

BLISS FOR THE NEEDY FOUNDATION

MONITORING, EVALUATION, RESEARCH AND LEARNING (MERL) FRAMEWORK

Empowering Lives. Restoring Hope. And Bringing Bliss at the End of Every Story.

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1. ABOUT THIS FRAMEWORK

1.1 Who We Are

Bliss for the Needy Foundation (BFN) is a grassroots Nigerian nonprofit organization dedicated to advancing gender equality, promoting education, and empowering young women and children to realize their full potential. BFN operates primarily in Rivers State and Edo State, with aspirations across Africa. The Foundation's programs span education scholarships, menstrual health, gender advocacy, leadership development, and community outreach, all anchored in the conviction that every child and young woman deserves to thrive regardless of background, gender, or circumstance.

1.2 Purpose of This MERL Framework

This Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning (MERL) Framework is BFN's master system for tracking, understanding, and improving its work. It does three things:

- It ensures accountability demonstrating to donors, partners, and communities how resources are used and what results are achieved.
- It enables evidence-based learning using data not merely to report, but to strengthen every program cycle.
- It integrates a research dimension allowing BFN to conduct structured inquiries into the root causes of the problems it addresses, the effectiveness of its interventions, and the deeper needs of its beneficiaries.

MERL is not a reporting compliance exercise. It is the engine of BFN's continuous improvement and impact growth.

1.3 What MERL Means at BFN

Component	Definition at BFN
Monitoring	Continuous, systematic tracking of program activities, outputs, and early indicators against planned targets. Answers: Are we doing what we said we would do?
Evaluation	Periodic, structured assessment of whether programs are achieving their intended outcomes and why. Answers: Is what we are doing making the difference we intended?
Research	Organized inquiry that goes beyond routine data examining root causes of inequality, testing new approaches, and generating evidence about BFN's context and beneficiaries. Answers: What do we need to understand more deeply?
Learning	The deliberate use of evidence from monitoring, evaluation, and research to change programs, strategies, and approaches. Answers: What should we do differently and better?

1.4 Framework Principles

- **People-Centered:** Beneficiaries especially girls, young women, and vulnerable children are at the heart of all measurement decisions.
- **Feminist and Gender-Responsive:** The framework actively tracks gender dynamics, power imbalances, and the specific experiences of women and girls.
- **Inclusive:** Data is disaggregated by gender, age, disability status, and geographic location to ensure no one is invisible in BFN's reporting.
- **Simple but Rigorous:** Indicators and tools are designed to be manageable for a grassroots team while maintaining credibility with donors and partners.
- **Adaptive:** The framework allows programs to be adjusted based on evidence, not just completed.
- **Ethical:** Beneficiary data is collected with informed consent, stored securely, and never used in ways that could harm participants.

2. ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY OF CHANGE

BFN's Theory of Change articulates the causal logic connecting its programs to long-term impact. It guides what the organization monitors, evaluates, researches, and learns.

2.1 The Problem BFN Addresses

In Nigeria particularly in Southern Nigeria girls, young women, and children from underserved communities face overlapping barriers: early school dropout driven by gender norms and poverty; lack of access to sexual and reproductive health information; limited leadership and career pathways for young women; harmful practices including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM); and a persistent culture that devalues girls' potential. These challenges compound each other, leaving generations of talented young people behind.

2.2 Theory of Change Statement

IF girls, young women, and vulnerable children in underserved Nigerian communities receive targeted education support, health empowerment, leadership training, mentorship, and access to opportunities and **IF** families, communities, and institutions shift their attitudes and practices in favour of gender equality **THEN** young women and children will complete their education, develop confidence and agency, access economic and leadership pathways, and live free from harmful practices **CONTRIBUTING TO** a Nigeria where every girl can reach her full potential and contribute to the development of her community.

