**AFRICA INSTITUTE FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT STUDIES, NAIROBI KENYA**

**NAME: DANIEL ACHIEK MAYOL**

**COURSE: POST GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

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**MODULE THREE ASSIGNMENT**

**TELEPHONE NUMBER: +211921668800/+211915320986**

**EMAIL ADDRESS:** [**blackseedtmb@yahoo.com**](mailto:blackseedtmb@yahoo.com)

**MODULE 3 Questions:**

**Q1:** Explain the value of M&E in about 100 words and outline key planning steps for setting up an M&E plan (10 mrks)

**Key terms**

* **Monitoring and evaluation are, in fact, two distinct sets of organizational activities, related but not identical.**

**Monitoring and evaluation is more than just keeping a birds eye view on a project being implemented but goes further to deriving essential project accountability information.**

**Monitoring and evaluation of development activities provided programme and project managers, including government officials and civil society with better means for learning from past experience, improving service delivery, planning and allocating resources, and demonstrating result as part of accountability to key stakeholders.**

**Within any programme or project there is a strong focus on results-this helps explain the growing interest in monitoring and evaluation.**

**Yet there is often confusion about what monitoring and evaluation entails. the purpose of this simplified monitoring and evaluation article is to strengthen awareness and interest in monitoring and evaluation.**

**It is also to clarified what it entails especially for struggling portfolio managers to government -sponsored public sector investment project.**

**Key planning step:**

**(STEP ONE): identify program goal and objectives**

**Defining program goal start with answering three question**

**Q1 what problem is the program trying to solve**

**Q2 what steps are being taken to solve that problem**

**Q3 how will program staff know when the program has been successful in solving the**

**Problem.**

**Answering these questions will help identify what the program is expected to do, and how the staff will know whether or not it works**

**For example, if the program is starting a condom distribution program for adolescent, the answer might look like this:**

* ***Problem*: high rate of unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted infection (STIs) transmission among youth ages 15-19**
* ***Solution*: promote and distribute free condoms in the community at youth friendly location.**
* ***Success*: lowered rates of unintended pregnancy and STI transmission among youth 15-19 higher percentage of condom use among sexually active youth.**

**From these answers, it can be seen that the overall program goal is to reduce the rates of unintended pregnancy and STI transmission in the community**

**(STEP TWO) : Define indicators**

**Once the program goal and objectives are defined, it is time to define indicators for tracking progress towards achieving those goals. Program indicators should be a mix of those that measure process, or what is being done in the program, and those that measure outcomes.**

**Process indicators track the progress of program, they help to answer the question, are activities being implemented as planned? Some examples of process indicators are.**

* **Ex 1 number of training held with health providers**
* **Ex 2 number of outreach activities conducted at youth-friendly locations**
* **Ex 3 number of condoms distributed at youth-friendly location**
* **Ex 4 percent of youth reached with condom use messages through the media**

**Outcome indicators track how successful program activities have been at achieving program objectives, they help to answer the questions, have program activities made a difference? Some examples of outcome indicators are:**

* **Ex 1 percent of youth using condoms during first intercourse**
* **Ex 2 number and percent of trained health providers offering family planning services to youth**
* **Ex 3 Number and percent of new STI infected among youth.**

**(STEP THREE): DEFINE DATA COLLECTION METHOD AND TIMELINE**

**After creating monitoring indicators, it is time to decide on methods for gathering data and how often various data will be recorded to track indicators. This should be a conversation between program staff, stakeholders, and donors. These methods will have important implication for what data collection methods will be used and how the result will be reported.**

**The source of monitoring data depends largely on what each indicator is trying to measure. The program will likely need multiple data sources to answer all of the programming questions. Below is a table that represents some examples of what data can be collected and how**

**Information to be collected data source**

**Implementation process and program program-specific M&E tools**

**Service statistics facility logs, referral cards**

**Reach of the program intervention within small surveys with primary**

**Audience subgroups or communities audience, such as provider**

**Interviews or client exits**

**Interviews**

**The reach of media intervention involved media ratings data,**

**In the program broadcaster logs, google**

**analytics, omnibus surveys**

**reach and success of the program national-representative surveys intervention at the population level omnibus surveys, DHS data**

**qualitative data about the outcomes focus group, in depth interviews**

**of the intervention listener/viewer group**

**discussions, individual media**

**diaries, case studies**

**once it is determined how data will be collected it is also necessary to decide how often it will be collected, this will be affected by donor requirements, available resources, and the timeline of the intervention some data will be continuously gathered by the program ( such as the number of training), but these will be recorded every six month or once a year, depending on the M&E plan. Other types of data depend on outside sources such as clinic and DHS data.**

**(STEP FOUR): IDENTIFY M&E ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

**The next element of the M&E plan is a section on roles and responsibilities. It is important to decide from the early planning stages who is responsible for collecting the data for each indicator this will probably be a mix of M&E staff, research staff, and program staff. everyone will need to work together to get data collected accurately and in a timely fashion.**

