

Effect of Project Implementation Strategies on the Success of “Back-to-School” Initiatives for Teenage Mothers in Rwanda: A Case Study of Gasabo District

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Abstract

Teenage pregnancy remains a leading driver of school dropout among girls in Rwanda, and back-to-school initiatives that bring young mothers back into education depend heavily on the support of the families, communities and institutions around them. This study examined the effect of stakeholder engagement strategies on the enrolment of teenage mothers in back-to-school programs in Gasabo District, Kigali City, as the first of four project implementation strategies investigated in a wider study. Anchored in Stakeholder Theory and Pinto and Slevin’s Project Implementation Theory, the study adopted a mixed-methods descriptive survey design. From an estimated population of 640 respondents across five stakeholder groups (teenage mothers, teachers and school administrators, district education and ministry officers, NGO staff, and parents or guardians), 241 completed questionnaires were obtained from 265 distributed (91.0% response rate), supplemented by 12 key informant interviews and two focus group discussions with teenage mothers. The instrument demonstrated acceptable reliability in a pilot test (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .81$; stakeholder engagement scale $\alpha = .79$). Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression (SPSS version 26) and thematic analysis. Stakeholder engagement was rated moderate overall ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.99$), with school administrators rated most favorably ($M = 3.65$) and community leaders least favorably ($M = 3.18$). Stakeholder engagement correlated strongly and positively with enrolment ($r = .591$, $p < .001$), accounting for 34.9% of its variance, and it was the strongest predictor of programme success in a regression model that jointly explained 68.4% of the variance ($\beta = .312$, $p < .001$); the null hypothesis was therefore rejected. Qualitative evidence indicated that family sensitization and home visits before enrolment were the practices that most often determined whether a girl returned to school and stayed, while community-level engagement remained incomplete across Gasabo’s sectors. The study offers evidence-based recommendations for implementing organizations, the Ministry of Education, the Gasabo District Administration and development partners on strengthening stakeholder engagement in school re-entry programs.

Keywords

Stakeholder Engagement, Project Implementation Strategies, Back-to-School Initiatives, Teenage Mothers, School Re-entry, Enrolment, Rwanda

1. Introduction

Adolescent pregnancy is one of the most persistent barriers to girls’ education in sub-Saharan Africa. The United Nations Population Fund reports that more than 12 million girls aged 15–19 become mothers each year in low- and middle-income countries, with significant consequences for their health, economic mobility and educational pathways [1]. Rwanda has been a continental leader in gender parity in education, and its Education Sector Strategic Plan and successive National Strategies for Transformation treat gender equity, inclusive education and learner retention as strategic priorities [2, 3]. Nevertheless, the 2025 Demographic and Health Survey found that 8% of girls aged 15–19 had ever been pregnant, up from about 5% in the 2019/20 survey [4], and recent studies indicate that most teenage mothers who leave school do not successfully return [5, 6].

To respond, government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in Rwanda have implemented back-to-school initiatives that help teenage mothers re-enter formal education. Gasabo District, in Kigali City, is a revealing setting in which to study them: it combines urban and semi-urban conditions with a large youth population, and it hosts programs run by both the district administration and NGOs. Research in the district shows that stigma, weak psychosocial support and the absence of targeted re-entry support from schools and families continue to shape teenage mothers’ educational prospects [7], and evidence from Ghana similarly identifies stigma and discrimination as significant obstacles to school re-entry [8]. Whether a girl enrolls is therefore decided not only by her own circumstances but by the attitudes and actions of many actors: her family, her community

leaders, school administrators and teachers, programme staff and district officials.

From a project management perspective, these actors are project stakeholders, and engaging them is a core implementation task. Stakeholder Theory holds that project outcomes depend on the quality of relationships maintained with all parties who can influence or be affected by a project's goals, not only its primary beneficiaries [9]. The Project Management Body of Knowledge identifies stakeholder engagement as a foundational process of project implementation [10], and Pinto and Slevin's Project Implementation Theory lists client consultation among the ten critical success factors of project implementation [11]. Research on international development projects has likewise sought to identify the implementation factors and conditions on which success depends [12, 13]. In Rwanda, community support has been identified as a mediating factor between structural barriers and school reintegration, with supportive communities increasing, and stigmatizing communities reducing, the probability that an adolescent mother returns to school [5].

