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Community leaders were very pleased with the level of involvement where they pledged their full support towards owning the intervention as well as providing supportive supervision of learners as well as facilitators in the learning centers.



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria (AENN) seeks to respond to the immediate educational needs of 302,500 children and youth in Borno and Yobe states through safe non-formal and formal education, while laying a foundation for the sustainable improvement of education systems at the community and Government levels.

The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Activity engaged the services of the development Research and Projects Center (dRPC) to conduct third-party monitoring of activities of the AENN project in Borno and Yobe states.

MONITORING PURPOSE AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this monitoring activity was to provide data for USAID/Nigeria on programming in insecure regions where USAID/Nigeria staff are prohibited from or have difficulty reaching due to dynamic security situations. The dRPC team were required to conduct activity monitoring and output verification of learning centre & storage facilities. Interviews with implementing stakeholders such as Master trainers, Non-Formal Learning Center (NFLC) facilitators, Learners, Family Health International (FHI 360), Save the Children and Viamo. Engage community stakeholders such as community leaders, Community Based Management Committees (CBMCs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)/ Community Based Organizations (CBOs) and to interview Government partners like the State Agency for Mass Education (SAME), State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and State Ministry of Education (SMoE).

A mixed method approach was used for data collection. Secondary data was collected before field deployment by reviewing project documents and reports such as the FBM protocol, AENN Y1Q1 report, Rapid Education Risk Analysis (RERA) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusiveness (GESI) report and RTL tracker. Primary data on the other hand was collected on the field through direct observations at fifteen NFLCs, two FHI 360 stores

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then one hundred and eighty Key Informant Interviews (KIIs) in Kanuri and Hausa languages.

Purposive and simple random sampling methods were used to select respondents and sites for the FBM.

KEY FINDINGS

- Return to learning and scholastic materials were observed in all 15 non-formal learning centers visited in Borno and Yobe states.
- Facilitators used guides in 67% (6 out of 9) NFLCs in Borno, and 100% (6 out of 6) NFLCs in Yobe.
- Recreational learning was demonstrated by facilitators in 100% (9 of 9) NFLCs in Borno, and 50% (3 of 6) NFLCs in Yobe.
- About 75% (42 of 56) of learners in Borno, and 97% (35 of 36) learners in Yobe have at least one or more set of learning materials exclusive for their use.
- Reading and writing skills were demonstrated by learners in 89% (8 of 9) of NFLCs in Borno and 100% (6 of 6) NFLCs in Yobe
- Walking distance was a challenge for a few learners at 2 centers in Yobe state as they had to walk 2 hours per trip to Nayi-Nawa and Mai Adiko community NFLCs.
- There was strong community engagement in both Borno and Yobe states. Interviewed community leaders expressed sound knowledge of the program and reported active participation in establishment of the NFLCs and selection of facilitators except for Islamiyya NFLC Unguwar Kudu communities in Yobe.
- CBMCs were active drivers from the start of the project. They participated as community entry points during learner enrolment and supported in identification of facilitators.
- Government involvement was not so strong compared to community involvement. SUBEB and SAME were more involved in driving the intervention compared to some in both Borno and Yobe states.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite working in a difficult and unpredictable security setting, overall findings show FHI 360 is making progress towards delivering on its objective of providing safe non-formal education to children in the North East. This is catalysed by strong community engagement and local ownership of the intervention thus creating demand and facilitating its acceptability even in remote communities. Not so strong Government partnership however may reduce the impact and threaten sustainability of this intervention if not improved upon.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- FHI 360 should improve Government partnership and collaboration especially with the SMOE through supportive supervision where representatives of Government agencies (SUBEB/ SAME/ SMOE) can accompany FHI 360 staff for routine monitoring of NFLCs.
- There should be continuous and close monitoring by USAID of the ongoing learners enrolment for 600 NFLCs. This will strengthen adherence to selection criteria and provide a platform for necessary support where applicable.

It was reported from Nayi-Nawa learning center Yobe state that due to high acceptability and demand for the intervention, there were higher number of attendees than registered learners. This was because some learners who were yet to be enrolled would come to the learning centers and attend sessions while they await their opportunity for enrolment.