**Data management role decided with input from all team members, so everyone is on the same page and knows which indicators they are assigned. this way when it is time for reporting there no surprises**

**(STEP 5): CREATE AN ANALYSIS PLAN AND REPORTING TEMPLATE**

**Once all of the data have been collected, someone will need to compile and analyze it to fill in a result table for internal review and external reporting. This is likely to be an in house M&E manager or research assistant for the program.**

**The M&E plan should include a section with details about what data will be analyze and how the results will be presented. Do research staff need to perform any statistical tests to get the needed answers? If so, what tests are they and what data will be used in them? What soft ware program will be used to analyze data and make reporting tables? Excel?, SPSS?, this are important consideration.**

**(STEP SIX) PLAN FOR DISSEMINATION AND DONOR REPORTING**

**The last element of the M&E plan describes how and to whom data will be disseminated. Data for data’s sake should not be the ultimate goal of M&E efforts. Data should always be collected for particular purposes.**

**Consider the following**

* **How will M&E data be used to inform staff and stakeholders a bout the success and progress of the program?**
* **How will it be used to help staff make modifications and course correction, as necessary**
* **How will the data be used to move the field forward and make program practices more effective?**

**The M&E plan should include plans for internal dissemination among the program team, as well as wider dissemination among stakeholders and donors. For example, a program team may want to review data on a monthly basis to make programmatic decision and develop future work plan, while meeting with the donors to review data and program progress might occur quarterly or annually. Dissemination of printed or digital materials might occur at more frequent intervals. These options should be discussed with stakeholders and your team to determine reasonable expectations for data review and to develop plans for dissemination early in the program. if these plans are in place from the beginning and become routine for the project, meetings and other kind of periodic review have a much better chance of being productive ones that everyone looks forwards to**

**Q2:** Describe the relevance of stakeholder participation in M&E (10 mrks)

Stakeholders participation is capable of increasing beneficiaries’ interest and satisfaction and to some extent their own satisfaction of projects and programmes being implemented as indicated by nyaguthii and oyugi (2013:9) when they stated that involving the local residents in monitoring of projects and programmes increases the level of satisfaction for the beneficiaries

As part of measuring the involvement of stakeholders in planning, implementation, M&E of projects and programmes, it was established that the involvement of the zonal council in planning and implementation of projects and programmes was generally rated as good whiles its involvement in M&E was rated as poor. This is in consonance with hilhorst and guijt (2006:3) who noted that while primary stakeholders are increasingly involved in some aspects of planning, their presence within the M&E of actions is very often lacking or in adequate. Ahenkan etal (2013:206) also observe ed that there are no clear structures and procedures for community involvement in the monitoring of development intervention in the district though some structures for promoting community engagement during planning processes exist evidence from the study gave an indication that M&E of projects and programmes could be concentrated at the municipal level hence the poor rated could be a result of the over concentration on participatory planning at the peril of PM&E at the zonal council level and that because participatory planning has been on the drawing board for long there exist some appreciable level of involvement in planning

This indicates that the participation of stakeholders can best be describe as tokenistic as noted by Anstein (1969) and consultation as noted by African development bank (2001) and Wilcox, (2003) the African development bank (2001) described, consultation as a prerequisite for participation encapsulating information sharing, listening and learning and joint assessment which can be likened to stakeholders review meetings and public hearing. This point out that more needs to be done to strengthen the level of participation in the M&E of projects and programmes to achieve the best outcomes and impacts of projects and programmes.

**Q3:** It is imperative that sufficient resources are allocated to the conduct of

## M&E in a program. discuss this assertion in about 350 words. (10 mrks)

## M&E is a key lever in evidence-based grantmaking. It definitely adds a cost to the donor.

## **The importance of allocating of grant funding to monitoring and evaluation**

## Over the years, organization has been questioned on the amount of money that has been allocated to evaluations. The frequent refrain is that the money could be better spent on beneficiaries, and this is something of a moral conundrum for those of us doing grant making in a context where the education need is so great.

Evaluations are indeed an additional cost to project costs, but it is important to do them. We need to undertake both formative as well as summative evaluations, as it is important for us to learn as we implement. learning the primary purpose of evaluations rather than only being about accountability, our experience is that partners have found them to be valuable. However, as evaluations are ultimately about value judgements on the impact of interventions, evaluations are not always well received. It is difficult for both donors and partners to get feedback on projects or components of projects which are not working. However, we learn from success and learn even more from failures.

**Budgeting for monitoring and evaluation**

When establishing an organization, we dedicated 10% of the project costs to evaluation. However, we don’t slavishly follow the 10% guideline anymore as it’s more effective to budget according to the defined purpose of an evaluation as well as its value to project partners and the broader sector. We don’t commission an external evaluation of every project and thus we have been able to keep the overall costs of evaluations within the benchmark of 10% of our total project funding per annum.