2.3 Change Pathway

Level	What changes	For whom	How BFN contributes
Inputs	Resources, staff, partnerships, funding	BFN programs	Education opportunities, scholarships, materials, trained facilitators, community outreach.
Outputs	Direct deliverables of activities	Beneficiaries reached	Girls trained, pads distributed, communities reached, schools visited, scholarships awarded
Short-term Outcomes	Knowledge, skills, confidence gained	Individual beneficiaries	Girls understand their rights; women know menstrual health; students finish the academic year
Medium-term Outcomes	Behavior and practice change	Individuals, families, institutions	More girls return to school; women speak up against FGM; community leaders welcome change.
Long-term Impact	Systemic transformation	Communities and society	Reduced gender gap in education; improved women's economic participation; cultural norm shifts

3. PROGRAM AREAS AND RESULTS CHAINS

BFN currently delivers three core program areas. Each has a dedicated results chain mapping activities to outcomes and impact.

3.1 Education Access and Academic Empowerment

Core Programs: Academic Empowerment Tour; Bliss EmpowerHer Initiatives (BEI); scholarship component

Activity	Output	Short-term Outcome	Medium-term Outcome	Impact
School visits and scholarship awards	# students receiving scholarships and materials	Students have materials and financial support to remain in school	Improved school attendance and retention rates	Reduced female school dropout; improved academic performance
Leadership and life skills training	# sessions delivered; # participants trained	Participants demonstrate leadership skills and confidence	Girls take on leadership roles in school and community	Increased female participation in decision-making
Sex education sessions	# sessions; # students reached	Students have accurate knowledge of SRH and safety	Reduced early pregnancy; reduced school dropout related to pregnancy	Long-term SRHR improvements for girls

3.2 Women's Health and Menstrual Hygiene

Core Programs: Pad the Women Health Programme; community health outreach

Activity	Output	Short-term Outcome	Medium-term Outcome	Impact
Free sanitary pad distribution	# pads distributed; # women reached	Women have access to menstrual hygiene products	Women manage menstruation hygienically and safely	Reduced absenteeism from school/work due to menstruation
Menstrual hygiene education	# communities reached; # sessions held	Women understand menstrual health and debunk myths	Reduced stigma; increased open discussion on MHM	Improved community attitudes toward menstruation
FGM awareness and	# awareness sessions; #	Women and community members	Community members speak	Reduction in prevalence of

anti-harmful-practice advocacy	women/girls engaged	understand FGM risks	out against FGM	FGM in target communities
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3.3 Gender Equality, Advocacy, and Empowerment

Core Programs: She Who Builds Campaign; Bliss EmpowerHer Initiatives (BEI); advocacy component

Activity	Output	Short-term Outcome	Medium-term Outcome	Impact
Mentorship and career guidance	# mentorship sessions; # girls mentored	Girls identify career goals and have guidance on pathways	Girls pursue higher education or vocational training	Increased female representation in professional and leadership roles
Digital literacy and empowerment training	# participants trained in digital literacy	Participants demonstrate basic digital skills	Participants use digital tools for learning, income, or advocacy	Increased digital inclusion for girls and women
Community advocacy and norm change activities	# community events; # stakeholders engaged	Community members articulate understanding of gender equality	Families and community leaders actively support girls' education	Visible shift in community norms around gender roles

4. INDICATOR FRAMEWORK

BFN tracks indicators at four levels: Inputs, Outputs, Outcomes, and Impact. Indicators are classified as Core (mandatory for all programs) or Recommended (used where capacity allows). All indicators are disaggregated by gender and age at minimum.

4.1 Core Output Indicators (All Programs)

Indicator	Data Source	Frequency	Disaggregation
# beneficiaries reached (total)	Attendance registers	Per activity	Gender, age, LGA
# scholarships/grants awarded	Scholarship records	Per cycle	Gender, school level
# training/sensitization sessions delivered	Program reports	Monthly	Program area
# sanitary pads distributed	Distribution records	Per outreach	Community, LGA
# communities reached	Field reports	Per quarter	State, LGA
# partnerships established	MOU records	Annual	Partner type

