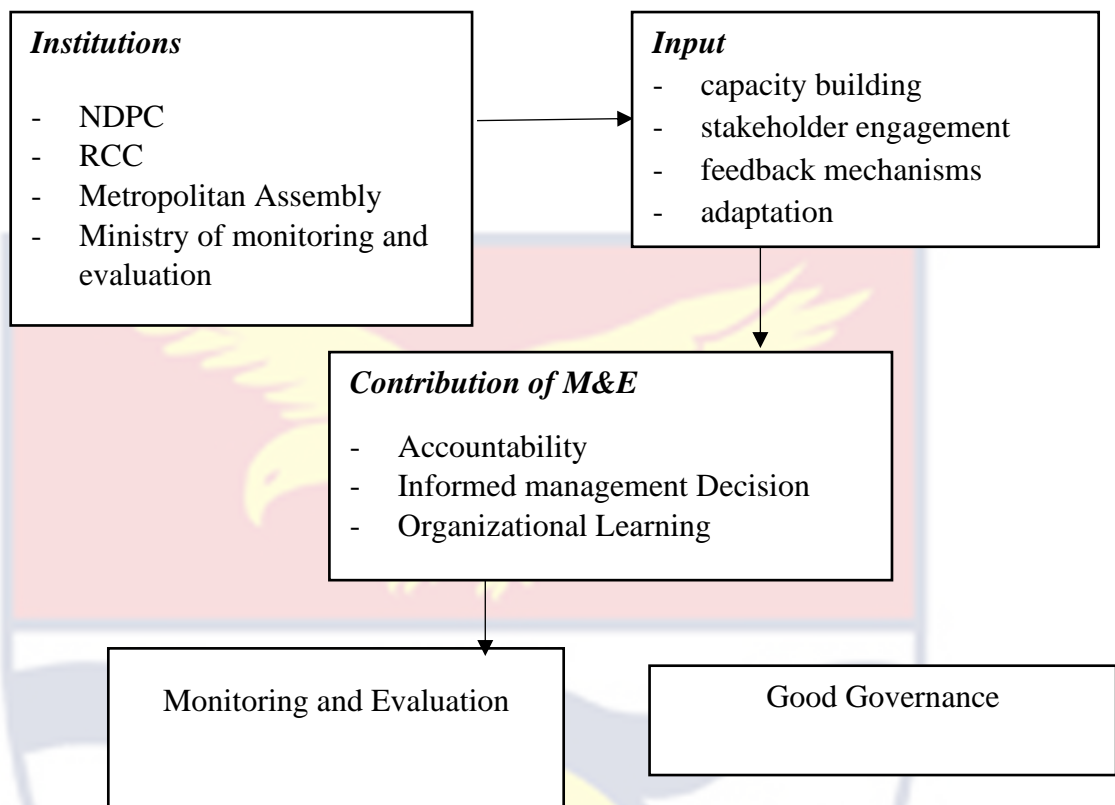


Figure 2 Conceptual Framework

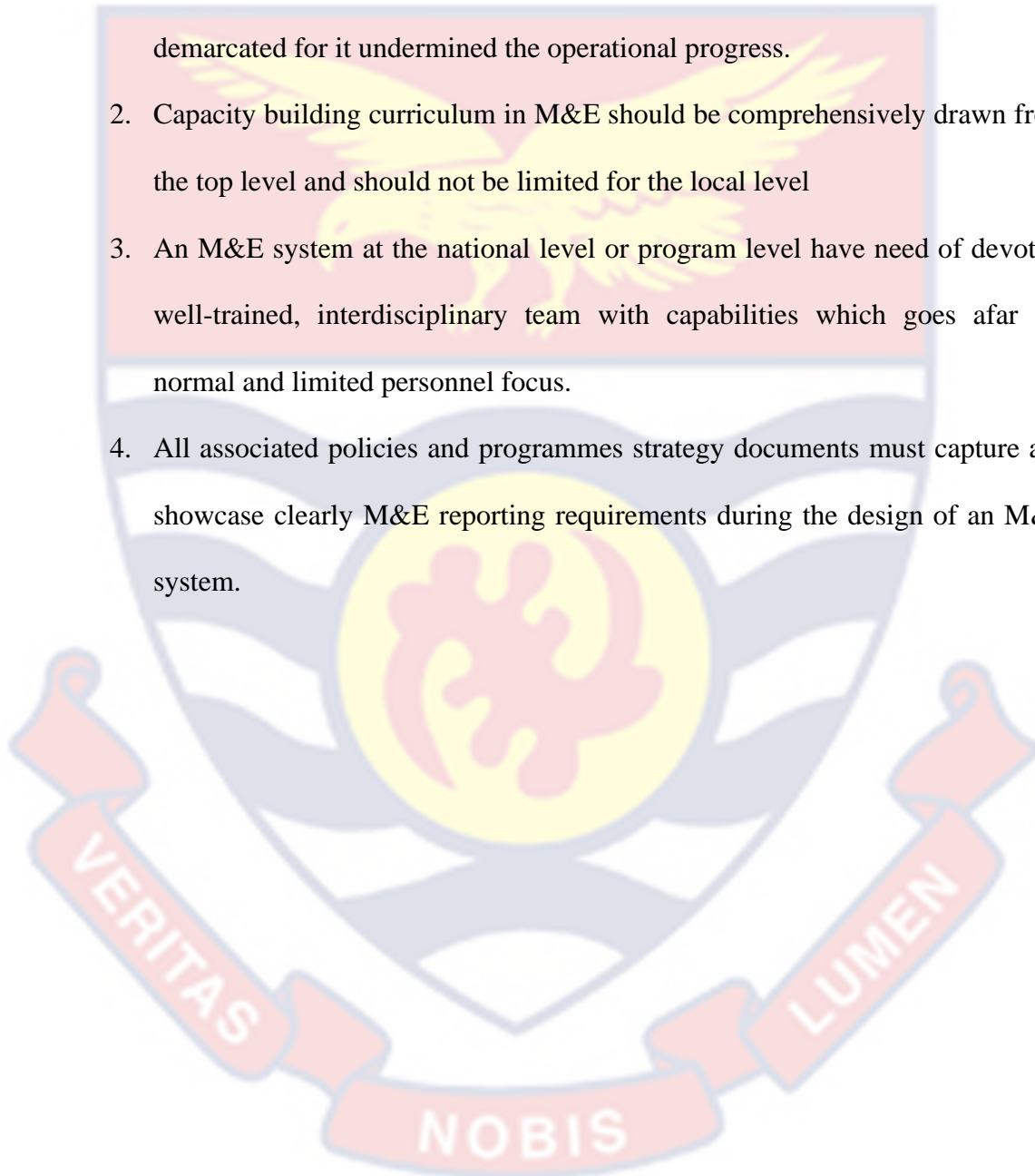
Source: author's Construct, 2022

Figure 2.2 indicates that, institutions such as the Ministry of Monitoring and Evaluation, Regional Coordinating Council, the Metropolitan Assembly and Planning Authorities are the institutions and units that are responsible for ensuring effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation. This conceptual framework illustrates the interconnections between key variables involved in assessing the effectiveness of M&E practices at the local level in Ghana. It emphasizes the importance of not only collecting and analyzing data but also engaging stakeholders, building local capacities, and ensuring that the evaluation process is adaptable and responsive. The ultimate outcome is the improvement of programs and sustainable development within local communities in Ghana. That is, monitoring and evaluation will ensure

Accountability, Management Decision and Organizational Learning. This will further help to promote good governance.

