

Developing Capacity For NGOs To Monitor and Evaluate Projects To Delay Early Marriage



Inaugural M&E Capacity building workshop for NGOs of the Consortium project, August 2013, Copyright dRPC

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The dRPC provided Monitoring and Evaluation technical assistance on the Building Collaboration, Partnerships and Political Commitment to Delay Early Marriage and the Onset of Childbearing in Northern Nigeria project (2013-2015)

Background

The empirical basis for the project was the 2013 Ford Foundation report, Mapping Early Marriage in West Africa which recommended that child marriage interventions be carried out by coalitions of civil society organizations working in partnership with government departments. The report also pointed to the importance of developing NGO capacity to monitor and evaluate interventions to end early marriage.

Against the background of these findings, the consortium project, anchored by Action Aid Nigeria set out three key objectives, one of which was to establish a strong and effective consortium of civil society organizations working to delay marriage in the northwestern states of Kaduna and Kano. Developing the capacity of the consortium to monitor and evaluate the project was a key scope of work which was assigned to the development Research and Projects Center (dRPC). In this regard, the dRPC was engaged to:

- Support the partners to conduct Baseline in Project Locations
- Support the partners to carry out monitoring of Project implementation Activities and evaluate project outcomes
- Monitoring & Evaluation and capacity building for consortium partners in M&E
- Knowledge management and dissemination of project successes

Best practices to build NGO capacity for M&E

The dRPC's strategy was that of collective workshop based training for project and M&E staff of the consortium followed on-site mentoring of individual NGOs. The dRPC convened four M&E capacity building workshops for the consortium partners. Each of the capacity building was conducted in each quarter of the two years life of project.

Box 1: Workshop based training for NGOs on M&E

20th to 23rd August 2013 -
Introduction to M&E for early marriage project

27th February 2014 to 1st March -
Workplan development

29th April to 3rd May 2014 - Data analysis for NGOs working to end early marriage

5th February to 7th February 2015 -
Report writing

Each training workshop was supported by on-site mentoring of NGOs

These activities aided in the development of standard indicators to monitor and evaluate the progress and impact of consortium projects. Follow-up mentoring sessions were carried out by the dRPC M&E team where workplans were operationalized and data collection instruments developed or revised.



Top: M&E Capacity building workshop Below: Participants at an M&E Capacity Building workshop

M&E Challenges, Achievements and Outcomes

As at August 2013 the baseline assessment of all implementing partners' M&E capacity revealed only one NGO had a designated M&E Officer and none had undergone any formal training on monitoring and evaluation of projects. By July 2015, however, the midline assessment of the implementing partners' capacity showed that they all had a designated M&E Officer with a written scope of works.

In each of the four M&E capacity building workshops, the most significant area of learning was in the area of workplan and indicator development.

Over the life of the project, the most valued topics



were: Analyzing data to track project performance; How to write a success story; Simple data analysis using SPSS; Visual documentation of projects When changes in Knowledge, skills and practices were measured between the baseline in August 2013 and the endline in October 2015, the project found changes in knowledge to be the area of most significant increases.

Knowledge gained increased by 23.8% between the baseline and endline. However, changes in skills and practice were found to be less significant ranging in 15% and less as M&E Officers continued to struggle with data analysis and report writing.

Table 1: Changes in knowledge of M&E training content between baseline and endline for participating NGOs in the consortium project

Baseline	N = 11 participants	Average (39.3%)	Cumulative	Score	Average % Gain in Knowledge = (23.8%)
Endline	N = 11 participants	Average (63.1%)	Cumulative	Score	

Reflections and Recommendations

Over the life of the project the dRPC struggled with the temptation to `deliver` the M&E component for the NGOs as opposed to continuing to train and mentor them to achieve project objectives. The dRPC opted for the latter option of enabling the groups to build capacity in M&E despite the challenges of convincing the NGOs that a good workplan is as necessary for program success as commitment and passion for protecting girls. At the end of the project all 3 NGOs were adjudged to have the capacity to develop an M&E Plan for a new project.

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Project Partners:

Girl-Child Concerns

Girl-Child Education (PRHI/Bixby Center)

development Research and Projects Center

Isa Wali Empowerment Initiative

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