4.2 Short-Term Outcome Indicators

Indicator	Measurement Method	Timing	Disaggregation
% participants demonstrating increased knowledge of their rights (post-test)	Pre/post knowledge test	End of each training	Gender, age, program
% girls reporting increased confidence and self-efficacy	Confidence scale (1-5)	End of program	Age, community
% women demonstrating accurate knowledge of menstrual health	Post-session quiz	Immediately after outreach	Age, community
% participants reporting intent to apply skills learned	Commitment survey	End of program	Gender, age
% scholarship recipients completing the funded academic term	School records	End of academic year	School level, gender

4.3 Medium-Term Outcome Indicators

Indicator	Measurement Method	Timing	Disaggregation
% scholarship recipients remaining enrolled in school 6 months later	Follow-up school visit or phone survey	6 months post-award	School level, gender
% girls reporting changed family attitudes toward their education	Alumni follow-up survey	3-6 months post-program	Age, community
% BEI graduates pursuing higher education or vocational training	Alumni tracking	12 months post-program	Gender, LGA
% community members reporting reduced acceptance of harmful practices (FGM)	Community survey	6 months post-outreach	Gender, age, LGA
# girls accessing JAMB/university application support and enrolling	Records + follow-up	Annually	State, LGA

4.4 Long-Term Impact Indicators

Indicator	Measurement Method	Timing	Disaggregation
% of BFN alumni who complete secondary school	Alumni database tracking	Annual	Gender, cohort year
Change in community-level attitudes toward girls' education (index score)	Community attitude survey	Every 2 years	Gender, LGA, community
# BFN alumni in formal employment, higher education, or leadership roles	Alumni survey	Annual	Gender, program type
% reduction in reported FGM incidence in target communities	Community health data + survey	Every 2 years	LGA, age
Total lives empowered toward 500,000 goal by 2030	Cumulative beneficiary count	Annual	Program area, state

5. MONITORING SYSTEM

Monitoring at BFN is a continuous, routine process that tracks whether programs are being implemented as planned and whether early signals of change are present. It is not a one-time activity it is embedded into every field visit, training session, and community outreach.

5.1 Data Collection Methods

Method	Purpose	When	Who Collects
Attendance Registers	Track who attends each session by gender, age, community	Every activity	Program staff
Pre/Post Knowledge Tests	Measure knowledge gained during training	Start and end of training	Facilitators
Confidence Rating Scales	Measure self-efficacy on a 1–5 scale	End of sessions	Facilitators
Daily Pulse Checks	Assess participant engagement and relevance in real time	During multi-day programs	Facilitators
Distribution Records	Track items given out (pads, materials, scholarships)	During distribution	Field staff
Facilitator Observation Checklists	Quality-check program delivery	During sessions	Program Manager / MEL Officer
Monthly Program Reports	Summarize activities, participants, challenges	Monthly	Program Manager
Field Visit Notes	Document qualitative observations from field	During field visits	Program staff

5.2 Data Management

- All data is collected using standardized BFN forms and entered into a central Excel-based tracking system within 48 hours of collection.
- A master beneficiary database is maintained, with unique identifiers for each participant to enable longitudinal tracking.
- Data is backed up monthly and stored securely. Personal information is anonymized in reports.
- All field staff receive basic data quality training at onboarding.

5.3 Data Quality Assurance

BFN uses a four-step data quality assurance process:

1. Completeness check: All required fields filled before data entry is accepted.
2. Accuracy check: Cross-verification of attendance registers against facilitator field notes.
3. Consistency check: Monthly review by MEL Officer comparing data from different sources.

4. Validation: Quarterly spot-checks of 10% of data records by the Program Manager.

6. EVALUATION SYSTEM

Evaluation at BFN goes beyond monitoring to ask whether programs are achieving their intended outcomes, why, and for whom. BFN conducts evaluations at three levels.