Lessons Learnt

1. It was identified that though planning is a good thing the much time demarcated for it undermined the operational progress.
2. Capacity building curriculum in M&E should be comprehensively drawn from the top level and should not be limited for the local level
3. An M&E system at the national level or program level have need of devoted, well-trained, interdisciplinary team with capabilities which goes afar the normal and limited personnel focus.
4. All associated policies and programmes strategy documents must capture and showcase clearly M&E reporting requirements during the design of an M&E system.



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The previous chapter provided a literature review of the concept of monitoring and evaluation. This is, it presented an exhaustive exposition of the development of the monitoring and evaluation system, as well as human capacity building in M&E and how MMDAs and other institution cope with M&E requirement.

This chapter elaborates on the methods adopted to collect data in order to answer the research questions. The chapter also discusses the profile of the study area, the research design and the methodology for calculating sample size as well as the research methodologies. This chapter describes the data collecting devices, as well as the data processing and analysis that were utilized to meet the research's goals.

Profile of the Study Area

This section provides an overview of the Wassa Amenfi Central District. It highlights the background information, the location, size, topography as well as political administration of the study area. It also elaborates on the District Planning Stakeholders and Area councils. The subsequent subsection describes in detail the features of the study area.

Location and Size

The geographical scope of the study will focus on Wassa Amenfi Central District. It lies between latitudes 5° 20'N and 7° 10'N and longitudes 2° 9'W and 2° 27'W. The Municipality covers a total land area of 1,845.93 square kilometers (1,845.93 km²) with 131 communities. Manso Amenfi is the administrative capital of the District. It is bounded to North by Bibiani-Ahwiaso Bekwai District; to the North-

West by Sefwi Wiawso Municipal; to the South by Ellembelle and Nzema East Districts; to the South-East by Prestea Huni-Valley District; to the East by Amenfi East District and to the West by Amenfi West District.

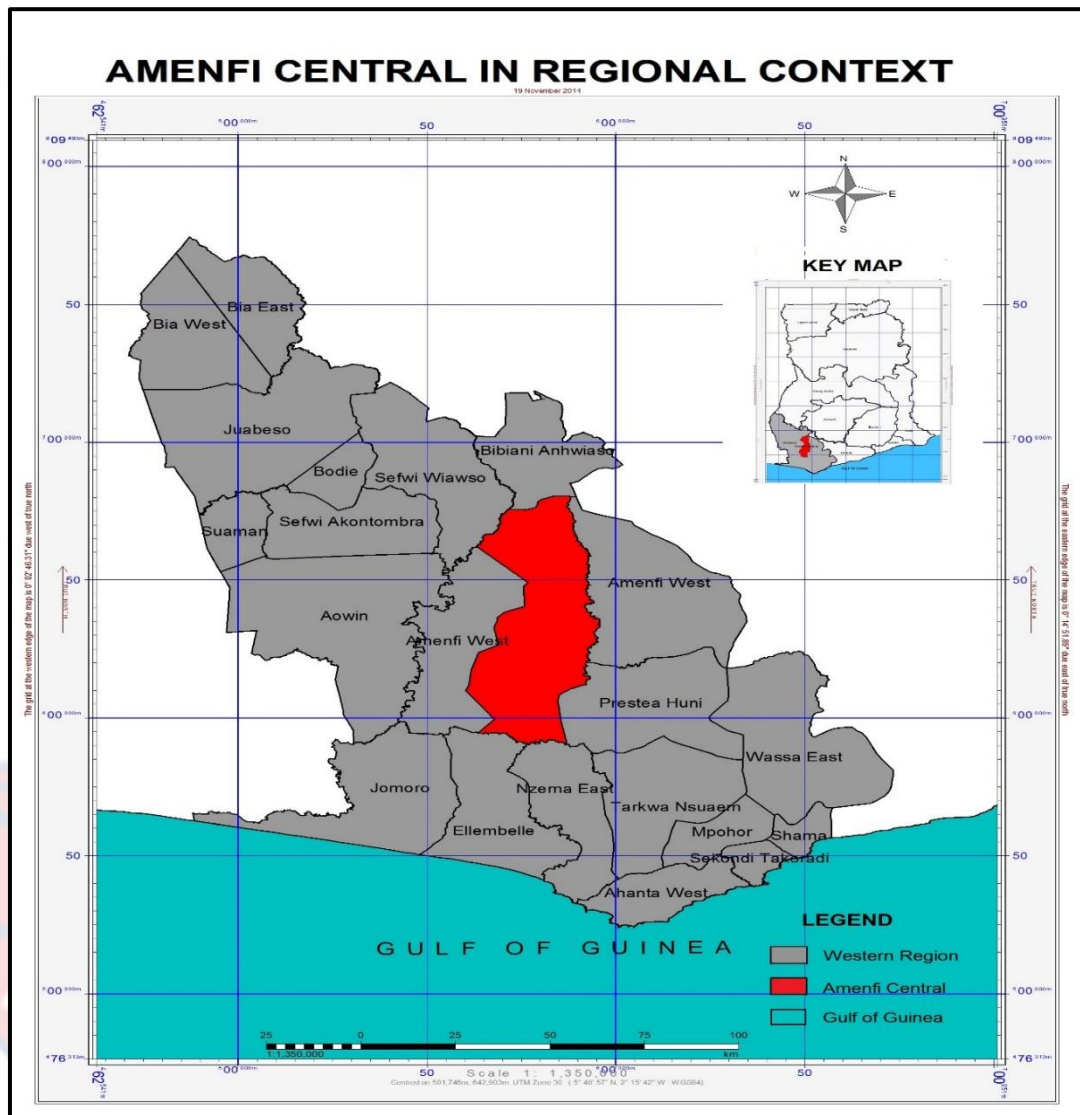


Figure 3 Map of Wassu Amenfi Central District

Source: Physical Planning Department (ACDA) – June 2022

Political and Administrative Structure

In accordance with the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462), the District Assembly is the highest political and administrative body of the District. The District Chief Executive (DCE) and the District Coordinating Director (DCD) are the political

and administrative heads of the district respectively. The General Assembly is chaired by an elected presiding member. The Assembly is made up of 32 Assembly Members of whom 21 are elected by voting and 11 are appointed by the President in consultation with the traditional authorities and other interest groups in the district. The Amenfi Central District Assembly has Five (5) Area Councils, namely; Manso Amenfi, Juabo, Adjakaa-Manso, Achichire and Agona-Amenfi which are all in good standing and contribute to the development of the District by helping in the generation of internal revenue.

The Assembly has an Executive Committee (EC) which is chaired by the District Chief Executive. The District has 11 Decentralised Department which contribute to the smooth running of the District. There are five statutory sub-committees which help the EC carry out its functions. These are:

- Finance and Administration
- Development Planning
- Works
- Social Services
- Justice and Security

The District Assembly has other two subcommittees in addition to the statutory five subcommittees. These are the Environmental and Micro Scale Enterprises Subcommittees. The EC is made up of chairpersons of the subcommittees. There are other committees which perform advisory roles and are also critical to the efficient performance of the functions of the EC. These include the District Tender Committee, the District Education Oversight Committee, Public Relations and Complaints Committee and the District Security Committee (DISEC). The DISEC is

chaired by the DCE. Day to day administration of the district is performed by the Central Administration (Secretariat of the District Assembly) with technical support from the 11 decentralized departments.

