



School of online and distance learning

**COURSE: PGD IN MONITORING AND  
EVALUATION**

**MODULE EIGHT ASSESSMENT TEST**

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**Q1: In the context of enhancing use of knowledge from M&E, describe the key steps to developing M&E knowledge products. (10 mrks)**

Monitoring and Evaluation is a lifeline during project implementation. It's the process that gauges whether the project is steered towards the right direction or not and how best adjustments and other improvement measures can be put in place to straighten the project. However, there are numerous steps that should be undertaken in developing a Monitoring and Evaluation knowledge product which will mainly depend on the audience and their information needs. In this context, audience and purpose should clearly be identified for a meaningful learning and knowledge sharing while not compromising on the quality of the products. The following are practical steps for developing knowledge products from Monitoring and Evaluation: (*UNDP, 2009*)

**Step 1: Identify target audiences and their information needs**

Some of the commonly identified audiences at this step includes program staff and colleagues in country offices and other units, government counterparts who or may not be directly involved in the project under evaluation but can facilitate policy changes recommended by the evaluation, other development partners like United Nations organizations, NGO's, academic and research institutions and other network of evaluators in the country.

Here the information needs for the various groups should first be assessed by those responsible for knowledge sharing including when the information is most needed and is likely to serve as an agent of change. For example, governments or other policy makers may find certain information very useful to trigger critical policy decisions.

The Monitoring and Evaluation unit in an organization should be aware when the 'window of opportunity' for decision making arises and make the necessary information available in a manner that is appropriate for the technical and functional needs of the target audience.

## **Step 2: Collect stakeholder contact information**

Even in real life, having someone's contact is very important to ease communication considering the technological advancement. The success therefore of every dissemination exercise depends mainly on the recipient contact information gathered during the Monitoring and Evaluation processes. For instance, regardless of the degree of involvement of the stakeholders in the evaluation topic, they still constitute a critical audience and should be well informed about the knowledge gathered from the evaluation exercise.

## **Step 3: Determine types of products that meet the audience's information needs**

A range of knowledge products can be developed to meet the information demands of different groups in addition to publishing information from regular Monitoring and evaluation reports. A systematic assessment of the needs and demand for specific products among targeted audiences can be undertaken to ensure the relevance and value of the products. For example, evaluation reports should include a brief and to the point yet comprehensive and information-rich executive summary. This summary can be used as a stand-alone product to enhance the readership of the evaluation. Secondly, without overwhelming the reader, there should be an evaluation brief. This should be a three to five non-technical summation of the executive summary to increase general interest in the readership. And finally, there should be a summary of the evaluation which is basically a one paragraph description designed to increase the visibility of published content and announce the report publication on the webpage and other electronic mediums.

It is therefore the responsibility of the institution or program to ensure that relevant and high-quality knowledge products are produced in a timely mode of action.

#### **Step 4: Identify language requirements per product and audience**

As a way of enhancing the impact of knowledge sharing and dissemination efforts knowledge products should be translated into local languages whenever possible. For example, In South Sudan a country with less than 40% literacy rate, there are sixty-four (64) diverse tribes who speak different languages altogether. Meaning knowledge products should be translated into the various languages of the different ethnic groups (mostly illiterate) for better understanding of the product. However, if resources are meager, the organization may determine language requirements per knowledge product or per audience group.

It is important to note that at a minimum, the evaluation brief should be translated into the most widely used local language. Additionally, the language used in the product should be appropriate for the technical levels of the targeted audience.

#### **Step 5: Determine efficient forms and dissemination methods per evaluation knowledge product**

One of the most common and often used means of sharing knowledge products is by electronic copy. In order to lift the efficiency in terms of time and cost, the institution's webpage and email list should be strategically used as a dissemination tool. This can be done by uploading the evaluation reports into the organization's external webpage with an information to give a recapitulation of the salient facts in the report.

Furthermore, knowledge from monitoring and evaluation can be shared broadly by incorporating them in existing reports and publications, such as the country office's annual report or other key reports, brochures and news bulletins among others.

#### **Step 6: Monitor feedback and measure results of dissemination efforts**

Communication is a two-way process. Its therefore vital to have feedback in return such that results, and impact of the information disseminated can be measured. So basically, there should be a feedback and learning mechanism for the effectiveness of the dissemination plan of action and quality of the knowledge product. For instance, the program can choose to conduct a quick survey among the recipients of the knowledge products or develop a web-based tool where users can be able to give feedback online as has been the most common phenomenon recently.

But while analyzing the feedback, the following questions should be asked: —To what extent has the monitoring and evaluation information been used in programming and policy making within and beyond the organization?; Has such information been made in a timely manner to effectively influence decision-making processes?; Have the products reached both direct and indirect audiences in an efficient manner and were they easily accessible?; Did the audience find the knowledge products useful?; If not, why not?; and What could be done better next time to improve?

In conclusion therefore and after finding answers / feedback from the above questions, the lessons learnt from the experience should be reflected in the future evaluation knowledge sharing and dissemination efforts so that evaluations in the organization will continue to be relevant and contribute to organizational learning and the enhancement of a global knowledge base in development.

**Q2:** Describe 5 key ways by which M&E knowledge may be shared with critical stakeholders. (10 mrks)

As a good programming and planning practice, institutions should make sure that their evaluations contribute to a better understanding of development effectiveness in the development community beyond their borders. As such, key findings, conclusions and

recommendations should often be shared and made available to potential users and audience beyond the programs immediate stakeholders for it can increase the impact of the evaluation into greater heights. This can only be achieved after having a through audience analysis like what their information needs are; how their learning takes place and what type, or kinds of communication and knowledge are most suitable to achieve the objective of sharing knowledge.

The following are some of the ways by which Monitoring, and Evaluation knowledge maybe shared with critical stakeholders:- ((*UNDP, 2009*))

- Evaluation Reports and other knowledge products should be uploaded onto the organization's public website while ensuring that the reports and other knowledge products are written clearly and made available in the most commonly used languages
- It is always vital to organize regular meetings with interested stakeholders to discuss lessons learnt in the organization's existing publications such as annual reports, newsletters or bulletins. Such a dialogue through the meetings will create a sense of transparency and better ways of dealing with emerging trends within the organization.
- By presenting findings and lessons at the annual stakeholders meeting of the organization, review meetings and forums with media, will ensure proper dissemination of the M&E knowledge and better ways of fostering positive change and dealing with hazards being experienced during the project implementation cycle.
- Besides that, the organization can develop a brochure for the program's activities and accomplishments for promotional purposes
- Alternatively, the organization can share M&E knowledge by inviting local researchers and academics to discuss the data collected for the evaluation or to discuss the evaluation methodology applied. This will trigger meaningful debate among the thinktanks that the

organization can borrow a leaf from. An article(s) can also be published on academic journals based on the evaluation findings.

- Develop a brief, concise and to the point summary in a plain language for wider circulation among others
- Share findings, recommendations and lessons learned at training sessions and workshops for Program staff, government counterparts and other partners. Training should focus on areas such as how to improve the quality of projects and skills development. Etc...

#### **REFERENCES:**

1. UNDP, 'Handbook on Planning, Monitoring and Evaluating for Results', Evaluation Office, New York, NY, 2009. Accessible through  
<http://web.undp.org/evaluation/handbook/documents/english/pme-handbook.pdf>