**Strategia Netherland**

Diploma Course in Monitoring and Evaluation

**Assignment One**

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1. **Giving examples differentiate between monitoring and evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation are important management tools that are necessary to track the progress and facilitate decision making for present and future interventions. However, there are lots of differences between monitoring and evaluations.

The terms ‘monitoring’ and ‘evaluation’ refer to two different functions.

There are important differences when considering frequency, purpose, focus, participants and reporting.

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| Monitoring | evaluation |
| Monitoring is the systematic and routine collection of information about the programs/projects activities | Evaluation is the periodic assessment of the programs/projects activities |
| It is ongoing process which is done to see if things/activities are going on track or not i.e. it regularly tracks the program | It is done on a periodic basis to measure the success against the objective i.e. it is an in-depth assessment of the program |
| Monitoring is to be done starting from the initial stage of the projects | Evaluation is to be done after certain point of time of the project, usually at the mid of the project, completion of the project or while moving from one stage to another stage of the projects/programs |
| Monitoring is done usually by the internal members of the team | Evaluation is done mainly done by the external members. However, sometimes it may be also done by  internal members of the team or by both internal and external members in a combined way |
| Monitoring provides information about the current status and thus helps to take immediate remedial actions, if necessary | Evaluation provides recommendations, information for long term planning and lessons for organizational growth and success |
| It focuses on input, activities and output | It focuses on outcomes, impacts and overall goal |
| Monitoring process includes regular meetings, interview, monthly and quarterly reviews etc. Usually quantitative data. | Evaluation process includes intense data collection, both qualitative and quantitative |
| Continuously throughout the project life time | At a given point in time, e.g. end of project, mid-term, ex-post or change of phase |
| Steer the project; provide timely information on progress made | Assess and provide judgment on the performance; learn from |
| Collecting and analysing factual information about activities, outputs, (without forgetting outcome) and the processes | Assess outputs, outcome and impact; and quality of the design, project implementation and context |
| Project staff, project end users | External evaluators, project staff, end users, donors and other stakeholders |
| Programme managers, project staff, primary stakeholders, funding agency | Programme managers, project staff, primary stakeholders, funding agency and policymakers |

1. **Why is Baseline survey an important part in Project Management**

The Baseline Survey is the first step in the project. A Baseline Survey gathers key information early in a project so that later judgments can be made about the quality and development results achieved of the project. The project’s monitoring and evaluation plan is closely linked to each (objective) level of the log frame and includes indicators of achievement and means of verification.

The baseline survey is an early element in the monitoring and evaluation plan and uses the log frame structure to systematically assess the circumstances in which the project commences. It provides the basis for subsequent assessment of how efficiently the activity.

Projects are designed to deliver measurable results, and a good baseline survey must answer the counterfactual so as to measure and distinguish those results from variables. Therefore conducting baseline survey before a particular project has commenced has the following importance;

It helps to determining what variables to measure, i.e. specifying the substantive content of the study. In academic research this usually means elaborating a set of hypotheses. By contrast, for the type of research necessary for a monitoring and evaluation system, the step consists in determining what information policy makers, programme planners and administrators require in order to ascertain whether or not the programme is functioning properly and why this is so. This step is perhaps the most difficult, since programmes do not always specify their objectives clearly and in measurable terms. Indeed, many of the objectives of a given programme are not event stated formally. In addition, although most development programmes are multidisciplinary, the programme personnel often exhibit a particular professional bias towards obtaining one or another type of information deemed necessary for monitoring and evaluation.

Baselines surveys are important to any project for they are the starting point for a project. A recommended way of starting a project is to carry out a baseline study. Through its result, a baseline serves as a benchmark for all future activities, where project managers can refer to for the purposes of making project management decisions.

Baseline studies are important in establishing priority areas for a project. This is especially true when a project has several objectives. The results of a baseline study can show some aspects of a project need more focus than other while others may only need to be given little focus.

Without a baseline, it is not possible to know the impact of a project. A baseline study serves the purpose of informing decision makers what impact the project has had on the target community. Accordingly, along with other strategies such as use of control groups, it also helps in attributing change in the target population to the project.

Baseline tools are used for evaluation: the tools used during a baseline study are normally the same tools used during monitoring and evaluation of a project. This is important for ensuring that management compares the situation before the planned project and the aftermath of the project. As such, conducting a baseline means that time and other resources for designing evaluation tools are minimized or event eliminated altogether.

1. **Distinguish between summative and formative evaluation Methods with examples.**

**Formative evaluation** is used to monitor student’s learning to provide ongoing feedback that can be used by instructors or teachers to improve their teaching and by students to improve their learning.