Research Design Approach

According to Leedy and Omrod (2001), research design is a broad framework for gathering and interpreting data. Kothari (2004), asserts that research design involves the process of establishing conditions for data collection and analysis in order to strike a balance between study purpose relevance and procedural economy. He added that case study cross-sectional design, longitudinal design, and experimental research design are four most prevalent research designs. Bell (2004) supports that research design appropriate for any study that depends on in-depth understanding of a phenomenon over a short period of time, when a large-scale survey is unlikely to yield the needed results. Example of these designs are exploratory research, descriptive research, causal research, and survey research. This study will employ an exploratory research approach. "The process of getting a thorough understanding of a situation or phenomena," Bless et al. (2006:47) define exploratory research as. The terms "good governance" and "measurement and assessment" will be defined more clearly as part of this inquiry.

With only a few quantitative data points, the study again adopted a case study research approach. This was chosen because that a specific phenomenon - the program M&E system – was selected to be studied, and the phenomenon's analysis was limited to M&E systems in the study district. According to Welman et al., the case study technique also aids researchers in conducting in-depth analyses of difficult subjects or exploratory research (2005:25).

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

According to Saunders et al. (2003), sampling is the process of selecting a group of people for research from a broader group known as the population. A total of 83 workers from the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly and Area Councils were involved in the study. That is all the staff members within the municipal assembly were involved. Probability and non-probability sampling are the two most common approaches used in researches. This research utilized the non-probability sampling procedures for the study. The judgmental sampling approach which falls under this sampling method was also used and it involves the researcher selecting units to be sampled based on their expertise and professional decisions.

The approach takes advantage of the numerous factors discovered during the literature evaluation to select the best research methodologies to use.

Calculation of Sample Size for the Selected Communities

Formula for calculating sample size:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where;

n = sample size = 150

N = sample frame (105)

e = error of margin (5%)

Secondary Data Collection Process

According to Khothari (2004), data is termed as secondary when it has been collected and analyzed by a third party, other than the person undertaking the research. In this study, secondary data was collected in order to provide standard upon which subsequent primary data collection was based by bridging the identified data gaps in the literature. The secondary data was collected from sources such published and unpublished documents relating to the topic. Published data was mainly sought and scrutinized to ensure reliability, suitability and adequacy of the content provided.

Journals and reports also provided important information on the conceptual and theoretical issues on monitoring and evaluation practices. The conceptual issues derived from secondary data sources were meaning of the concept of monitoring and evaluation, requirement for monitoring and evaluation at the district levels as well as the challenges of monitoring and evaluation. Other sources were publications from foreign or international organizations, public records and statistics.

Primary Data Collection Instruments and Procedures

Data collection tools are the instruments which are used to collect the necessary information needed to serve or prove some facts (Mugenda, 2003). Due to the fact that this study is mixed in nature, key indicators, semi-structured interviews and various documents were used to investigate the key objectives of this study. Data collection involved a systematic approach by which information was gathered from several sources to get a complete and accurate picture of an area of interest. Before the start of the research, the researcher formally informs the authority of the Wasswa Amenfi Central District Assembly about the research through communication. Upon granting the researcher the permission to conduct the research, the researcher spread the questionnaires among the employees to collect the data.

In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with the administration component of the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly, specifically the District Coordinating Director and the other directors and officers within the District Assembly. The researcher was however able to schedule and conduct separate interviews with the individuals at a convenient date and time. The officers interviewed were assured of their confidentiality to foster objectivity in their responses. The semi-structured interviews consisted of 20-30 minute sessions with each participant. The questions that were covered during the semi-structured interviews were aligned to the key objectives of the study, and covered three main themes, namely, the district environment, coping monitoring and evaluation strategies adopted by the municipal assembly as well as the monitoring and evaluation capacity and challenges within the district. Additional information required for responding to the research questions which was not solicited during the interviews was sourced through the exchange of emails and phone calls shortly after the interviews.

Data Analysis Procedures

The processing of data started after the various instruments of data collection have been checked in order to ensure completeness, accuracy and consistency in the data. Thus, data analysis began after the editing and coding the responses. Prior to the analysis, the data was coded into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS version 20) which helped in the generation of tables and charts for analysis. That is SPSS was used in the analysis of quantitative data. According to Agresti and Min (2002), SPSS is one of the major statistical software programs that has functions for categorical data analysis, such as small-sample confidence intervals for differences and ratios of proportions. It can also calculate exact *p*-values and confidence intervals when a large dataset is gathered.

The method of data analysis was mainly qualitative (descriptive approach) and quantitative (interpretative approach using figures). The qualitative approach was used to make inductive inferences from text responses gathered from the respondents whereas the quantitative approach was also utilized to make deductive interpretation of statistical data gathered. The analysis also involved making comprehensive statements and analytical descriptions about the meaning of statements that were made by institutions and experts. In other words, the study adopted the coding method to transform the conversation with the M&E expert into a script. In all, the study applied thematic analytical approach. Thus, themes were developed based on the objectives of the study, literature review and theories for the collection of data. Data analysis were then done along these thematic areas. The analysis along the thematic approach enabled the researcher to cover all aspects of the objectives of the study.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations are vital in the undertaking a research on the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation practices at the local level in Ghana's Amenfi Central District. Respect for participants' autonomy, informed consent, and confidentiality are paramount. The researcher ensured the safety and well-being of participants, obtain proper permissions from authorities of the District Assembly, and maintain integrity throughout the study. Additionally, effort was made to avoid any harm to the respondents, protect sensitive information, and report findings accurately and transparently, adhering to ethical guidelines and principles.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

The preceding chapter presented the methodology adopted to undertake the study. It also described the location, size topography, demographic characteristics of the district. This helped in identifying the past and existing situations. It also explained research design approach, the sample size and the techniques used. This chapter elaborated the data collection instruments as well as the data processing and analyses used to achieve the objectives of this research.

Following that, this chapter discusses the monitoring and evaluation activities and strategies adopted by the study. Thus, it elaborates the monitoring and evaluation strategies of the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly. In addition, the effectiveness and challenges of the monitoring and evaluation activities are also highlighted in this chapter.

Characteristics of Respondents

Table 3 displays the distribution of respondents based on their gender. The results indicate that the majority of participants, 16 (53.3%), were male, while the remaining 14 (46.7%) were female. This highlights the deliberate consideration of gender balance in selecting participants to ensure reliable and equitable data collection for the assessment of the effectiveness of monitoring and processes of the District Assembly. Furthermore, the data reveals that the proportion of male respondents in the study exceeds the proportion of female respondents, which contrasts with the national male to female ratio of 0.97 males for every female, as reported by the Ghana Statistical Service in 2022.

Table 3: Sex of Respondent

Sex	Frequency (N=30)	Percent (%)
Male	44	53.3
Female	39	46.7
Total	83	100

Source: Field survey, 2022

Educational Characteristics of Respondents

According to Piff et al. (2010), an individual's educational background plays a crucial role in their ability to understand the objectives of the Assembly and, more importantly, to evaluate how effective the Assembly is in its monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities. The survey included 30 participants with varying levels of education, ranging from senior high school to tertiary/college education and even undergraduate/postgraduate degrees.

