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THIRD-PARTY MONITORING OF ACTIVITIES OF THE AENN ACTIVITY IN BORNO AND YOBE STATES



ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

Addressing Education in Northeast Nigeria (AENN) seeks to respond to the immediate educational needs of 302,500 out-of-school children and youth in Borno and Yobe states through safe non-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 advised to avoid due to dynamic security situations. The dRPC were engaged by the MEL Activity to and conduct activity monitoring and output verification of the AENN Activity. The monitoring team conducted 180 Key informant Interviews (KIs) with implementing stakeholders such as Family Health International (FHI360) and their sub-grantees (Save the Children International [SCI] and Viamo); Government partners like the State Agency for Mass Education (SAME), State Universal Basic Education Board (SUBEB) and State Ministry of Education (SMoE); Community representatives such as Community leaders, Community Based Management Committees (CBMCs), Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)/ Community Based Organizations (CBOs); Master trainers and Non-Formal Learning Center (NFLC) Facilitators; Parents of Learners; and Learners.

A mixed method approach (primary and secondary data collection) was employed for the FBM. Secondary data were collected by reviewing project documents and reports such as the FBM protocol, AENNYIQI report, Rapid Education Risk Analysis (RERA) and Gender Equality and Social Inclusiveness (GESI) report, Bi-weekly reports and “Return to Learning” (RTL) data tracker. Primary data on the other hand were collected on the field through direct observations at fifteen (15) NFLCs, two (2) FHI360 stores and 180 Key Informant Interviews (KIs) in Kanuri and Hausa languages.

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

KEY FINDINGS

- The AENN Activity trained 50 Master trainers on social and emotional learning, literacy and numeracy, who stepped down the training to 156 facilitators for the Return to learning (RTL) curriculum.
- RTL Facilitators guide, Teaching and Learning Materials (TLMs) and scholastic materials are procured and distributed based on needs which is determined by number of NFLCs established and Learners enrolled.
- AENN outputs for NFLCs were not sighted at the FHI360 store as they were dispatched within 48 hours of arrival to the NFLC Facilitators and Learners in their various communities.
- RTL Facilitator’s guide, TLMs and scholastic materials were sighted in all fifteen (15) Non-formal learning centers (NFLCs) visited in Borno and Yobe states.
- Thirteen (13) out of fifteen (15) NFLCs visited were secure and conducive for learning except for Mai Adiko Primary School NFLC where the learning space was small with poor lighting; and Yimirshika Primary School NFLC, where the Facilitator reported security challenges.

- Learning Facilitators in six (6) out of the nine (9) NFLCs visited (67%) in Borno state used the Facilitators guides, whilst in Yobe state the Facilitators in all six (6) NFLCs visited (100%) used the guides to deliver lessons. In contrast, Recreational learning was demonstrated by all Facilitators (100%) in Borno state, whilst in Yobe state three (3) out of six (6) Facilitators (50%) demonstrated recreational learning.
- Forty-two (42) out of fifty-six (56) Learners (75%) in Borno state; and thirty-five (35) out of thirty-six (36) Learners (97%) in Yobe state mentioned that they have at least one or more set of learning materials exclusive for their use.
- Learners actively participated in choral reading, and writing on scholastic materials from the blackboard during lessons. This was observed in eight (8) out of nine (9) visited NFLCs in Borno state, and six (6) out of six (6) visited NFLCs in Yobe state.
- About 98% (55 of 56) of Learners interviewed in Borno state, and 100% (36 of 36) Learners interviewed in Yobe state mentioned that they enjoyed coming to the NFLCs on the contact days. However, one (1) Learner from Al-Falah Primary School NFLC, and one (1) Learner from Mai Adiko Primary School NFLC in Yobe state mentioned that the walking distance was a challenge two (2) hours per trip on every contact day.
- Findings from KIIs shows active community involvement, as Community leaders, CBMCs and CCs participated as community entry points in the setting up of NFLCs; nomination of Facilitators; Learners enrolment; as well as monitoring of Facilitators' and Learners attendance to NFLCs. However, the Community Leader of Unguwar Kudu community in Yobe state reported that they were not consulted during the establishment of the NFLCs as well as the selection of facilitators. Notwithstanding, he expressed his satisfaction and pledged continuous support for the AENN Activity.
- Parents were satisfied but expressed the need for more active roles in the NFLCs, likened to the roles of parents in School Based Management Committee (SBMC) of Formal schools.
- For the Government involvement, SUBEB and SAME were involved in curriculum development, and the selection of Master trainers and Facilitators however, the SMOE were not actively involved in some of the processes.
- At the time of the FBM visit, enrolment of Learners in the 600 NFLCs across 150 communities for the commencement of the Basic Literacy curriculum was ongoing and the start date is targeted at June 12, 2019.

CONCLUSIONS

Despite working in a difficult and unpredictable security setting, overall findings show that FHI360 is making progress towards delivering on its objective of providing safe non-formal education to out of school children in the Borno and Yobe states. This is catalysed by strong community engagement and local ownership of the activity, thus creating demand and facilitating its acceptability even in remote communities. However, Government partnership needs to be strengthened, as this may reduce the impact and threaten sustainability of the AENN Activity if not improved upon.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- FHI360 should improve Government partnership and collaboration especially with the SMOE, considering that they are the parent ministry in charge of education in the states, in order to increase the impact and sustainability of the Activity.
- Government partnership, can also be strengthened through joint supportive supervision where representatives of Government agencies (SUBEB/ SAME/ SMOE) accompany FHI360 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.

SUCCESSES

Community leaders were very pleased with their involvement in the AENN Activity and pledged their continuous support towards local ownership and sustainability of the intervention, they also mentioned that they will continue to oversee the Learners and Facilitators attending the learning centers in their respective communities.

Due to the high number of out of school children willing to attend learning sessions, Al-Falah Primary School NFLC, Nayi-Nawa Bulabulin Community, Damaturu LGA in Yobe state had a high number of attendees at the NFLC observed than the enrolled number of Learners. The additional Learners attended learning sessions pending another opportunity for enrolment into new NFLCs.