Despite this, existing Rwandan research on school re-entry has concentrated on the causes of teenage pregnancy and the barriers that girls face [5, 7], and the few studies of implementation in Rwandan education projects have examined resource planning in donor-funded projects rather than back-to-school programs for teenage mothers [14]. Empirical evidence on how the engagement of families, community leaders, schools and programme staff affects the enrolment of teenage mothers in a specific district such as Gasabo is limited; the only district-specific case study identified drew on five participants [7]. This study addresses that gap. It reports the first objective of a wider investigation of four project implementation strategies: to examine the effect of stakeholder engagement strategies on the enrolment of teenage mothers in back-to-school programs in Gasabo District. The corresponding null hypothesis (H_{01}), that stakeholder engagement strategies have no significant effect on the enrolment of teenage mothers, was tested. As detailed in the sections that follow, the null hypothesis was rejected: stakeholder engagement was strongly and positively associated with enrolment ($r = .591$) and was the strongest predictor of programme success when the other three strategies were held constant ($\beta = .312$), although engagement was rated only moderately overall and community-level engagement was its weakest element.

2. Materials and Methods

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach built on a descriptive survey design [15]. The quantitative strand established the strength and direction of the relationship between stakeholder engagement and enrolment, while the qualitative strand, comprising key informant interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs), contextualized and explained the mechanisms through which that relationship operates. The study covered back-to-school programs implemented by the district government and NGOs in Gasabo District, Kigali City, between 2020 and 2025.

2.1. Study Population and Sampling

The target population comprised five groups directly involved in or affected by back-to-school initiatives in Gasabo District: teenage mothers who had participated in programs between 2020 and 2025 (approximately 320), teachers and school administrators in schools hosting re-entry programs (approximately 85), district education officers and Ministry of Education programme staff (approximately 15), NGO programme managers and field staff (approximately 20), and parents or guardians of beneficiaries (approximately 200), a total of approximately 640 people estimated from national statistics, ministry data and NGO program records. The sample size was determined using the Krejci and Morgan formula [16] at the 95% confidence level ($\chi^2 = 3.841$), a population proportion of 0.5 and a 5% margin of error, which yielded 241 respondents distributed proportionally across the five strata; a 10% attrition buffer raised the number of questionnaires distributed to 265 (Table 1). Stratified random sampling across the sectors of Gasabo District was used to select teenage mothers and parents or guardians; simple random sampling was used to select teachers and school administrators from the list of schools hosting re-entry programs; and purposive sampling was used to select district education officers, NGO programme managers and key informants with direct knowledge of programme implementation. For the qualitative strand, 12 key informants (district education officers, NGO managers and school heads) were purposively selected, and two FGDs of eight teenage mothers each were conducted, with participants chosen to reflect diversity in age, place of residence and programme experience.

Table 1. Target Population, Questionnaires Distributed and Response Rate by Respondent Category.

Respondent Category	Population	Distributed	Returned	Response Rate (%)
Teenage mothers	320	130	116	89.2
Teachers and school administrators	85	35	32	91.4
District education officers and MINEDUC staff	15	15	15	100.0
NGO programme managers and field staff	20	20	20	100.0
Parents/guardians of beneficiaries	200	65	58	89.2
Total	640	265	241	91.0

Source: Primary Data (2026). Population figures are estimates from national statistics, ministry data and NGO records.

2.2. Data Collection Instruments

The primary quantitative instrument was a structured questionnaire developed in English and translated into Kinyarwanda for accessibility. It comprised respondent profile items and Likert-scaled sections measuring the four project implementation strategies (four items each) and the success of the back-to-school initiative (four items). All substantive items used a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). The stakeholder engagement section, which is the focus of this paper, contained four items: family members were involved and informed about the programme; community leaders supported and encouraged return to school; school administrators were welcoming and supportive during re-entry; and programme staff regularly communicated with all parties involved. Enrolment of teenage mothers was assessed through the re-enrolment dimension of the programme success section. Qualitative data were collected through a semi-structured interview guide for key informants and an FGD guide for teenage mothers, which explored respondents' experiences of programme implementation, the most effective strategies, the difficulties faced and suggestions for improvement. With informed consent, interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the researcher moderated the FGDs with the assistance of a qualified research assistant.