Table 4 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their educational qualifications. The results indicated that the majority of participants, 15 individuals (50%), were diplomats, while 10 individuals (33.3%) held university degrees, and the remaining 5 individuals (16.7%) were high school graduates employed by the Assembly. These findings highlight that the employees of the New Juaben Municipal Assembly possessed the necessary educational background to comprehend the Assembly's responsibilities and assess its effectiveness in fulfilling those duties.

Table 4: Education Level

Level of education	Percentage (%)
Degree	33.3
Diploma	50.0
SHS	16.7
Total	100

Source: Field survey, 2018

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies at the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly

This section of the chapter discusses how monitoring and evaluation is done at the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly. It runs through the planning and arrangements made for the activities, the processes as well as the nature of participation of the activity.

Planning of M&E Activities in the District

With regard to planning of M&E activities, the interview conducted and secondary data analysis result revealed that, the District Assembly has M&E plan that was prepared before starting the implementation of programmes and projects. Further probe indicated that during the planning, all technical as well as M&E staff participate to share their valuable knowledge and opinions. The Development Planning Unit indicated that the M&E plan is been updated quarterly and annually. This is done to meet the requirement of the NDPC. 68% of the staff showed that mostly, the M&E staffs do not comply with the M&E plan. As per their response, some of the M&E activities are performed out of the time frame set in the plan or sometimes not completed at all because of other activities that the M&E staff put as priority. Contrarily, 32% of them said that M&E staffs implement activities according to the plan. Monitoring the implementation of the M&E activities according to the plan is verified by the program staff during the field visits and by reviewing of reports received from the M&E office.

The District Planning Officer indicated that, the M&E plan details activities to be performed in a monthly and weekly basis and by whom the activities would be performed. He however added that the M&E plan of the Assembly is linked to National M&E Plan to tie its activities with the national development strategy.

Defining the result chain that are impact, outcomes, outputs, activities and inputs project, describing what needs to be monitored and evaluated, developing an M&E strategy, defining the indicators and bring it all together in an M&E plan with conditions and budget needed is the key for M&E and program integration activities (UNDP 2011). From district M&E plan review all the above elements are fulfilled but budgeting against each activity has not been considered important in the document. All respondents regarding the integration of M&E to other project activities said that, all M&E activities are properly integrated with all programme activities.

Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangement of Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly

As shown earlier in chapter two, Govender (2011), stated that governance is described by the quality of decisions; accountability; compliance and community participation resulting in local districts conform to legislation, regulations and corporate governance aspects. This section presents the M&E arrangements within the Wassa Amenfi Central District.

Corporate Governance

Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly in its Annual Report (2020/2021), indicated that corporate governance as a set of processes, practices, policies, laws and stakeholders which affect the way an institution is directed, administered and controlled. This was to enhance the assembly's public accountability and also ensure that its activities are conducted according to ethical standards. Corporate governance at the assembly involved the relationships between the many stakeholders involved and the goals for which the institution is governed. The Wassa Amenfi Central District Monitoring and Evaluation Plan (2022) details the following measures which forms part of its corporate governance.

1. Risk Management

The M&E system of the district assembly required the leadership to be strategic and have clear understanding of basic concepts and their potential uses so as to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. That is, the M&E system enhance commitment to providing the necessary financial, material and human resources for undertaking M&E within the District, thereby enabling it to develop and mature; Commitment to supporting the values and ethics that bring about a successful M&E (which include commitment to achieving development results, evidence-based policy formulation and decision making, objectivity, transparency and accountability, partnership and ownership of the development process by the stakeholders); A strong civil society demanding and advocating evidence-based policy making with consideration for age, gender, disability, social status, ethnicity, other social factors and cultural values; Willingness and ability to challenge any negative tendencies or culture within the government establishment; and Capacity within government institutions and civil society organizations to demand and use M&E information as part of the normal process of doing business.

The M&E system of the district assembly mandate the leadership to take all reasonable steps to ensure that the district has and maintains effective, efficient and transparent systems of financial and risk management and internal control, as well as the effective, efficient and economical use of the assembly's resources.

2. Anti-Corruption and anti-fraud

The Local Government Act, 1993, (Act 462), requires the implementation of effective bidding structures to minimize the possibility of corruption, while the District Finance Management Act, identifies supply chain measures to be enforced to combat corruption, favoritism and unfair and irregular practices. Additionally, the

laws of the assembly states that the Traditional Authorities and Civil Society organizations can hold MDAs and DAs more accountable and responsible for the delivery of goods and services as well as exposing malpractices, corruption and choices which do not benefit those needs the NDPF is supposed to address.

3. Audit Unit/Committee

The study revealed that the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly has an Audit Unit/Committee established to carry out performance appraisals and audit functions. The Monitoring and evaluation report issued by the District Planning Unit also indicated that the audit committee serve as an advisory body that advise the municipal council, the political office-bearers, the accounting officer and the management staff of the district on matters relating to internal financial control and internal audit; risk management; accounting policies; the adequacy, reliability and accuracy of financial reporting information; performance management; effective governance; compliance with this Act, the annual Division of Revenue Act and any other applicable legislation; Performance evaluation; and any other issues referred to it by the district.

Monitoring and Evaluation Processes in Wassa Amenfi Central District

Identifying the process adopted by the district assembly in the implementation of M&E functions becomes necessary in the quest to examine its effectiveness. The study therefore explored the various processes adopted by the district assembly to undertake M&E activities. It was realized from the survey that, the processes for carrying out M&E activities included community sensitization, beneficiary identification and training, input distribution, field data collection, data capture, reporting to progress reviews. Further probe discovered that, carrying out these monitoring and evaluation activities was identified to be the responsibility of mainly

the District Planning Unit, the works department as well as the programme staff. However, evaluation activities are initiated jointly by the DPDC and undertaken by mainly by the District Planning Unit. Also, the District Planning Officer revealed M&E Technical Coordinators from RCC sometimes provides technical support in terms of preparation of tools and processes as well as quality control and assurance for the M&E functions of the programmes and projects. Further probe discovered that, M&E activities of the programmes/projects in the district rests on the use of output indicators to track the progress towards the achievement of programme goals and objectives.

Moreover, the district planning officer mentioned that the mixed methods for field data collection were used in their monitoring and evaluation activities. These methods included interviews with programme beneficiaries and other key stakeholders and observation. It was further realized that, data collected from field are captured in respective modules in a database that served as a repository for data input and retrieval. The district planning officer said that *“programmes such as school feeding programme, malaria control programmes and many others have specific weekly and monthly reporting formats used for reporting on their monitoring activities”*. The survey however revealed that some of the respondents and even members of the MPCU and some programme staff were not aware of the standards reporting formats and for that matter did not apply it in their M&E process. Respondent awareness of reporting format in M&E is presented in figure 4.1.

