**Module 1 Questions:**

**Q1**: Explain in about 350 words why M&E informs good programming practice. (10 marks)

*Monitoring and evaluation are two of the most important aspects of ensuring the project/program success, when carried out correctly, with appropriate resources, at the right time and place. Unfortunately, project managers often give less priority to monitoring and evaluation and the later are then used simply for the sake of meeting the donor’s requirements instead of using them as an appropriate mechanism of ensuring project success.*

*Monitoring and evaluating are important for reasons like: performance management, learning and accountability, etc. They enable you to understand what factors and approaches lead to expected change, to be more accountable to donors and internal/external stakeholders, and help improve your programming strategies as well. Monitoring and evaluation allows to have crucial information on organizational and project performance, area of intervention (context of the zone), key project stakeholders (local, national and international).*

*Monitoring and evaluation is a whole that captures information to maximize the success likelihood of the project from its onset to its closure. Also, during implementation, it allows to identify promising aspects of the project that could be replicated elsewhere.*

*This practice lets M&E influences projects and programs from their design stages by inspiring appropriate approaches and strategies to project implementers, decisions-makers and funding agencies. An example to illustrate this, is when NGOs are revising their country/global strategies, they always reflect based on captured lessons learned from previous programming. This example shows the extent to which M&E is not only about a specific project or program but the implementing organization as a whole should give monitoring and evaluation a special place to inform their programming.*

*Also, with a good monitoring and evaluation practices, implementing organization are likely to have good data management systems that feeds donor reports and requirements as well as needs for new projects proposals (for more funds to cover clear needs in specific areas). For example, it’s easy to respond to donor appeal for funding in your area of intervention when you have data to justify your proposal or concept note. In general, applying good monitoring and evaluation practices saves time, money, reputation and improves confidence, better programming, impact, accountability to stakeholders, funding and the organization as a whole.*

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

*There are several similarities between Monitoring and Evaluation. These are two complementary management tools for capturing information to control the action implemented and to inform decision-making. They help identify and measure project, program or policy results.*

*Monitoring and evaluation information enables (1) to adjust, evaluate and reflect on strategies and activities, (2) to report progress to stakeholders (for example: donors, beneficiaries, local government, civil society, etc.), (3) to identify and share with others (implementing organizations and donors) good practices and lessons learned, (4) to inform better future programming based on lessons learned. While complementary, monitoring and evaluation are separate approaches to continuously measure performance and measure effects or changes, respectively.*

*Monitoring is like a dashboard that gives regular information on the operation; a continuous process of data collection and information analysis to assess the extent to which a project / program is implemented, comparing with expected performance. Monitoring is more about resource availability, process operation and outputs. For this purpose, we commonly use tools such as checklists, patient registers, attendance list, good received notes, distribution lists, activity tracking matrix, etc. to collect data regularly.*

*On the other hand, evaluation is a one-off activity that takes place after a specific period of time and requires more in-depth assessments. It is a systematic and objective measure of a project / program or a specific milestone. It judges the data and information of the strategic decisions, which will allow future improvements of the project / program or policies in place. It covers specific area like the relevance, consistency, efficiency of implementation, effectiveness, impact as well as sustainability of the outcomes of the project.*

*Here is a small recap on the complementarity between monitoring and evaluation, adapted from the Kuzek and Risk model, World Bank (2004).*

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| *Monitoring* | *Evaluation* |
| *Clarifies program objectives, results and targets* | *Analysis why the expected results were (or were not) achieved* |
| *Links activities and their resources to goals* | *Assesses the specific causal contributions of the activities* |
| *Transforms objectives and results into performance indicators and defines targets* | *Examine the implementation process* |
| *Regular collection of indicator’s data* | *Explain the unexpected results* |
| *Compares actual results with objectives* | *Provides lessons learned* |
| *Report a problem to managers and warn them if a problem occurs* | *Highlights the results of the program compared to what caused them* |
| *Supports donor reports* | *Offers recommendations for improvement* |

*To conclude, I would say that monitoring is an integral part of the evaluation. Indeed, during an evaluation, the information collected through the monitoring is used to understand how a program initiated a change. So, an evaluation process is the analysis or interpretation of data collected in order to thoroughly examine the relationships between outputs, outcomes and the overall impact of a project or program.*

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

*Formative and summative evaluations can be distinguished by their main purpose but they can sometime overlap based on aspects that we assess.*

*A formative evaluation normally takes place during project or program implementation, often at mid-term. The purpose of a formative evaluation is to mold the future of the project or program and improve its performance. A formative evaluation tends to focus more on learning and management. For instance, it can highlight the need for better use of indicators for monitoring work progress, suggest better linkages to the context that can feed organization strategies.*