2.3. Validity and Reliability

Content validity was established through expert review by two subject-matter specialists from the University of Kigali's School of Science and Technology, who evaluated the instrument for clarity, relevance and appropriateness of the Likert items; their feedback led to the rewording of four ambiguous items and the removal of one redundant item. The questionnaire was then pilot-tested with 24 respondents (approximately 10% of the final sample) drawn from a back-to-school programme in Kicukiro District, outside the main study area, in proportions similar to the main strata; pilot respondents were excluded from the final sample. As summarized in Table 2, Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from .77 to .85 across the five constructs, with an alpha of .79 for the stakeholder engagement scale and .81 for the overall instrument, all exceeding the .70 minimum threshold recommended by Kothari [15].

Table 2. Reliability Statistics of the Research Instrument (Pilot Test, $n = 24$).

Construct	No. of Items	Cronbach's α	Decision
Stakeholder Engagement	4	.79	Accepted
Resource Allocation	4	.83	Accepted
Communication Strategy	4	.77	Accepted
Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Mechanisms	4	.80	Accepted
Programme Success	4	.85	Accepted
Overall Instrument	20	.81	Accepted

Source: Primary Data (2026). Decision rule: accept where $\alpha \geq .70$.

2.4. Data Analysis

Completed questionnaires were edited, coded, entered into SPSS Version 26 and cleaned for errors and missing values. Descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations, frequencies and percentages) summarized the sample and the stakeholder engagement indicators, which were interpreted using conventional bands (1.00–1.80 very low, 1.81–2.60 low, 2.61–3.40 moderate, 3.41–4.20 high, 4.21–5.00 very high). Pearson correlation assessed the bivariate relationship between stakeholder engagement and enrolment, and multiple linear regression estimated the independent effect of stakeholder engagement on programme success.

alongside the other three implementation strategies, specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

where Y is the success of back-to-school initiatives, X₁ is stakeholder engagement, X₂ is resource allocation, X₃ is communication strategy, X₄ is M&E mechanisms, β₀ is the constant, β₁ to β₄ are the regression coefficients, and ε is the error term. Multicollinearity was assessed by examining the inter-correlations among the independent variables, and statistical significance was set at $p < .05$. Qualitative data from the interviews and FGDs were analyzed thematically following the six-phase approach of Braun and Clarke [17], with triangulation against the quantitative results conducted at the interpretation stage.

2.5. Ethical Considerations

This study was conducted in compliance with the University of Kigali Graduate Research Guidelines (2023) and internationally recognized research ethics principles. Research permits were obtained from the University of Kigali Graduate School, the Gasabo District Administration and the relevant school and NGO authorities before data collection. All participants were informed of the purpose, procedures and potential risks of the study, and of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Written consent was obtained from adult participants; for teenage mothers who were minors, assent was obtained from the participant together with written consent from a parent or legal guardian. Identifying information was removed from data records, data were stored on password-protected devices accessible only to the researcher and supervisor, and questions on sensitive issues such as sexual violence, family rejection and stigma were framed carefully, with participants showing signs of distress referred to counselling services.

3. Results

The quantitative strand yielded 241 completed questionnaires from the 265 distributed (91.0% response rate), well above the 70% threshold generally considered excellent for survey-based social research [15] (Table 1); response rates were 100% among district officers and NGO staff and between 89.2% and 91.4% in the other groups. Teenage mothers formed the largest group of respondents (48.1%), followed by parents or guardians (24.1%), teachers and school administrators (13.3%), NGO staff (8.3%) and district education officers and ministry staff (6.2%). Among the 116 teenage mother respondents, 42.2% were aged 18–20 years, 30.2% were aged 21–24, 19.0% were below 18 and 8.6% were 25 or older; more than half (52.6%) had completed lower secondary education (S1–S3) before dropping out, 24.1% had completed primary education and 23.3% had completed upper secondary education (S4–S6). Twelve key informant interviews and two FGDs were also conducted.