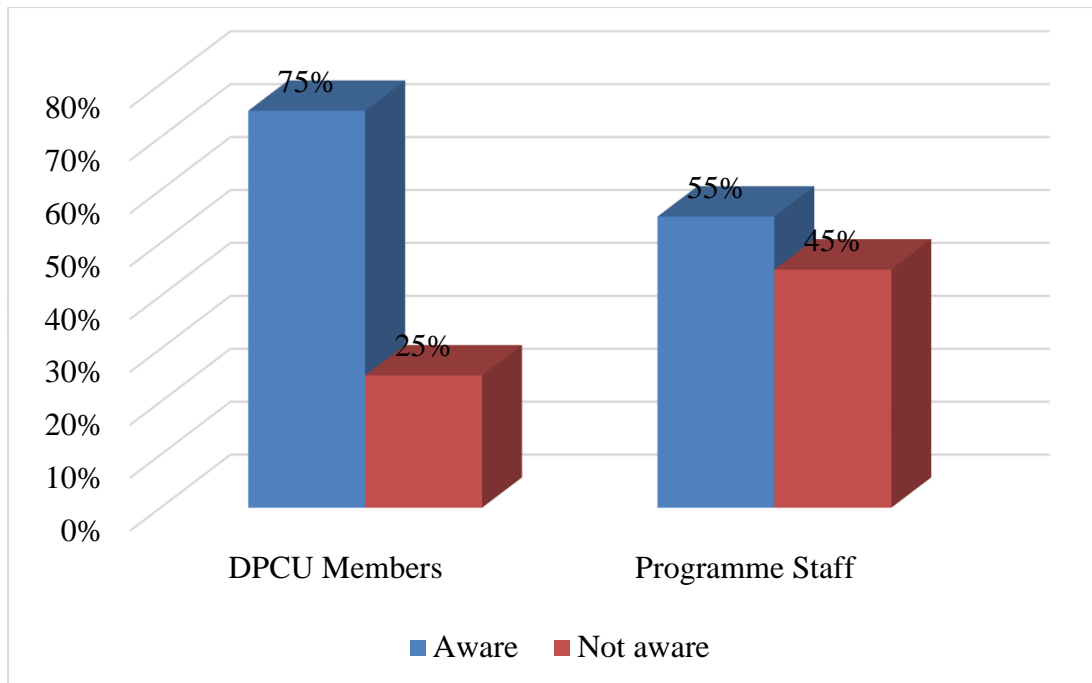


Figure 4 Respondent (staff and DPCU) Awareness of Monitoring Reporting Format

Source: Field Survey, 2022

The figure 4 above indicate that majority of MPCU members (75%) and programmes staff (55%) were aware of how to properly report information to ensure effective monitoring. However, responses from MPCU and programme staff indicated that programme progress reports serve the information needs of Programme Managers, programme staff and donors, as well as other stakeholders.

Stakeholder Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation

This section of the study exploits the how communities and other stakeholders are made to involve in the monitoring and evaluation activity of the Assembly. The analysis done based on the result when a question was posed on when whether the MPCU is solely responsible for M&E in the District. The result is shown in figure 4.2.

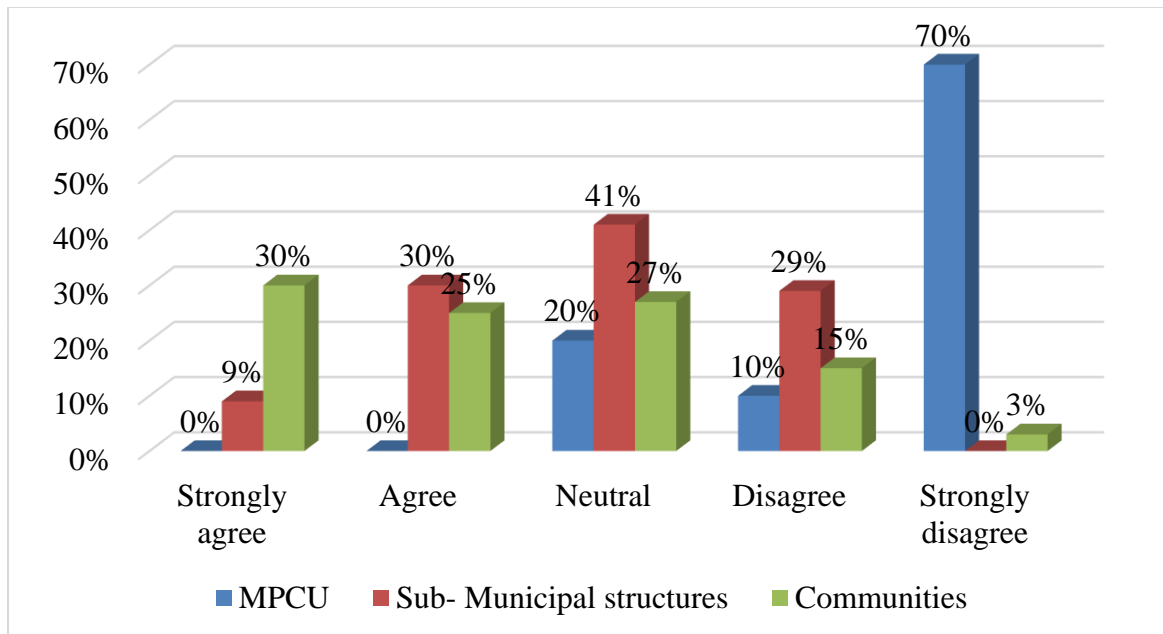


Figure 5 DPCU is Solely Responsible for Monitoring and Evaluation

Source: Field Survey, 2022

With the nature of participation in M&E, the study sought to examine the following; to determine whether the DPCU is solely responsible for monitoring and evaluation activities in the district, whether monitoring and evaluation promotes transparency and accountability and whether the district assembly involve the various stakeholders in monitoring and evaluation and sees it as a critical project management tool. Lastly, to identify how much the area councils are involved in monitoring and evaluation activities directly or indirectly. The results as indicated on figure 4.4 show the differences in the levels of agreement of the different categories of stakeholders.

From Figure 4.4, it can be realized that there is a strong divergence with the statement that the DPCU is solely responsible for M&E activities within the district. That is 70% percent of the DPCU members have strong perception that DPCU undertake monitoring and evaluation with other supporting stakeholders, however, this is different from that of the municipal sub structures and the communities. Thus,

9% of the respondents from the municipal sub structures and the communities each strongly agree to the fact that DPCU solely undertake M&E in the metropolis. This probably indicates that, in this particular case, some of the DPCU members in the assembly did not necessarily see the involvement of other stakeholders in M&E as particularly important. The strongest rejection to the statement was from the Community (55%), followed by the sub-structure (39%) and the DPCU (0%). The substantial rejection to the statement by especially the MPCU and the municipal is in line with the Local Government Act, 1993 (Act 462) which indicates that for the DPCU to perform its M&E functions effectively, the DPCU should co-opt representatives from other sector agencies, persons from the private sector and civil society organizations whose inputs will be needed in ensuring the participation of all stakeholders (NDPC, 2013). The response of communities and sub-structures implies that their involvement in M&E sometimes depends on the willingness of the MPCU to include them and to act on their observation of projects and programs in their respective sub areas. It also indicates that the community beneficiaries monitor projects though not in a formalized way. The DPCU direction of response could probably be because it views itself positively when it comes to the M&E of projects and program. However, 20% of the DPCU respondents remained neutral while 40% and 30% of the substructure and community also remained neutral. Few of the respondents agreed with the statement with the highest agreement, thus, 10% each from sub-structure and the community. The MPCU did not support the statement at all as none of them agrees or strongly agrees to it. This result implies that there was a low level of stakeholder participation in M&E activities in the municipality most especially the beneficiary community members of the various programmes and projects. This is because responses from stakeholders other than DPCU members

point to the fact that they are rarely fully involved in M&E activities. The situation realized from the study findings is contrary to the view of Institute of Development Studies (1998), which indicated that allowing to fully participate in M&E activities becomes an prospect for development organizations to focus better on their ultimate goal of improving the wellbeing of people as well as broadening involvement in identifying change of which a clearer picture can be gained of what is really happening on the ground. Stakeholder's involvement can also be an empowering process because it helps the people in charge are developed their skills and show also that their views count. The study indicates that the District Assembly does not fully involve all stakeholders. This might hinder the realization of the benefits of involving stakeholders especially stakeholders at the beneficiary community level. It must be emphasized that DPCU members consider monitoring and evaluation as a technical activity requiring technical indicators, means of verification and complex assumptions that community members are perceived not to understand. For some DPCU members, empowering community members to be part of the major drivers of the monitoring and evaluation process is expensive and time consuming.