*For instance, formative evaluation can help determine the extent of violence in the community, the factors that contribute to or protect from violence, the community context in which the prevention approach, including gender norms held by the community, will be conducted and ways to tailor the approach to increase its relevance and likelihood of achieving the desired results (Valle et al., 2007).*

*Formative evaluation assesses the strengths and weaknesses of actions and strategies, and their convenience before or during implementation. It helps project implementers to design and develop innovative approaches or solutions, to gear actions to the complex, uncertain and dynamic circumstances.*

*By contrast, a summative evaluation is often carried out at the end of a project or program. It is usually designed to assess what was achieved, and how.*

*Summative evaluations are often implemented when a project or program has ended, or is about to end, and it is no longer possible to make changes to that project or program. However, lessons may still be learned that could help shape future interventions. It measures effects* *and changes that result from the project or program and assesses outcomes in the target beneficiaries that come about as a result of strategies and activities implemented.*

*Summative evaluation also looks at community-level change or longer-term objective sought as a result of the project or program’s aggregated effects on individuals’ behavior and the sustainability of the project achievements. It attempts to determine whether the project caused the observed effects.*

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

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| ***Formative*** | ***Summative*** |
| ***How do the project’s target beneficiaries think about the issue?***  *This questioning helps to understand the involvement of beneficiaries or target audience, their access to assistance (goods or services) provided and their level of satisfaction (they can also identify barriers as well).* | ***What significant unintended impacts did the project have?***  *It’s interesting understand unexpected results from a project on beliefs, attitudes and social norms which also show how not-target people were indirectly affected by project’s actions.* |
| ***What messages work with what audiences?***  *This question addresses the relevance of the messages used in the program. And this may imply the adaptation of awareness messages based on a clear perception of the sensitivity of different groups of beneficiaries to specific issues.* | ***To what extent this project or on of its component can be replicated?***  *Based on lessons learned from the project implementation, some adjustments can be done to make it replicable in another location. Note that sometime, it’s only a component or an approach of the project that can be replicated.* |
| ***Who are the best messengers?***  *It is important to know the best communication channels in a project. At this stage, we analyze whether the channels used are the best and whether they require adaptations to reach a larger audience.* | ***What impact did the project have on the lives of beneficiaries?***  *Based on the expected outcomes of the project, we should judge the accomplishment of project objectives by measuring the change that occurs in comparison to an earlier state in a beneficiary’s daily life.* |
| ***What outcomes are being achieved?***  *It is important to see what are the actions of the project that lead to a specific result and if it will be successful by looking at the trend the activities carried out. At this stage, we can also see the activities and approaches that contribute significantly to the accomplishment of the project objectives.* | ***Has there been any systems-level change?***  *Since the project works in an environment with several actors, we can check what it has been able to influence in its environment. For example: how coordination was done with other to result to a change.* |
| ***What do initial results reveal about what is working and not working?***  *Through a SWOT analysis, we can easily identify barriers, challenges and opportunities to achieve project’s objective.* | ***Are the project activities sustainable?***  *Here, we look at what are the sustainable actions of the project; what remained although the project is finished or is coming to an end. At this stage, we can to verify the actions set up by the project as an exit strategy.* |

**Q5:** Explain the main limitations of the pretest-post-test model of evaluation

(10mrks)

*The pretest-posttest model provides essential elements for quick decision-making. This is to either initiate a project or program, or to obtain sufficient data for accountability, learning and / or communication with donors (contractual reporting), beneficiaries and other stakeholders (civil society organizations, local government, etc.).*

*It is a model that is widely used with humanitarian projects that demand quick results for the action they take for beneficiaries. This model assumes collecting specific data on the group targeted at the beginning and at the end of the project based on well-defined indicators. And the difference between the data of the beginning and the end is considered as attributable to the project.*

*For example, for a food security project, the food consumption score can be collected at the beginning and at the end of the action. And when we observe an improvement in the score, we can conclude that it is the project that has contributed to the improvement of this score and the welfare of beneficiaries in general.*

*However, it has some limitations related to scientific rigor since there are several factors related either to the project environment or to the beneficiaries themselves that are not controlled at the project level. Also, there is a risk of bias when administering questionnaires, selecting respondents for the assessment and even the expectations of respondents who sometimes want to influence humanitarian aid in their area.*

*In fragile contexts, for example, although organizations try to coordinate, it may happen that in the same areas, there are beneficiaries that are taken into account by several projects. This can influence the results of evaluations at the end of the project.*

*It should be noted that in practice, it may be very difficult to interview all participants in the program and / or to make this evaluation regularly (time series model) because of the financial implications.*

*However, there are many efforts undertaken to address these constraints such as conducting regular contextual analysis, coordinating with other actors (local and international NGOs), involving local authorities and leaders (the community) in beneficiary selection process, and combining quantitative and qualitative methods to collect the data.*