3.1. Descriptive Statistics of Stakeholder Engagement

Table 3 and Figure 1 summarize respondents’ ratings of the four stakeholder engagement indicators. The overall mean score was 3.39 ($SD = 0.99$), a moderate level of stakeholder engagement across back-to-school programs in Gasabo District, and the ratings reveal an uneven picture. School administrators being welcoming and supportive during re-entry was the highest-rated indicator ($M = 3.65$, $SD = 0.92$, high), followed by the involvement and information of family members ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.98$, high), whereas regular communication by programme staff with all parties ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 1.01$) and, lowest of all, community leaders’ support and encouragement of return to school ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 1.04$) were only moderate. Dispersion was smallest for school administrators and largest for community leaders, indicating that experiences of community leader support varied most widely across respondents. Engagement was therefore strongest where it was institutionalized in schools and weakest at the community level.

Table 3. Descriptive Statistics of Stakeholder Engagement Indicators (N = 241).

Indicator	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Family members were involved and informed about the programme	241	3.42	0.98	High
Community leaders supported and encouraged return to school	241	3.18	1.04	Moderate
School administrators were welcoming and supportive during re-entry	241	3.65	0.92	High
Programme staff regularly communicated with all parties	241	3.31	1.01	Moderate
Overall Stakeholder Engagement	241	3.39	0.99	Moderate

Source: Primary Data (2026).

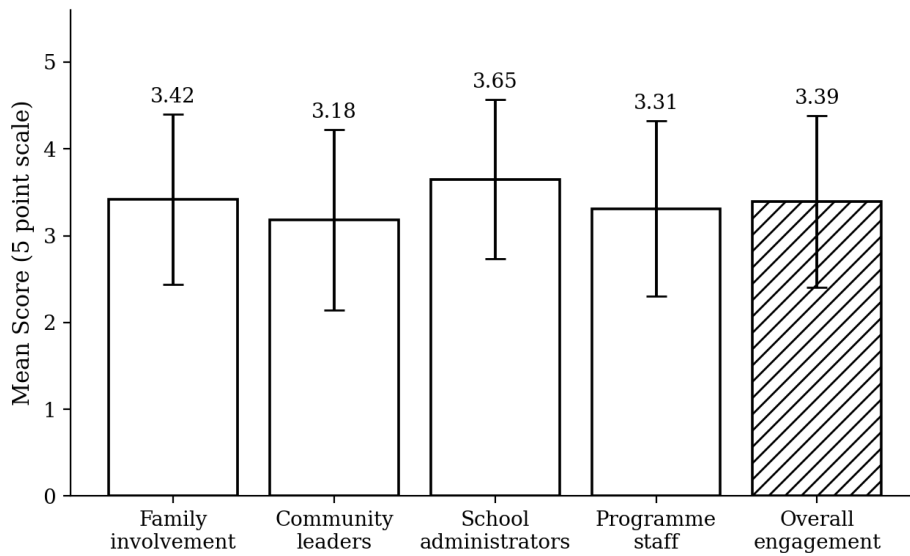


Figure 1. Mean Scores of Stakeholder Engagement Indicators ($N = 241$). Error Bars Show ± 1 Standard Deviation.

3.2. Correlation Analysis

Table 4 presents the Pearson correlation matrix. Stakeholder engagement was positively and significantly correlated with enrolment and programme success at the .01 level ($r = .591$, $t(239) = 11.33$, $p < .001$), a large association by Cohen's conventional benchmarks (small = .10, medium = .30, large = .50), and was the strongest correlate of programme success among the four implementation strategies (resource allocation $r = .548$, communication strategy $r = .523$, M&E mechanisms $r = .487$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .349$) indicates that stakeholder engagement alone accounted for approximately 34.9% of the variance in enrolment, leaving 65.1% to be explained by other factors. Stakeholder engagement correlated moderately with the other three strategies ($r = .355$ to .402), and inter-correlations among all four strategies ranged only from .334 to .409, indicating that the strategies are related but empirically distinct enough to be entered together in a single regression model without problematic multicollinearity.

Table 4. Pearson Correlation Matrix among Study Variables ($N = 241$).

