Course Assignment (Module Two)

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COURSE ASSIGNMENT TWO

1. **What are the qualities of a good indicator? Give an example.**

Qualities of good indictor are as follows (SMART, CREAM, and ROAS) these are been explained with different expertise below are the details explanations.

1. **SMART,** were originally proposed as a management tool for project and program managers to set goals and objectives, **(Doran 1981 and others)** but currently **SMART** criteria have been well accepted in the field of monitoring and evaluation and have become deep rooted common best practice approach in developing indictors. Below are overviews of what SMART means.

**S stands for Specific:** The indictor must be able to be translated in to operational terms and made visible while the outcome/result itself can be comprehensive, the indicator should be narrow and focus on the who and What of the intervention, in addition, how and where the who is doing what therefore it’s important to include in the indicator as its provide the action for the intervention. Hence for your indicators to be Specific it must answer the following questions. Is it clear exactly what is being measured? Has the appropriate level of disaggregation been specified? Does the indicator capture the essence of the desired result? Does it capture differences across areas and categories of people? Is the indicator specific enough to measure progress towards the result? For example, using the indicator “increase by 20 per cent in number of criminal complaints filed” may reflect a more effective justice system OR an increase in crime.

**M means Measurable:** The indicator has the capacity to be counted, observed, analyzed, tested, or challenged. If one cannot measure an indicator, then progress cannot be determined. How will one know if the outcome has been achieved? Once an indicator is clear and specific, they can be measured in numerous ways; almost any indicator is in one way or another, measurable.

**A Means Achievable and Attributable:** [Monitoring and Evaluation system and related indicators] identifies what changes are anticipated as a result of the intervention and whether the results are realistic. Attribution requires that changes in the targeted developmental issue can be linked to the intervention.

**R means Relevant:** An indicator should be a valid measure of the result/outcome and be linked through research and professional expertise. The best way to think about relevance is to ensure that there is a relationship between what the indicator measures and the theories that help create the outcomes for the client, program, or system. The best method to find relevant indicators is to consult expert input and proper research.

**T means Timely:** Indicators must be timely in several aspects. First, they must be timely in terms of the time spent in data collection. This relates to the resources that are available - staff and partner time being critical. Second, indicators must reflect the timing of collection. Finally, the time-lag between output delivery and the expected change in outcome and impact indicators must also be reflected in the indicators that are chosen.

1. **ROARS**: An easy way to remember this is to say a good indictor ROARS like the lion,

**R stands for Relevant:** It measures an important part of an objective or output;

**O stands for Objective:**If two people measure the same indicator using the same tool, they should get the same result. The indicator should be based on fact, rather than feelings or impressions (another way to say this is to say that it should be Measurable);

**A means Available:** Indicators should be based on data that is readily available, or on data that can be collected with reasonable extra effort as part of the implementation of the (sub-) project.

**R means Realistic:** It should not be too difficult or too expensive to collect the information.

**S means Specific:** The measured changes should be attributable to the project, and they should be expressed in precise terms.

1. **CREAM:** is essentially a set of criteria to help in developing good performance indicators for a specific project, program, or policy **(Schiavo-Campo 1999, p. 85).**

**C means Clear:** Precise and unambiguous,

**R stand for Relevant:** Appropriate to the subject at hand,

**E means Economic:** Available at a reasonable cost,

**A means Adequate:** Provide a sufficient basis to assess performance,

**M means Monitorable:** Amenable to independent validation If any one of these five criteria is not met, formal performance indicators will suffer and be less useful. Indicators should be Monitorable, meaning that they can be independently validated or verified, which is another argument in favor of starting with quantitative indicators as opposed to qualitative ones.

Indicators should be reliable and valid to ensure that what is being measured at one time is what is also measured at a later time— and that what is measured is actually what is intended. Caution should also be exercised in setting indicators according to the ease with which data can be collected. “Too often, agencies base their selection of indicators on how readily available the data are, not how important the outcome indicator is in measuring the extent to which the outcomes sought are being achieved” **(Hatry 1999, p. 55).**

Examples of Indicators are as follows:

% of decrease in prevalence of water borne diseases,

% increase in proper-hand washing practice

% increase in household income

% increase in per unit yield of maize crop

% Increase in survival rate of the livestock

% of CFW days created for the flood affect

1. **As part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Universal education is a right for all children. Different governments have implemented free primary education in order to achieve this goal. With example from your country please explain the following:**
2. Critically evaluate the implementation programme of free primary education for the first 2 years.

South Sudan government and partners don’t implement free primary education program, the partner’s only support South Sudan government on free Education in emergencies (EiE) such as for returnees, Internal Displace Person’s (IDPs) and Refugees Camp in Maban county located in Northern part of South Sudan.

The free primary education in an emergencies situation in South Sudan has increased access to and quality of education over the past 2 years, this was the key improvement cited by the many South Sudanese communities members **(South Sudan Education Cluster May 2013),** the communities in South Sudan has appreciated education in emergencies as a way of keeping children safe from hazards and meaningfully occupied, out of harm’s e.g. Most woman said that the temporary Learning Space (TLS) reduces the distance that their children had to travel or move in order to access education in an unfamiliar environment. It has restored hope to children future, raising awareness of risk to health and wellbeing e.g. Mines, at the time of flooding.