An evaluation that is performed at mid-term is called a formative evaluation. This means that it takes place while the project is still running. The intention of the formative evaluation is to improve the functioning of the project while it is still possible to do so. It can predict the project’s final effects and can highlight adjustments that are required to the project design. It examines the development of the project and may lead to changes in the way the project is structured.

**Summative evaluation**, however, is used to evaluate student’s learning at the end of an instructional unit by comparing it against some standard or benchmark.

Summative evaluation only allows us to draw lessons once the project has been completed. It therefore does not enable us to make improvements to the specific project being evaluated. However, lessons may be learnt that can be applied to enhance future projects and improve the functioning of the organisation. It is an overall assessment of the project’s performance and its impact. It assesses the extent to which the programme has succeeded in meeting its objectives, and the potential sustainability of gains made through the programme.

**Examples of formative evaluation**

Formative assessments can be classroom polls, exit tickets, early feedback, and so on.

**Examples of Summative assessments**

Examples of summative assessments are midterm exams, end of unit or chapter tests, final projects or papers, district benchmark and scores used for accountability for schools and students.

1. Monitoring and evaluation uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the success and impact of the projects. However, economists and staticians adapt a one sided method (quantitative) to analyze the results.
2. **Identify the potential dangers of a one sided monitoring system.**

It is important to anticipate external factors that can hamper the implementation of planned M&E activities and events, because the success or failure of the M&E system can strongly depend on them.

* The results may only be accepted by one party
* There could be potential bias in the individual conducting the evaluation

At the technical level, risks encompass a lack of capabilities/capacities that can be related to skills and/or human resources. There may be also issues relating to the sensitivity of data to be collected for M&E purposes: this is particularly relevant in some IAEA fields of activity.

At the institutional level, the multiplicity of donor procedures may be a challenge when harmonizing the M&E system. In such a situation, a greater involvement of key stakeholders or actors is needed from the beginning in order to develop the M&E system.

1. **Critically analyze the quantitative method often employed by economists and staticians in monitoring and evaluating development projects**

With quantitative methods, things are either measured or counted, or questions are asked according to a defined questionnaire so that the answers can be coded and analysed numerically.

Quantitative methods help to answer questions such as “who?”, “how much?”, and “how many?” Where probability sampling is used, statistical analysis will provide precise estimates for study variables, such as: frequencies, averages, ranges, means, and percentages, at a known and quantifiable degree of confidence.

Quantitative methods allow the identification of major differences in the characteristics of (or conditions affecting) a population. They also determine whether there is a statistical relationship between a problem and an apparent cause, and allow generalizing to the larger population based on data from samples. However, they tend to ‘simplify’ the reality.

Examples are: Direct measurements, Observations, Census/counting, Questionnaires (quantitative)

1. **a. Define logical Framework**

Logical framework is a tool for planning and managing development projects. It looks like a table (or framework) and aims to present information about the key components of a project in a clear, concise, logical and systematic way.

**b. Define and Explain key components of Logical Framework**

**Goal**

Refers to the sectoral and national objectives to which the project is designed to contribute. The goal can also be thought of as describing the expected impact of the project. It is a statement of intention that defines the main reason for undertaking the project.

**Purpose**

Refers to what the project is expected to achieve in terms of its development outcome. The purpose relates only to the beneficiaries, a specific area and a timeframe.

**Output**

Refers to specific results and products (goods and services) produced by undertaking a series of activities. The specifically intended results of the project activities- uses milestones of what has been accomplished at various stages during the life of the project.

**Activities**

Refers to actions and tasks undertaken to achieve the required outputs. Descriptions of activities should not include too much detail, because they easily become too lengthy.

**Inputs**

Refers to the resources required to undertake the activities (e.g. personnel, equipment and materials). They should not be included in the matrix format.

**Indicators**

Refers to information/observations that would help us to determine progress made towards attaining project objectives

Also referred to as measurable or objectively verifiable indicators (OVI) quantitative and qualitative ways of measuring progress and whether project outputs; purpose and goal have been achieved.

**Assumptions**

Refers to external conditions that could affect the progress or success of the project. The project manager has no direct control over these conditions (e.g. the inflation rate, upcoming elections). Assumptions relate to conditions that must pertain (exist, be in place) in order for project objectives to be achieved (e.g. peace, economic stability). Conversely, “risks” are conditions or events that might prevent the attainment of objectives (e.g. conflict, economic collapse).

**Means of verification**

Refers to the expected source of the information we need to collect. MoVs should clearly specify this source. They ensure that the indicators can be measured effectively by specification of types of data, sources of information and methods of collection.

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