Variable	SE	RA	CS	M&E	PS
SE	1	.402**	.378**	.355**	.591**
RA	.402**	1	.361**	.334**	.548**
CS	.378**	.361**	1	.409**	.523**
M&E	.355**	.334**	.409**	1	.487**
PS	.591**	.548**	.523**	.487**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed); $N = 241$ for all pairs. SE = Stakeholder Engagement; RA = Resource Allocation; CS = Communication Strategy; M&E = Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms; PS = Programme Success.

3.3. Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple linear regression tested the independent effect of stakeholder engagement on programme success while holding the other three implementation strategies constant. The model was highly significant overall ($R = .827$, $R^2 = .684$, Adjusted $R^2 = .679$, Standard Error of the Estimate = .312; $F(4, 236) = 127.71$, $p < .001$), meaning that the four strategies jointly explained 68.4% of the variance in programme success, with the small gap between R^2 and Adjusted R^2 indicating that the model is not overfitted. Table 5 reports the coefficients. Stakeholder engagement emerged as the strongest predictor ($B = .348$, $SE = .071$, $\beta = .312$, $t = 4.901$, $p < .001$), followed by resource allocation ($\beta = .287$, $p < .001$), communication strategy ($\beta = .241$, $p < .001$) and M&E mechanisms ($\beta = .198$, $p = .003$).

Table 5. Regression Coefficients (Dependent Variable: Programme Success).

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	.421	.187	–	2.251	.025
Stakeholder Engagement (SE)	.348	.071	.312	4.901	.000
Resource Allocation (RA)	.319	.074	.287	4.311	.000
Communication Strategy (CS)	.271	.075	.241	3.613	.000
M&E Mechanisms (M&E)	.224	.076	.198	2.947	.003

Source: Primary Data (2026). Model: $R = .827$, $R^2 = .684$, Adjusted $R^2 = .679$, $SE = .312$; $F(4, 236) = 127.71$, $p < .001$.

$$Y = 0.421 + 0.348X_1 + 0.319X_2 + 0.271X_3 + 0.224X_4 \quad (2)$$

The fitted model (Equation 2) indicates that, holding the other three strategies constant, each one-point improvement in stakeholder engagement is associated with a 0.348-point gain in programme success, the largest unstandardized effect of the four strategies (0.319 for resource allocation, 0.271 for communication strategy and 0.224 for M&E mechanisms). In standardized terms, the effect of stakeholder engagement ($\beta = .312$) is about 1.6 times that of M&E mechanisms ($\beta = .198$), as visualized in Figure 2.

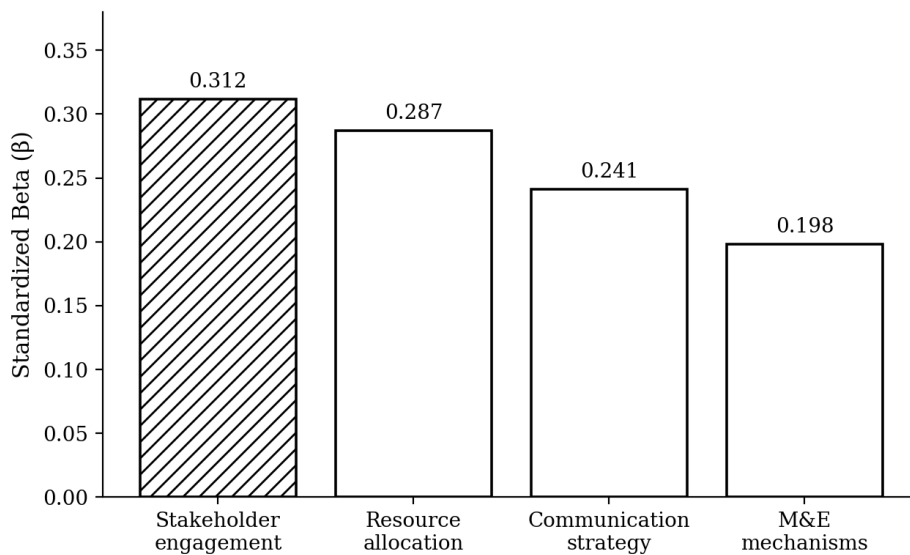


Figure 2. Relative Predictive Strength of the Four Implementation Strategies on Programme Success (Standardized Beta Coefficients).

