



Effectiveness of Selection Criteria and Meeting Scholarship Requirements

Project: Meru, Kenya

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Program background: The service scholarship program helps older students continue their education. The objective of this program is to help students reach their potential, provide role models in the sponsorship community, and cultivate local leadership in Unbound communities. It involves a selective process among applicants who demonstrate a participatory attitude and a strong commitment to service and leadership.

Purpose of the evaluation: Learn the value service scholarship requirements on the scholars themselves and understand challenges scholars face in meeting the requirements.

Methods: A sample of 148 scholars from the program for two or more years, and a confidence interval of 4% and a confidence level of 95% were used. Scholars completed the questionnaires and Focus Group Discussions were held with selected parents whose groups were beneficiaries of scholarship slots.

Key findings and Conclusions:

- Almost half of scholars applied to the program on their own followed by themselves; 23% were assisted by staff; 16% were advised by parents and 11% were advised by Mothers' Groups.
- 76% of scholars receive communication on program requirements from staff; 14% received from sponsored group leaders; 9% were informed by parents. A little over a half of scholars viewed 200 service hours as an opportunity; 20% viewed it to learn how to relate to others; 11% viewed it as a chance to socialize; 9% viewed it as commitment; and 7.5% viewed it as source of school fees.
- 28% of scholars felt distance was a challenge; 25% felt lack of lunch was an issue; 16% felt time was a challenge; 9% felt assigned tasks were not in their specialization; 7% felt beneficiaries were disrespectful.
- Program will address challenges of required receipts by looking at proposals such as scholars bringing them at the end of term, subproject mailing them to projects and direct deposit.

Learnings and Report recommendations:

- Strengthen capacity building among mothers groups so that they execute instruction without challenges; all groups in scholarship program will be trained.
- New strategies will be tried to increase transitions to higher education beyond secondary.
- Program stakeholders will continue to encourage equal opportunity to scholars of both genders.
- Program will aim to empower both parents and scholars with clear channels of communication.