Despite the strong rejection by the community that monitoring and evaluation is non-participatory, the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly indicated implementing the Ward Committee system to ensure community participation. The M&E Plan (2019-2020) of the municipality details that the objective of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government which results in ward committees being part of local governance and an important way of achieving the aims of local governance and democracy mentioned in the Constitution of 1992.

Additionally, as directed by the guidelines, the Assembly in its capacity incorporated the concept of Participatory M&E (PM&E). The Assembly intended to

embark on certain activities to build the capacity of the communities so that they track the progress of their own development as well as facilitate the process by being part of the solution.

Through PM&E, the Assembly interact with other stakeholders, especially community members and demonstrate the achievements as well as challenges. This served as a true mark of accountability and transparency to the people. The DPCU put in place the following PM&E tools and methodologies for social analysis and participatory impact assessment:

- Citizens Report Cards;
- Community Score Cards;
- Focus Group Discussions; and
- Participatory Expenditure Tracking of social service Expenditure

The views from the Assembly and the community are contrary which could be subjected to future detailed studies.

Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Processes of the District

This section discusses the effective machineries put in place by the Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly that ensured the effectiveness monitoring and evaluation activities and as well attained it goals and objectives. It presents how the processes of monitoring and evaluation are clearly outlined, the expertise required to implement monitoring and evaluation as well as how monitoring and evaluation function is structurally well located.

Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Process Guide

The study discovered that the DPCU has developed monitoring and evaluation processes and principles base on which monitoring and evaluation activities were

undertaken. These processes were outlined to guide the assembly (staff) on how to execute their day to day tasks and outline the types of conduct and work standards to which they should conform in relation to monitoring and evaluation. As shown in figure 4.3, the study revealed that the highest majority of the respondents (82%) affirmed that monitoring and evaluation processes are clearly delineated. However, there was an insignificant number (14%) of those whose assessments were contrary. A relatively small number of respondents (4%), who possibly could have been new appointees, chose to be neutral.

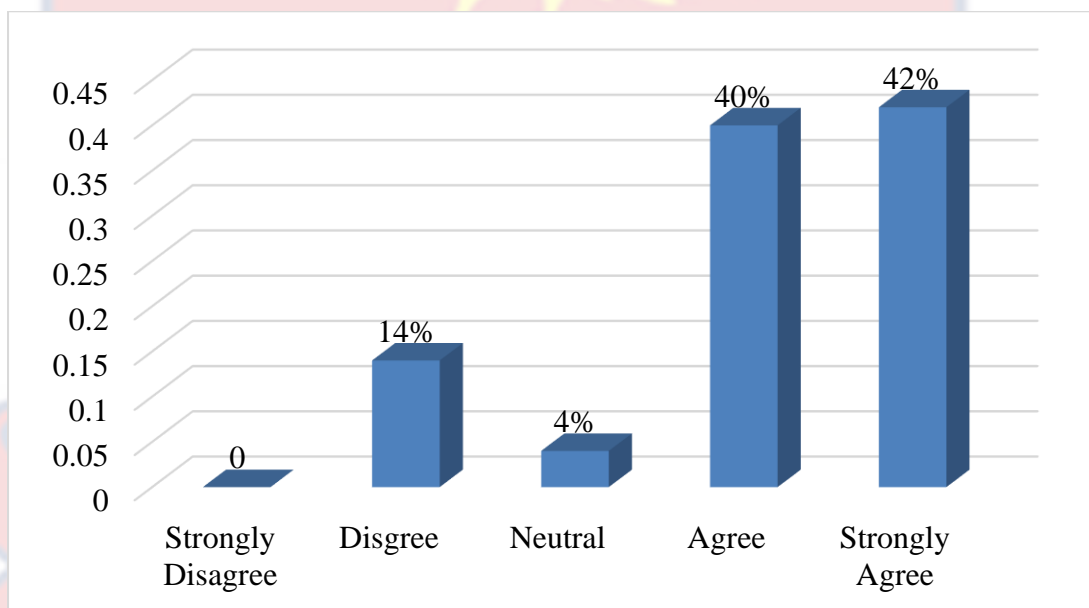


Figure 6 Monitoring and Evaluation Process is Clearly Outlined

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Human Resource Capacity

The study examined the human resource available at the district assembly for undertaking monitoring and evaluation activities as well as the skills need for the activities in question. Findings from the study indicated that the Assembly is constrained by the under listed human resource capacity; Inadequate M&E skills, experience and knowledge; Inadequate staff for the DPCU; Non-availability of the

full complement of the DPCU staff, No-permanent office space for the DPCU. It was further discovered that the District Planning office which is already fully occupied with documents is being used as the DPCU Office, No incentive and motivation is provided for the DPCU staff hence non-commitment of the members to the task of M&E activities. This implies that the skills and knowledge of the DPCU members and other staff on M&E should be improved upon regularly to help ensure effective and efficient M&E in the district. This finding agrees to GIZ (2013), who established that M&E steps need to be clearly stated and outlined and must be followed by MMDAs in order to avoid lapses and also attain effectiveness and efficiency in the practices M&E activities.

Expertise to Implement Monitoring and Evaluation

In this research, expertise is referred to as basically the types of skills that is need to carry out monitoring and evaluation. The research item does not single-out any specific type of skill, however focus on multiple skills that employees be able to applied to comprehensively in executing monitoring and evaluation in of projects and programmes in the district. As indicated in figure 4.4, the study revealed that majority of the respondents (40%) chose to be neutral. Thus, they indicated they have the skills to some extent. A significant number of the respondents that is 29% confirmed that they have acquired the expertise that they need to implement monitoring and evaluation while 21% strongly agree. This implies that the needed skill for undertaking monitoring and evaluation are available. An effective M&E implementation requires not only adequate staff employed in the M&E unit, but also the necessary M&E technical knowhow and experience of the staff employed. The result conforms with Kelly and Magongo (2004), who established that, there should be the existence of individuals who are experts in order to be in charge of monitoring

and evaluation as a main function and identification of different personnel for different activities of the monitoring and evaluation such as data collection, analysis, report writing, dissemination of M&E findings. Gorgens et al. (2009), also opines that it is necessary for all personnel involved in M&E activities to possess M&E competencies in order to effectively execute their functions in the operation of M&E system. This has the implication that the Assembly should embark on M&E capacity development programmes that focus on the technical skills that would equip all M&E operators to be functional.