3.4. Hypothesis Testing

Using the significance of the correlation and of the regression coefficient at the .05 level (Table 6), the null hypothesis was rejected: stakeholder engagement strategies have a statistically significant, positive effect on the enrolment of teenage mothers in back-to-school programs in Gasabo District ($r = .591$, $p < .001$), and the effect remained significant when the other three implementation strategies were controlled ($\beta = .312$, $p < .001$), answering the first specific objective of the study.

Table 6. Summary of Hypothesis Testing Decision.

Hypothesis	Test Statistic	Sig.	Decision
H_{01} : Stakeholder engagement strategies have no significant effect on the enrolment of teenage mothers in Gasabo District (bivariate test)	$r = .591$, $t = 11.33$	.000	Rejected
H_{01} (multivariate check): Stakeholder engagement has no independent effect on programme success when the other three strategies are controlled	$\beta = .312$, $t = 4.901$	.000	Rejected

Source: Primary Data (2026). Decision rule: reject H_0 where $p < .05$.

3.5. Qualitative Triangulation

Findings from the key informant interviews and FGDs triangulated closely with the quantitative results. The most consistent

theme was the decisive role of parental and family support in motivating teenage mothers to re-enrol. An NGO programme officer explained that “when the family is on board, the girl comes back,” whereas when a family is ashamed or unsupportive, “even if we enroll her, she drops out within weeks,” and described family sensitization as the most important thing the organization does before a girl steps through the school gate. FGD participants described the same mechanism from the girl’s side: one explained that her mother, afraid of what the neighbors would say, changed her mind after a programme officer visited their home and explained the programme, adding that without that visit she would not be in school today. Home visits and family sensitization sessions were therefore identified as the most impactful engagement strategies, consistent with the strong association between engagement and enrolment. A district education officer reported that community leader engagement had improved through Umudugudu (village-level) sensitization meetings, but emphasized that coverage remained incomplete across Gasabo’s 15 sectors, which corresponds to the lowest-rated quantitative indicator, community leader support ($M = 3.18$). No major divergence between the quantitative and qualitative data was identified.

4. Discussion

Stakeholder engagement strategies were strongly and positively associated with the enrolment of teenage mothers ($r = .591$, $R^2 = .349$) and were the strongest of the four implementation strategies in explaining programme success ($\beta = .312$, $p < .001$) within a model that jointly accounted for 68.4% of its variance. This finding provides direct empirical support for the central proposition of Stakeholder Theory [9] that project outcomes depend on the quality of relationships maintained with all parties who can influence or be affected by the project, not only with its primary beneficiaries. In this setting the decisive parties were not only the teenage mothers themselves but their families, community leaders, school administrators and programme staff. The result is also consistent with Pinto and Slevin’s identification of client consultation as a critical success factor of project implementation [11] and with the treatment of stakeholder engagement as a foundational implementation process in the PMBOK Guide [10].

The qualitative evidence suggests how engagement works. Family acceptance acted as a precondition for enrolment: where families were informed, visited and persuaded, opposition softened and girls returned, whereas enrolment without family acceptance was fragile and ended in early withdrawal. This is consistent with evidence from rural Rwanda that adolescent mothers in communities with strong social support networks, positive attitudes towards girls’ education and active parental involvement had significantly higher school reintegration rates than those in communities characterized by stigma and exclusion [5], and with evidence from Ghana that stigma and discrimination are significant obstacles to school re-entry [8]. The accounts of participants whose mothers changed their minds after a home visit also resonate with Mezirow’s view that meaningful educational re-engagement involves a change in frame of reference [18]; although this study did not measure learning processes, the pattern suggests that engagement may work partly by shifting how families view a young mother’s educational prospects, a proposition that future research could test directly.

The pattern of ratings adds nuance. Engagement was rated best where it was institutionalized in schools (school administrators, $M = 3.65$) and worst at the community level (community leaders, $M = 3.18$), with direct communication by programme staff also only moderate ($M = 3.31$). The gap matters because evidence from Rwanda indicates that the attitudes of community leaders are a key determinant of school reintegration outcomes [5]. It also shows that the practice with the greatest influence on outcomes is not yet consistently delivered: moderate average engagement coexists with a strongest-predictor status. The qualitative accounts of incomplete Umudugudu-level coverage across Gasabo’s 15 sectors indicate that community outreach has so far been uneven, and the results suggest that outreach and family engagement should be ongoing, structured processes embedded throughout the project lifecycle, as the stakeholder engagement guidance in the PMBOK Guide implies [10], rather than one-off sensitization events.