6.1 Types of Evaluation

Type	Purpose	When	Led By
Baseline Assessment	Establish starting conditions before a new program begins knowledge levels, attitudes, context	Before program launch	MEL Officer with program team
Mid-Term Review	Assess progress, identify problems, make adjustments mid-program	Halfway through program cycle	Program Manager + external peer review
End-Line Evaluation	Measure outcomes achieved against baseline; assess overall effectiveness	At program completion	MEL Officer; donor-commissioned where applicable
Alumni Follow-Up Evaluation	Track medium-term outcomes 3–12 months after program ends	3, 6, and 12 months post-program	MEL Officer
Annual Organizational Evaluation	Review whole-organization performance against the Theory of Change	Annually (Q4)	Executive Director + MEL Officer

6.2 Evaluation Methods

- Surveys: Structured questionnaires administered to beneficiaries before and after programs.
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs): Participatory qualitative sessions with beneficiaries, families, and community stakeholders.
- Key Informant Interviews (KIIs): In-depth interviews with school principals, community leaders, and partner organizations.
- Case Studies and Impact Stories: Narratives documenting individual transformation journeys.
- School Record Reviews: Verification of enrollment, attendance, and academic progress for scholarship recipients.
- Community Attitude Surveys: Periodic surveys measuring community-level shifts in gender norms.

6.3 Evaluation Questions

Every evaluation at BFN is anchored in at least one of the following core questions:

1. Are beneficiaries better off as a result of BFN's programs, and in what ways?
2. Are the most marginalized girls and women being reached, and are the programs relevant to their needs?
3. Are programs being delivered with quality and with the intended approaches?
4. What is driving change or preventing it in participants' lives?
5. Are there unintended consequences positive or negative of BFN's programs?
6. Is BFN's work contributing to longer-term systemic change in communities?

7. RESEARCH COMPONENT

The Research component is what distinguishes a MERL framework from a simple MEL framework. BFN's research function goes beyond measuring what is happening to investigating why it is happening enabling the organization to respond to evidence rather than assumption.

7.1 Purpose of Research at BFN

- To understand the root causes of girls' exclusion from education in target communities.
- To test the effectiveness of new or adapted program approaches before scaling.
- To generate evidence that BFN can share with partners, donors, and policymakers.
- To ensure programs respond to the real, lived experiences of beneficiaries rather than perceived needs.

7.2 Annual Research Agenda

BFN will conduct at least one structured research inquiry per year. Priority research questions are identified annually by the Program Manager and Executive Director in consultation with community partners. Examples include:

Research Question	Methodology	Output
What are the primary barriers preventing Fulani girls in Edo State from completing secondary education?	FGDs with girls, families, teachers; document review	Research brief + program design recommendations
What factors most influence community acceptance or rejection of FGM in BFN's target areas?	KIIs with community leaders; survey of women 15-45	Evidence note informing advocacy strategy
Do BFN scholarship recipients show significantly better school retention than non-recipients?	Comparison of school records (scholarship vs. non-scholarship cohort)	Impact evidence note for donor reporting
How do girls' confidence levels change across BFN program cohorts over time?	Longitudinal cohort analysis using confidence scale data	Annual cohort comparison report

7.3 Research Ethics

- All research involving human participants requires informed consent, explained in plain language and the local language where needed.
- No beneficiary under 18 will be named or photographed without parental/guardian consent.
- Research data will be anonymized before analysis and reporting.
- Findings will be shared with communities in accessible formats.
- Research involving sensitive topics (FGM, SGBV, reproductive health) follows safeguarding protocols.

8. LEARNING AND ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT

Collecting data is only the beginning. BFN's Learning System ensures that evidence feeds back into decision-making, program design, and organizational strategy. Learning is not an afterthought, it is institutionalized.

8.1 Learning Cycle

When	What Happens	Who Is Involved
After each program activity	Field debrief: What worked? What didn't? Quick adjustments for next session.	Facilitators + Program staff
Monthly	Program data reviewed; emerging trends discussed; operational decisions made.	Program Manager + MEL Officer
Quarterly	Reflection meeting: Progress against indicators reviewed; program adjustments identified and documented.	Full program team + Executive Director
After each evaluation	Evaluation findings work shopped; program redesign decisions made; donor briefing prepared.	Executive Director + Program Manager + MEL Officer
Annually	Organizational learning review: All program data synthesized; Theory of Change reviewed; strategy updated.	Full organization + Board
After research studies	Research brief produced; findings shared with program team and external partners; strategy implications discussed.	MEL Officer + External stakeholders

