

**1: Explain in about 350 words why M&E informs good programming practice. (10 marks)**

M & E also known as Monitoring and Evaluation has an important role for the accomplishment of projects and effectiveness of institutions. It is for this reason that there has been a growing emphasis on M&E across the globe, with programs and governments setting up their M&E systems. Thus, the significance of M&E is of utmost importance and the following are reasons why M&E assist to informs good programming practice.

To begin with, Monitoring and Evaluation informs good programming practice because they are processes within a project or program that are carried out to help improve performance and achieve results. In order to achieve performance and result, M&E as a programming tool assist to enhance current and future management of outputs, outcomes and impact. In addition, M&E informs good programming practice because at the program level it enable to track implementation and outputs systematically, and measure the effectiveness of programs. It also helps determine exactly how a program is on track and when changes may be needed.

Again, M&E informs good program practice because they are mainly used to assess the performance of projects, institutions and programs set up by governments, local, national, international organizations as well as NGOs. In addition, M&E enable to establish links between the past, present and future actions to be taken. For example it assist us learn from past successes and challenges and inform decision making so that current and future initiatives are better planned to improve people's lives and expand their choices. Furthermore, couple with good planning effective monitoring and evaluation can play a significant role in strengthening the effectiveness of development programs and projects. In other words, the aim of M&E is to assess that a project is achieving it set targets or goals.

**Q2: Describe the fundamental similarities and differences between Monitoring and Evaluation. (10 marks)**

Although Monitoring and Evaluation are vital tools to improve performance and achieve results, they however are different in their own rights. Therefore, the following are the fundamental similarities and differences between Monitoring and Evaluation.

To begin with similarities the common ground for monitoring and evaluation is that they are both management tools. In addition, both Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are important to assess that a project is achieving set targets. Furthermore, the purpose of monitoring and evaluation is to track implementation and outputs systematically, and measure the effectiveness of programs.

However, Monitoring and evaluation also have the following fundamental differences. In terms of definition, Monitoring is define as a systematic and long-term process that gathers information pertaining to the progress made by a project being implemented whereas the UN-System defines

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Evaluation as the systematic assessment of an activity, project, program, strategy, policy, topic, theme, sector, operational area or institution's performance.

Secondly, with regards to Monitoring, data and information collection for tracking progress according to the terms of reference is gathered periodically which is not the case in evaluations for which the data and information collection is happening during or in view of the evaluation.

Again, Monitoring is a short term assessment and does not take into consideration the outcomes and impact unlike the evaluation process which also assesses the outcomes and sometime longer term impact. This impact assessment occurs sometimes after the end of a project, even though it is rare because of its cost and of the difficulty to determine whether the project is responsible of the observed results.

Furthermore, Monitoring is a continuous assessment that aims at providing all stakeholders with early detailed information on the progress or delay of the on-going assessed activities. It is an oversight of the activity's implementation stage. Its purpose is to determine if the outputs, deliveries and schedules planned have been reached so that action can be taken to correct the deficiencies as quickly as possible. On the other hand, Evaluation focuses on expected and achieved accomplishments, examining the results chain (inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and impact), processes, contextual factors and causality, in order to understand achievements or the lack of achievements. Evaluation aims at determining the relevance, impact, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of interventions and the contributions of the intervention to the overall results achieved. In short, USAID policy on project/program evaluation states that an evaluation should provide evidence based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The findings, recommendations and lessons of an evaluation should be used to inform future decision-making processes regarding the program, including design of new projects.

In a nutshell, Monitoring is on-going and tends to focus on what is happening whereas Evaluations are conducted at specific points in time to assess how well it happened and what difference it made.

**Q3: Describe the difference between formative and summative evaluation process and explain the time of each process in the life of a project.10mrks)**

There are many types evaluation such as, needs assessments goal-based, process,outcomes, formative, summative evaluations etc. Program evaluations are often conducted at different stages of projecting planning and implementation. Although there are many types of evaluation, focus will mainly be on Formative and Summative evaluation given that they are the two main categories of evaluations of development projects. Thus, what are the differences between formative and summative evaluation process and what are the time of each process in the life of a project.