Set against related Rwandan evidence, the strength of the association ($r = .591$) is comparable in magnitude to the correlation of .654 reported between resource planning practices and project performance in donor-funded education projects [14]. Within the present joint model, however, stakeholder engagement outranked resource allocation ($\beta = .312$ versus $\beta = .287$), which qualifies a common assumption that funding is always the first lever for improving school re-entry: both mattered, but how well families and communities were engaged mattered slightly more. By examining engagement within a social development project, the study also extends the project management literature on implementation factors in development projects [12, 13] to the specific problem of teenage mothers’ school re-entry.

For practice, the results give implementing organizations a defensible basis for sequencing effort: engagement of families and community leaders should be treated as an early and continuing work package of a back-to-school project, completed before enrolment and sustained after it. The limitations of the evidence should nonetheless be acknowledged. The design was cross-sectional and the measures were the perceptions of respondents drawn from five groups, so the results show association and prediction rather than proof of causation, and social desirability may have influenced the ratings, particularly those of teenage mothers. A correlation of .591 leaves 65.1% of the variance in enrolment unexplained. Girls who left programmes were difficult to reach and are probably under-represented. Finally, the study covered a single district, which limits statistical generalization to

other districts, although the findings should be transferable to settings with similar socio-demographic characteristics.

5. Conclusions

This study examined the effect of stakeholder engagement strategies on the enrolment of teenage mothers in back-to-school programs in Gasabo District, Kigali City. Three main conclusions follow from the evidence gathered.

First, stakeholder engagement matters substantially for the enrolment of teenage mothers. Engagement was strongly and significantly associated with enrolment ($r = .591$, $R^2 = .349$), it remained a significant predictor when the other three implementation strategies were controlled, and it was the strongest of the four strategies in the joint model that explained 68.4% of the variance in programme success. The null hypothesis was therefore rejected, validating the Stakeholder Theory premise that engaging all parties around the beneficiary, not the beneficiary alone, is central to project success.

Second, engagement is delivered unevenly. It is strongest where it is institutionalized in schools and weakest at the community level, where community leader support received the lowest rating ($M = 3.18$) and coverage across the district's 15 sectors was reported to be incomplete. Programme staff communication with all parties was also only moderate ($M = 3.31$). Qualitative evidence shows that the practices with the greatest effect, namely home visits and family sensitization before enrolment, depend on staff time and sustained outreach rather than on large financial outlays.

Third, the practical implications call for coordinated action. Implementing organizations should adopt a standard family-engagement protocol in which every beneficiary's family is visited and informed before enrolment and updated regularly thereafter; the Gasabo District Administration and the Ministry of Education should extend Umudugudu-level sensitization to all 15 sectors and secure the explicit commitment of community leaders to school re-entry; schools should maintain the welcoming practices that were already rated most favorably; and development partners should fund stakeholder engagement as a core component of back-to-school programs rather than as an optional extra. Future research replicating this design across other districts, using longitudinal designs capable of testing the direction of causality, and using administrative enrolment records alongside perceptions, would further extend the findings reported here.

Abbreviations

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINEDUC	Ministry of Education
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NST2	National Strategy for Transformation (2024–2029)
PMBOK	Project Management Body of Knowledge
RDHS	Rwanda Demographic and Health Survey
SD	Standard Deviation
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund

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Umutoniwase Elyse: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal Analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Validation, Visualization, Writing – original draft, Writing – review & editing

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Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

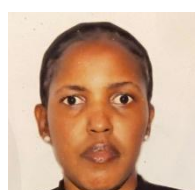
Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest.

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Biography



Umutohiwase Elyse is a Master of Science in Project Management candidate at the University of Kigali, Rwanda. Her research focuses on project implementation, stakeholder engagement and education development projects in Rwanda. I

Research Field

Umutoniwase Elyse: Project Management, Stakeholder Engagement, Project Implementation, Education Development Projects, Teenage Mothers and School Re-entry, Monitoring and Evaluation