An evaluation can cost as much as 30% of a project’s costs. I had an experience of this three years ago when the organization evaluated a pilot of a school-based internships in Initial Teacher Education. We had the project evaluated so we could establish the efficacy a of the model and to determine whether the pilot could be replicated. In order to do this, the evaluation needed to consider the various components of the programme – the at-school mentoring, the wrap-around support provided to the intern, the academic distance learning model, the resources needed by the managing agency and tracked the interns in their first teaching role – in order to make an argument about the replicability of the model. This made it a time-consuming and the evaluation exceeded the 10% guideline.

the donors need to set up their own internal monitoring systems and as well as commission external evaluations of the projects they support. Both have cost implications for the donor and are both equally important.

**The importance of dedicating funding to the dissemination of results**

The schooling sector is hugely researched in South Africa. Government, researchers, NGOs, evaluators and donors all collect data from school. Our experience is that little of this gets back into the sector and indeed back to schools. It is vital that we donors take responsibility for giving feedback to project participants, implementing partners, government partners as well as the broader sector, and to allocate funding to do so. Feedback on evaluation results to schools has been most illuminating. Principals and school’s management teams have embraced the findings and using the evidence for more informed planning and setting targets to improve learner performance. Dissemination costs include for example, packaging of the findings of evaluations into various fit-for-purpose knowledge products, events with various partners to share information, sharing on both digital and face-to-face platforms. Doing this helps to build a body of knowledge and evidence about what works and what does not work in education today. Dissemination is the first step to promoting uptake and usage and then the real value of M&E.

**Q4:** What are the key considerations and questions that both monitoring and evaluation seeks to answer? Explain giving project examples. (10 Mrks)

Key terms

Monitoring

The frequency of monitoring depends on what indicators are being monitor it can be daily (e.g. relief programming processes) weekly (e.g. distribution), monthly (e.g. prices, population assisted) quarterly (e.g. training) etc.

The bulk monitoring happened at projects implementation phase, however context monitoring can happen at any part during a project to make this information collected useful it should feed into project planning and decision- making , decision around what data should be collected as part of monitoring will be decided at the assessment stage and when baselines are undertaken these will then feed into planning

Key question Monitoring should answer

* Has there been any change in the operating environment context? If so what and why? Are the needs stills the same or have needs evolved that the programme is not addressing?
* To what extent are the right people being targeted by the project how does it compare to overall needs and inputs of other agencies? Is any readjustment required?
* Is the projects activity plan or track? If not, why not and what can be done to correct this?
* If the current rates of progress continue, will project activities achieve the intended objective, (output and outcomes)? If not. Why not and what can be done to correct this?
* Is the project having any unanticipated effects? Are these positive or negative?
* Has the projects achieved the intended indicator level?

Evaluation

Evaluation should always clarify their primary purpose around internal/external accountability or learning and their primary audience, irrespective of whether the purpose of the evaluation is for accountability or learning, project beneficiaries should be at the heart of it in reality most evaluation seek to combines accountability and learning objective however by identifying the primary purpose, evaluation methodology will vary accordingly.

Evaluation maybe based on assessing the extent to which projects have adhered to other framework, such as codes and standard (e.g. the ACF charter, the red cross and NGO code of conduct: sphere standards etc.) or thematic framework change framework.

* Looking at what the project or organization intended to achieve-was the change or impact intended achieve? If not, why not?
* Looking at the project plan, organizational strategy, or specific thematic policies -was there a clear plan/strategy/policy in place? Was this utilized to shape activities? Did the plan/strategy/policy work? If not, why not?
* Looking at the processes-was there an efficient use of resources? What was the opportunity cost of resource allocation? How sustainable is the way the project or organization work? What are the implications for the various stakeholders in the way the organization works?

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**Q5:** Explain the relationship between *change assumptions”* and *impact* in a project. (10Mrks)

A theory of change anticipates the assumptions about the process through which change will occur and specifies the ways in which all of the required early and intermediate outcome related to achieving a desired long-term change will be brought about and documented as they occur (Anderson. 2006) here it comprises the description of visualization of the change processes and accompanying assumption from problems definition to the identification of knowledge gaps through research design and execution to the realization of expected output and outcomes and the desired contribution to impacts. It is an important tool for monitoring and evaluation, and in particular for learning

The change assumption can be a useful tool for communicating what your programme

does and how it has an impacts in a clear and convincing way.

One example of change assumption

Reducing youth re-offending project

Support accessing housing employability training and jobs application support

**Assume some housing is available increase number in employment**

**in the brought**

**increase number in permanent housing increase number have sustainable income**

increase number stable & safer

reduced dependency on negative peer’s physical support

mentoring by an ex-offender

assumes ex- offender mentors are more likely to build a report with clients

* improved confidence improves pro-social skills
* increase independence increase ability to make positives life decision

reduce dependency on negatives peers for emotional support

reduce likelihood of gang activity

reduce likelihood of offending or re-offending

change assumption which provide a clear, concise and convincing explanation of what your project does, what impacts you aim to have and how you believe you will have it is a vital foundation of any project. And a prerequisite for effective evaluation. For this reason, producing a change assumption is an obligatory requirement for achieving standards 1 on project oracles standards of evidence.

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