8.2 Adaptive Management Protocol

1. BFN uses the following protocol when monitoring or evaluation data signals that a program is not performing as expected:
2. Signal detected: Monitoring data shows output or outcome indicator below target by more than 20%.
3. Root cause analysis: Program team conducts a structured 'Five Whys' analysis or equivalent.
4. Adaptation decision: Executive Director and Program Manager decide whether to adjust delivery, tools, targeting, or approach.
5. Documentation: The adaptation decision and rationale are documented in the Program Log.
6. Re-measurement: Adjusted program is measured against the same indicators at next reporting point.

8.3 Knowledge Management

- All evaluation reports, research briefs, and learning notes are stored in BFN's central knowledge repository.
- A quarterly one-page learning brief is produced summarizing key findings and decisions — shared with donors and partners.
- Impact stories are collected at every program cycle and compiled in BFN's Annual Impact Report.
- BFN shares learning with peer organizations and networks to contribute to the broader Nigerian nonprofit ecosystem.

9. DATA COLLECTION CYCLE

BFN's data collection follows a structured cycle tied to program stages and reporting requirements.

Stage	Key Activities	Tools Used	Responsible Person
Before Program	Baseline assessment; stakeholder expectation setting; community mapping	Baseline survey; community profile template; stakeholder register	MEL Officer
During Program	Attendance tracking; daily pulse checks; facilitator observation; distribution records	Attendance register; pulse check form; observation checklist; distribution log	Facilitators + Program staff
Immediately After Program	Post-training knowledge test; participant feedback survey; confidence scale	Post-test form; feedback form; rating scale	Facilitators
30–90 Days After	Follow-up surveys on behavior change; school verification for scholarship recipients	Follow-up survey (phone or field); school record request	MEL Officer + Program staff
6–12 Months After	Medium-term outcome tracking; alumni surveys; community attitude survey	Alumni tracking form; community survey	MEL Officer
Annual	Organizational impact review; endline evaluation; annual research inquiry	Evaluation tools; research instruments; annual report template	Executive Director + MEL Officer

10. MERL TOOLS AND INSTRUMENTS

BFN uses the following standardized tools across all programs. Each tool is reviewed and updated annually.

#	Tool Name	Purpose	Format
1	Baseline Survey	Assess knowledge, attitudes, and context before programs begin	Structured questionnaire (paper/phone)
2	Attendance Register	Track all participants at each activity name, gender, age, community	Paper form + Excel master database
3	Pre/Post Knowledge Test	Measure knowledge gained during training sessions	Standardized quiz per program area
4	Confidence and Self-Efficacy Scale	Track participant confidence on a 1–5 scale at start and end of program	Rating scale form
5	Daily Pulse Check Form	Real-time relevance and engagement feedback during multi-day programs	3-question daily form
6	Participant Feedback Survey	Capture participant satisfaction and suggestions at program end	Short structured form (10 questions)
7	Facilitator Observation Checklist	Assess quality of program delivery against BFN standards	Structured checklist with YES/NO and narrative
8	Alumni Follow-Up Survey	Track medium and long-term outcomes for program graduates	Phone/in-person survey; 30, 90 days, 6 months, 12 months
9	Community Attitude Survey	Measure community-level change in gender norms and harmful practices	Community survey administered every 2 years
10	Impact Story Template	Document individual transformation stories for qualitative impact reporting	Guided narrative template
11	Gender & Inclusion Tracking Sheet	Track female participation rates, disability inclusion, and marginalization indicators across programs	Excel tracking sheet
12	Program Log / Activity Report	Document each activity what happened, who attended, challenges, decisions	Standard activity report template
13	Beneficiary Database	Central registry of all people BFN has reached with unique IDs for longitudinal tracking	Excel (graduated to Kobo Toolbox as capacity grows)
14	Budget Monitoring Dashboard	Track spending against budget; flag variances	Excel dashboard (monthly update)

11. ORGANIZATIONAL LOG-FRAME

This log-frame provides a one-page summary of BFN's organizational logic, linking activities to impact, with indicators, means of verification, and assumptions.