Firstly, Formative evaluations or process evaluations examine the development of the project and may lead to changes in the way the project is structured and carried out. Those types of evaluations are often called interim evaluations. In formative evaluation, Midterm evaluation is mostly commonly used. On the other hand, Summative evaluations (also called outcome or

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impact evaluations) address the second set of issues. They look at what a project has actually accomplished in terms of its stated goals. There are two main types of summative evaluation which are commonly used: end time evaluations and ex-post evaluations. The former aim to establish the situation when external aid is terminated and to identify the possible need for follow up activities either by donors or project staff while the latter are carried out two to five years after external support is terminated.

Again, formative evaluations are process oriented and involve a systematic collection of information to assist decision-making during the planning or implementation stages of a program. They usually focus on operational activities, but might also take a wider perspective and possibly give some consideration to long-term effects. While staff members directly responsible for the activity or project are usually involved in planning and implementing formative evaluations, external evaluators might also be engaged to bring new approaches or perspectives. Meanwhile, Summative evaluations are usually carried out as a program is ending or after completion of a program in order to —sum up the achievements, impact and lessons learned. They are useful for planning follow-up activities or related future programs. Evaluators generally include individuals not directly associated with the program.

In sum, Formative evaluations occur during project/programme implementation to improve performance and assess compliance while Summative evaluations occur at the end of project/programme implementation to assess effectiveness and impact.

**Q4: With brief explanations, outline the key questions both formative and summative evaluations seek to answer. (10mrks)**

The vitality of Formative evaluations cannot be over emphasis. This is so due to the fact that formative evaluation focuses on operational activities as well as take effect during project/programme implementation to improve performance and assess compliance. Apart from this, in order for formative evaluation to be more relevant and effective it needs to address the following crucial questions such as:

- To what extent do the activities and strategies correspond with those presented in the plan?

If they are not in harmony, why are there changes? Are the changes justified?

- To what extent did the project follow the timeline presented in the work plan?

-Are activities carried out by the appropriate personnel?

-To what extent are project actual costs in line with initial budget allocations?

- To what extent is the project moving toward the anticipated goals and objectives of the project?

-Which of the activities or strategies are more effective in moving toward achieving the goals and objectives?

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- What barriers were identified? How and to what extent were they dealt with?
- What are the main strengths and weaknesses of the project?
- To what extent are beneficiaries of the project active in decision-making and implementation?
- To what extent do project beneficiaries have access to services provided by the project? What are the obstacles?
- To what extent are the project beneficiaries satisfied with project services?

On the other hand, summative evaluation look at what a project has actually accomplished in terms of its stated goals. In addition, the main purpose is to assess what lasting impact the project has had and to extract lessons of experience. Nonetheless, just like formative evaluation, summative evaluation needs to address the following questions in order to achieve its objectives:

- To what extent did the project meet its overall goals and objectives?
- What impact did the project have on the lives of beneficiaries?
- Was the project equally effective for all beneficiaries?
- What components were the most effective?
- What significant unintended impacts did the project have?
- Is the project replicable?
- Is the project sustainable?

**Q5: Explain the main limitations of the pretest-post-test model of evaluation (10mrks)**

The Pretest-post-test model of evaluation is a process in evaluation which state that without project interventions, the situation that existed before the implementation of the project will continue as it was before. Thus, due to intervention, the situation will alter over time. Consequently, under this process the situation is measure prior to start of the project and repeat the same measures after the project is completed. The differences or changes between the two points in time can be attributed to the project interventions. However, the pre-test-post-test models are not without limitations which can be found below.

To begin with, the main limitation of the pre-test and post-test model is that it is void of scientific rigor. There are many partialities that might take place between the pre-test and the post-test that could impact the results, and consequently, weaken the direct link between project interventions and project outcomes or impact. This implies, changes in the situation prior and

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after project implementation might (to some extent) be attributed to other external factors. However, this problem could be resolved to an extent by implementing the Multiple Time series model, i.e. repeating the measures at different points of time during the implementation of the project and not only at the beginning and end points of time. In this regard, it will enable that results of measures can be tracked over time and the impact of the external factors can be assessed and controlled. Nevertheless, the work load might increase significantly thereby increasing cost of the evaluation.

On the other hand, the pre-test-protest model is however has some advantageous in the sense that it can be implemented with relative ease as well as it can be implemented using the same group of project beneficiaries. However, its limitations are serious points of concern which can increase work burden such as increase in cost of evaluation.