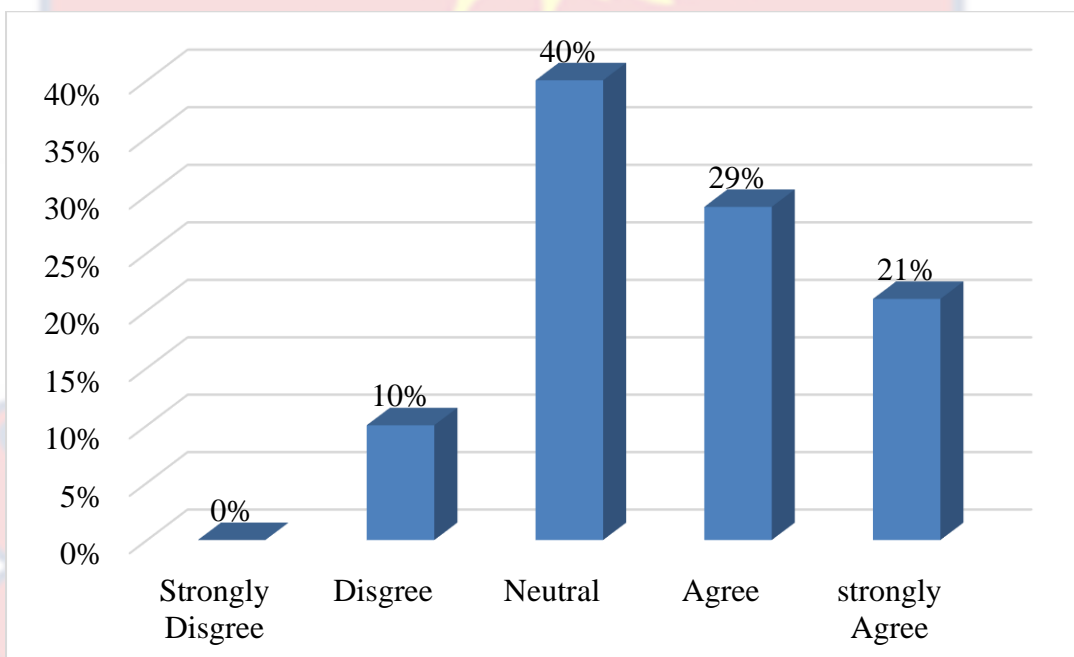


Figure 7 Expertise to Implement Monitoring and Evaluation

Source: Field Survey, 2022

M&E's Activities Resources Allocation

Several donors budget different amount of funds to run M&E activities of projects. However, allocating adequate number of resources for M&E activities helps to implement programme and project successfully and also achieve its objectives and goals. From an interview with the DPCU and the Planning Officers, it was realized

that the Assembly does not allocate adequate funds for the effective execution of M&E activities. Additionally, they revealed that there have been M&E activities that could not be undertaken due to budget constraint. It was shockingly revealed that, all the 84 staff interviewed revealed that the Assembly has not been allocating sufficient funds to undertake M&E activities and they always face any budget constraint to implement M&E activities as well as other activities of the assembly.

The District Planning officers said that, *“even though all the officers who undertake M&E are educated and have no capacity problem, but, the Assembly has never planned to give trainings to its M&E officers to develop their capacity in the field and learn new methods and systems to handle the M&E activities effectively and efficiently”*. Further probe revealed that most projects is under staffed to do its routine activities properly, consecutively activities overlap and some activities left behind to meet declines. This result agrees to (Görgens and Kusek (2009), who established that a critical challenge to the operationalization of the M&E system is the limited experience personnel and institutions. They found out in their study that there is a dearth of skilled M&E professionals and a lack of harmonized training courses and technical advice available.

The Main Challenges of M&E Activities in Wassa Amenfi Central District

Monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects in the Wassa Amenfi Central District Municipal Assembly are faced with some challenges. These obstacles hindered the institutions' ability to meet the M&E goals. It is therefore important to figure out what's preventing the project from running smoothly since this will aid in future decision making. This discusses the challenges faced the district Assembly in carrying out M&E activities.

Inadequate financial resources

The study discovered that inadequate financial resources is a major factor that hinders the effective execution of monitoring and evaluation activities in the district. According to the secretary of the DPCU (District Planning Officer) *“the funds obtained for monitoring and evaluation activities were sometimes insufficient to completely support them. Sometime, funds were not released on time”*. The added that *“M&E activities involves money and therefore has financial implications, the development budget must as a matter of urgency make the necessary budgetary allocation to finance the M&E Plan. However, there is low level of commitment of the Assembly to not only undertaking the activities of M&E”*.

This has hindered monitoring and evaluation, and in some cases, it has been abandoned altogether. Nonetheless, it is always involved in the action plans of various programmes and projects, therefore, it is required to be performed. The findings on limited funds for M&E are consistent with Turabi et al., (2011) who established that inadequate financial resources as the principal threat to any monitoring and evaluation system in organization.

Inadequate of Human Resource Capability

Inadequate of human resource capability was also identified by the study as a challenge in the execution monitoring and evaluation activities in the District. When assessing the barriers to implementing M&E in the district, the respondents were specifically asked whether there was enough Human Resource Capacity in M&E and 40% of them responded that implementing M&E in the district was challenging due to a lack of human resource competence. The District Planning Officer further claimed that a lack of M&E implementation training for officials has reduced the assembly's human resource capacity to conduct effective and efficient monitoring and evaluation.

Consequently, the M&E system need the utilization of qualified persons and institutions. This supports Görgens and Kusek's results (2009). According to them, there should be a scarcity of qualified M&E specialists to carry out M&E, thus a lack of coordinated training courses and technical advice is a barrier to effective M&E.

Lack of an Effective Communication Strategy

Findings from the study revealed that lack of an effective communication strategy to impact policy making and planning is one of the challenges the Assembly is facing in executing monitoring and evaluation activities. Thus, Wassa Amenfi Central District Assembly lack a plan for sharing M&E data to the right stakeholders. As a result, transparency is harmed. The reason being that, publicly displayed information was frequently out of date and unavailable to the majority due to the placement of the display or the language used. Corruption, rent-seeking, bid rigging, and strained relationships between paid and elected officials continue to be major concerns.

Lack of Modern Technology and Systems in Monitoring and Evaluation

The study again identified that technology for collecting, analyzing and systematically easily reporting M&E information in the district is a challenge. It was comprehended that the assembly did not apply modern technology such as the use of tablets (phones), cameras and other new technology in execution of M&E activities. For instance, the Head of the District Planning Unit said that “*sometimes when we go to the field for monitoring and evaluation, we don't even get phones and cameras to take pictures physical projects and keep also records regarding the progress of ongoing programmes and projects*”. This is supported by the fact that 45% of the staff interviewed mentioned the low level of technology used in carrying out M&E in the municipality.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed and analysed the data. It presented detailed analysis on the monitoring and evaluation activities in Wassa Amenfi Central District as well as the challenges encountered by the in undertaking these M&E activities. This chapter presents summary of the study's key results after discussing and analysing the survey data. It then makes practical recommendations based on the challenges discovered. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of how the study's objectives were met.

Findings of the Study

The key findings of the study are summarized in this section. It addresses the monitoring and evaluation arrangements and processes of the district. It also emphasizes on the effectiveness of the monitoring and evaluation processes. Finally, it examines the challenges of monitoring and evaluation. The findings are categorised under the various objectives of the study.

Monitoring and Evaluation Strategies of the Assembly

The District Assembly has M&E plan that was prepared before the start of implementation of programmes and projects in the district plan. The processes M&E processes included community sensitization, beneficiary identification and training, input distribution, field data collection, data capture, reporting to progress reviews. This finding conforms to Hammood and Alishah (2020), who established that in order to ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, there is the key requirement of developing strategic outcomes and goals which can direct the allocation of resources and activities of the government to attain them.