Level	Objective	Indicators	Means of Verification	Assumptions
Impact	Girls and women in underserved Nigerian communities achieve their educational and economic potential, free from harmful practices	% BFN alumni in education/employment 12 months post-program; community attitude index score improvement	Alumni surveys; community surveys every 2 years	Enabling policy environment; community will; continued funding
Outcome	Beneficiaries apply knowledge, skills, and confidence gained from BFN programs in their real-world environments	% applying skills 90 days post-program; % scholarship recipients retained in school 6 months; % community members changing attitudes on FGM/GE	Alumni follow-up surveys; school records; community survey	Families support beneficiaries; no major economic shocks or conflict
Output	Beneficiaries complete high-quality BFN training, mentorship, and empowerment programs	# beneficiaries reached; # scholarships awarded; # communities reached; completion rate ≥80%	Attendance registers; scholarship records; program reports	Sufficient facilitators; safe meeting spaces; beneficiaries willing to participate
Activity	Trainings, campaigns, school visits, pad distributions, scholarship awards, mentorship sessions, community outreach	# sessions delivered; # items distributed; # school visits conducted	Activity reports; distribution logs; field notes	Adequate funding; no major logistical disruptions; staff availability

12. RISK MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

BFN identifies risks proactively and embeds risk management into program design, implementation, and review processes.

Risk Type	Description	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation
Strategic	Programs misaligned with community needs or donor priorities	Medium	High	Annual needs assessments; regular community feedback loops; Theory of Change review every 2 years
Operational	Low attendance; transport/logistics failure; facilitator unavailability	Medium	Medium	Advance community mobilization; backup facilitator pool; flexible scheduling
Financial	Funding gaps; delayed disbursements; budget overruns	Medium	High	Diversified funding base; phased implementation; reserve fund; real-time budget tracking
Safeguarding	Harm to beneficiaries, especially minors, during programs	Low	Very High	Safeguarding policy; parental consent forms; no photography without consent; incident reporting system
Data Quality	Inaccurate, incomplete, or biased data affecting decision-making	Medium	High	Standardized tools; data quality checks; quarterly data audits; MEL Officer oversight
Reputational	Negative stakeholder perception; unmet donor expectations	Low	High	Transparent communication; evidence-based reporting; donor review sessions; quality assurance reviews
Sustainability	Impact doesn't continue beyond program lifecycle; alumni disengage	Medium	Medium	Alumni network maintenance; community ownership strategies; follow-up tracking beyond program end
Security	Community tensions, unrest, or access constraints in field areas	Medium	High	Regular security assessments; community liaison relationships; flexible field protocols

13. MERL GOVERNANCE AND ROLES

Clear roles ensure that MERL responsibilities are owned and executed not left as an afterthought.

Role	Person/Team	MERL Responsibilities
Executive Director	BFN Leadership	Strategic oversight of MERL; approves annual research agenda; presents findings to Board and donors; reviews Theory of Change
Program Manager	Program Team Lead	Oversees implementation of MERL plan; conducts mid-term reviews; leads monthly data review meetings; manages evaluation processes
MEL Officer	Dedicated or part-time role	Designs and updates tools; manages data collection and entry; analyzes data; produces reports; manages alumni database; leads research studies
Field Facilitators	Program Delivery Staff	Administer pre/post tests; collect attendance and feedback data; submit field notes; deliver daily pulse checks
Finance Officer	Finance Team	Tracks expenditure against budget; produces financial monitoring dashboard; flags variances
Community Liaison Officers	Field Representatives	Support community data collection; ensure community feedback is captured; coordinate FGDs and community surveys
Board / Advisory Body	Governance	Reviews annual impact report; provides strategic direction for MERL; ensures accountability to mission

14. REPORTING PRODUCTS AND SCHEDULE

BFN produces the following standard reporting products to communicate performance, learning, and impact to internal and external stakeholders.