These Monitoring activities was recognized as the responsibility of mainly the District Planning Unit, the works department as well as the programme staff. Some of the respondents and even members of the DPCU (25%) and some programme staff (45%) were not aware of the standards reporting formats and for that matter did not apply it in their M&E process. DPCU draft programme progress reports which serve the information needs of Programme Managers, programme staff and funding agencies as well as other stakeholders. These findings are contrary to the M&E guidelines issued by NDPC (NDPC, 2014), which stated that all stakeholders must be aware and involved in every activity and process of M&E at all levels. Similarly, This contrasts with what Acheampong (2010) discovered. He found that numerous institutions and stakeholder groups were involved in the execution of three livelihood programs

Effectiveness of Monitoring and Evaluation Process

The study revealed that the highest majority of the respondents (82%) affirmed that monitoring and evaluation processes are clearly delineated. However, there was an insignificant number (14%) of those whose assessments were contrary. A relatively small number of respondents (4%), who possibly could have been new appointees, chose to be neutral. This finding agrees to GIZ (2013), who established that M&E steps need to be clearly stated and outlined and must be followed by MMDAs in order to avoid lapses and also attain effectiveness and efficiency in the practices M&E activities.

Findings from the study revealed Assembly is constrained by the under listed human resources capacity. These are inadequate M&E skills, experience and knowledge, inadequate staff for the DPCU, non-availability of the full complement of

the DPCU staff, No-permanent office space for the DPCU. Additionally, lack of incentive and motivation is provided for the DPCU staff hence non-commitment of the members to the task of M&E activities. (Görgens and Kusek (2009), agrees that M&E system involves the integration of a number of components made up of processes and activities as well as basic M&E resources with the capacity to deliver on program's ability to collect and manage data. This implies that the skills and knowledge of the DPCU members and other staff on M&E should be improved upon regularly to help ensure effective and efficient M&E in the municipality.

It was found that 70% percent of the DPCU members have the strong perception that DPCU undertake monitoring and evaluation with other supporting stakeholders. The study findings again revealed that there was a strong rejection of community members and the sub-structure in M&E activities. This is because 55% and 39% of them respectively indicated that only the DPCU undertake M&E in the district.

Furthermore, the study revealed that several donors budget different amount of money to run the M&E activities of projects. The Assembly has failed to conduct trainings sections to its M&E officers to develop their capacity in the field and learn new methods and systems to handle the M&E activities effectively and efficiently. They also indicated that the M&E staff in the project is under staffed to do its routine activities properly, consecutively activities overlap and some activities left behind to meet declines. This result agrees to (Görgens and Kusek (2009), who established that a critical challenge to the operationalization of the M&E system is the limited experience personnel and institutions. They found out in their study that there is a dearth of skilled M&E professionals and a lack of harmonized training courses and technical advice available.

Challenges of Monitoring and Evaluation

Findings revealed that monitoring and evaluation in Wassa Amenfi Central District is faced with several challenges. These challenges include; inadequate M&E skills, experience and knowledge, inadequate staff for the DPCU, Non-availability of the full complement of the DPCU staff, No-permanent office space for the DPCU. Inadequate financial resource and late release of fund for M&E was also another problem. It was also discovered that the Assembly lack the technology for collecting, analyzing and reporting M&E information. The district assembly lack a plan for sharing M&E data to the right stakeholders.

Conclusions

Though, it is uncommon to find an institution or programme that can claim of full integration of M&E best practices in its implementation processes, development interventions have been indicated to attain higher levels of integration by putting in place essential strategic activities and employing some fundamental M&E tools. This implies that MMDAs can be at different phases in terms of integrating M&E systems into management tasks depending on the implementation sequence.

Overall, the research found that an M&E is an essential management function that should be given higher priority by the MMDAs and be basic in the public sector since it helps to promote good governance and effective utilization of resources. Additionally, providing people with the necessary training, skills, and continuing application through M&E will enhance their capacity to provide meaningful reports and data for decision-making purposes, as well as boost accountability, which supports development and good governance at the district level. This conforms with World Bank (2006). It was concluded that monitoring and evaluation activities in most developing countries can be limited by budget constraints and limited skilled

human resources. This therefore call for the possibility of choosing the right data collection methods.

Recommendations

Based on the results from the study and the challenges identified, recommendations were made to help improve effectiveness monitoring and evaluation in the Wassa Amenfi Central District. Monitoring and evaluation entails series of tasks, therefore it should be approached as a whole. This section proposes ways for ensuring the District's M&E deployment is more effective.

Allocation of Sufficient Resources to M&E

Owing to the distrust in the financial and human resources allocations to monitoring and evaluation, the implementing agencies or units of various programs and projects should consider it vital to make adequate human, financial and material resource allocations for M&E activities in order to avoid compromising these activities in the event of broader program budget constraints. This will help to apply M&E effectively at the local levels which will intend support efforts to foster development and good governance at MMDAs levels. It is advised that the standard allocation of fund for M&E should be between 5 to 10% of the programme or project sum.

Establishment of Capacity-building Plan, Program Review Schedules, and Reflection Plans

Effective and efficient M&E can be undertaken if a capacity-building plan, program review schedules, and reflection plans are established and implemented, just as they are for the other basic tools when establishing an M&E system for an organization. This will enable M&E staff to be updated with new modules of M&E

since M&E ideas evolves from time to time. Staff responsible for M&E activities, such as the DPCU should also create internal and external capacity-building strategies. To support an effective and efficient M&E system, the capacity-building strategy should focus on improving the M&E system and formats. This will assist program personnel in learning the skills and tools needed to conduct effective M&E. Due to the fact that the concept is continually evolving, this should be done on a frequent basis.

Enactment of Effective M&E Communication Strategies

In order to curb the deficiencies in the communication strategy to impact policy making and planning, it also recommended that the Assembly entreat the District Planning Unit and other communication officers to work closely to produce and share the M&E information such as standardized newsletters, information bulletins, success stories and other M&E outputs with stakeholders and donors to update the progress and increase transparency.

Enhancing Regular Monitoring and Evaluation System

The challenge of poor M&E performance can be mitigated if regular supervision of the M&E system is ensured. The M&E system aims to make it easier for MMDAs, RCCs, and NDPCs to share complete performance data. The system also provides processes and mechanisms for the use of such data in order to increase intergovernmental support for districts. The M&E system should be supervised by the NDPC/RPCU in this context. The oversight should involve the creation of a common performance reporting template for MMDAs, as well as the determination of performance report submission timeframes.

Recommendation for Further Studies

There are several areas for further studies based on the findings and recommendations presented in this study. These include

It is recommended that further studies would look at impact of adequate resources. That is, there is the need to investigate the direct correlation between the allocation of human, budgetary, and material resources to M&E activities and the overall effectiveness and efficiency of development programs within local government assemblies.

It is also recommended that Stakeholder Participation and Collaboration would be explored in further research. Further studies need to explore the role of active stakeholder participation in M&E processes as well as analyze how involving various stakeholders impacts the quality and depth of monitoring and evaluation.

Communication Strategies in M&E also need to be examined. Further research should delve deeper into effective communication strategies for M&E activities. Research could focus on identifying innovative communication methods and technologies that facilitate real-time data sharing, policy development, and planning, thereby enhancing the impact of M&E efforts.

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