Report	Content	Frequency	Audience
Activity Report	What was done, who attended, outputs delivered, immediate observations	After each activity	Program Manager; internal records
Monthly Program Report	Progress against targets; data summary; challenges; decisions taken	Monthly	Executive Director; donors (where required)
Quarterly Learning Brief	1–2 page summary of what BFN is learning; what is working; adaptations made	Quarterly	Donors; partners; Board
Donor-Specific MEL Report	Tailored report aligned to donor requirements and indicators	Per donor reporting schedule	Specific donor
Mid-Term Review Report	Progress against outcome indicators; program quality assessment; recommendations	Midpoint of each program	Donors; Board; program team
Annual Impact Report	All-program data synthesis; year's achievements; impact stories; KPI dashboard	Annually (Q4)	All stakeholders; public
Research Brief / Evidence Note	Findings from structured research inquiry; recommendations	Per research study	Donors; partners; policymakers; public
Alumni Follow-Up Report	Tracking outcomes 3–12 months post-program; cohort comparison	Annually	Executive Director; donors

14.1 Key Organizational KPIs Dashboard

The following KPIs are tracked on BFN's organizational dashboard, updated monthly and presented to the Board quarterly:

- Total beneficiaries reached (cumulative and per quarter)
- Female participation rate (% of all beneficiaries who are female)
- Program completion rate (% of enrolled participants who complete programs)
- % scholarship recipients retained in school after 6 months
- % participants demonstrating knowledge gain (pre/post test improvement)
- % alumni applying skills 90 days post-program
- # communities reached

- # active partnerships
- Total funds mobilized
- Progress toward 500,000 lives goal by 2030

15. PERFORMANCE ENVIRONMENT ANALYSIS

BFN recognizes that program outcomes are not determined by program quality alone. External factors shape what is possible for beneficiaries and for BFN as an organization. The following environmental factors are assessed at program design and reviewed at mid-term.

Environmental Factor	Influence on BFN Programs	BFN Response
Gender norms and patriarchal attitudes	Affects girls' ability to attend programs; families may restrict participation	Community sensitization before programs; engaging male community leaders; flexible scheduling
Economic conditions (household poverty)	Poverty drives girls out of school; limits uptake of opportunities	Scholarship programs; material support; linking beneficiaries to livelihood pathways
Security and conflict dynamics	Insecurity restricts field access and beneficiary safety	Regular security assessments; community liaison partnerships; contingency planning
Government education and health policy	Policy changes affect school fees, curriculum, and health services available	Policy monitoring; advocacy engagement; aligning programs to national frameworks (e.g., Nigeria Education Policy, National Health Act)
Cultural and religious norms around SRHR and FGM	May create resistance to health education and advocacy programs	Community-led facilitation; using trusted local messengers; phased community engagement
Digital connectivity and infrastructure	Affects ability to use digital tools for M&E data collection and alumni tracking	Paper-based primary data collection; mobile data where connectivity allows; digital transition plan
Donor funding landscape	Funding uncertainty can disrupt program continuity	Diversified funding strategy; unrestricted reserve fund; multi-year grant applications

16. GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

Term	Definition
Adaptive Management	The practice of adjusting program approaches based on evidence from monitoring and evaluation, rather than rigidly following the original plan.
Baseline	A measurement of conditions before a program begins, used as a reference point to measure change.
Beneficiary	A person who directly receives BFN's services or support.
Disaggregation	Breaking down data by characteristics such as gender, age, or location to ensure different groups are visible in reporting.
End-line	A measurement taken at the end of a program to compare with the baseline and assess change.
Impact	Long-term, sustainable changes in individuals, communities, or systems attributable to BFN's work.
Indicator	A measurable variable used to assess progress toward a specific objective.
Log-frame (Logical Framework)	A structured table linking activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact, with indicators, means of verification, and assumptions.
MERL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Research and Learning, BFN's integrated system for tracking and improving program performance and impact.
Outcome	A change in knowledge, attitude, behavior, or practice that results from a program's outputs.
Output	The direct, tangible product of program activities (e.g., # people trained, # scholarships awarded).
Theory of Change	A description of how and why a program is expected to achieve its goals, tracing the pathway from activities to impact.