1. Analyze the unintended outcomes of free primary education on job creation within the same period,
2. what would the monitoring exercise in free primary education wish to achieve for the following stakeholders?

* Donors
* Primary School managers
* Government

**The free primary education wish to achieve to the Donor’s the following points:**

* The monthly progress report submitted by the implementing partner’s,
* Support Supervision report or monitoring report at the cost of implementation if the programme for the free education is on track and capturing all the set indictors
* Including the percentage of children enrolled in the free emergencies in Education.
* No of mobilization conducted including parent’s meeting conducted at the school, and
* Number of education materials distributed to the school’s children.
* Monthly financial liquidation report and auditor’s report on finance accountabilities on the documentation on the uses of Donor’s funding.
* Lastly post evaluation report on the impact of the free Primary education on Emergencies.

**Primary School Manager’s, Monitoring exercise wishes to achieve to the primary school manager the following:**

* School record of Pupil present, including number of children ascend,
* Number of school teacher’s recruited and number of teacher trained not trained,
* Skim of work for the teachers,

**Monitoring exercise wish to achieve to the government the following:**

* Free primary school should be the responsibility of the government hence it’s currently being implemented by partners therefore during implementation of free primary education in an emergencies partners wishes to reduces the number of illiteracy within the implementation areas,
* Partner need the government to understand the important of children right to education and government wish to know the quality of free education provided.

1. **You have been contracted by UNICEF to undertake the role of a consultant in a project (joint partnership between them and the Ministry of Gender and Children) a program that gives direct funds to families staying with orphaned children, to plan a monitoring system for the same.**
2. **What are the advantages of participatory evaluation methods?**

**The advantages of participatory evaluation method are mentioned as follows:**

**It gives you a better perspective on both the initial needs of the project's beneficiaries, and on its ultimate effects**. If stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, are involved from the beginning in determining what needs to be evaluated and why - not to mention what the focus of the project needs to be - you're much more likely to aim your work in the right direction, to correctly determine whether your project is effective or not, and to understand how to change it to make it more so.

**It can get you information you wouldn't get otherwise.** When project direction and evaluation depend, at least in part, on information from people in the community, that information will often be more forthcoming if it's asked for by someone familiar. Community people interviewing their friends and neighbors may get information that an outside person wouldn't be offered.

**It tells you what worked and what didn't from the perspective of those most directly involved - beneficiaries and staff.** Those implementing the project and those who are directly affected by it are most capable of sorting out the effective from the ineffective.

**It can tell you why something does or doesn't work.** Beneficiaries are often able to explain exactly why they didn't respond to a particular technique or approach, thus giving you a better chance to adjust it properly.

**It results in a more effective project.** For the reasons just described, you're much more apt to start out in the right direction, and to know when you need to change direction if you haven't. The consequence is a project that addresses the appropriate issues in the appropriate way, and accomplishes what it sets out to do.

**It empowers stakeholders.** Participatory evaluation gives those who are often not consulted - line staff and beneficiaries particularly - the chance to be full partners in determining the direction and effectiveness of a project.

**It can provide a voice for those who are often not heard.** Project beneficiaries are often low-income people with relatively low levels of education, who seldom have - and often don't think they have a right to - the chance to speak for themselves. By involving them from the beginning in project evaluation, you assure that their voices are heard, and they learn that they have the ability and the right to speak for them.

**It teaches skills that can be used in employment and other areas of life**. In addition to the development of basic skills and specific research capabilities, participatory evaluation encourages critical thinking, collaboration, problem-solving, independent action; meeting deadlines...all skills valued by employers, and useful in family life, education, civic participation, and other areas.

**It bolsters self-confidence and self-esteem in those who may have little of either.** This category can include not only project beneficiaries, but also others who may, because of circumstance, have been given little reason to believe in their own competence or value to society. The opportunity to engage in a meaningful and challenging activity, and to be treated as a colleague by professionals, can make a huge difference for folks who are seldom granted respect or given a chance to prove themselves.

**It demonstrates to people ways in which they can take more control of their lives**. Working with professionals and others to complete a complex task with real-world consequences can show people how they can take action to influence people and events.

**It encourages stakeholder ownership of the project**. If those involved feel the project is theirs, rather than something imposed on them by others, they'll work hard both in implementing it, and in conducting a thorough and informative evaluation in order to improve it.

**It can spark creativity in everyone involved.** For those who've never been involved in anything similar, a participatory evaluation can be a revelation, opening doors to a whole new way of thinking and looking at the world. To those who have taken part in evaluation before, the opportunity to exchange ideas with people who may have new ways of looking at the familiar can lead to a fresh perspective on what may have seemed to be a settled issue.

**It encourages working collaboratively.** For participatory evaluation to work well, it has to be viewed by everyone involved as collaboration, where each participant brings specific tools and skills to the effort, and everyone is valued for what she can contribute. Collaboration of this sort not only leads to many of the advantages described above, but also fosters a more collaborative spirit for the future as well, leading to other successful community projects.

**It fits into a larger participatory effort.** When community assessment and the planning of a project have been a collaboration among project beneficiaries, staff, and community members, it only makes sense to include evaluation in the overall plan, and to approach it in the same way as the rest of the project. In order to conduct a good evaluation, its planning should be part of the overall planning of the project. Furthermore, participatory process generally matches well with the philosophy of community-based or grass roots groups or organizations.

1. **Formulate the steps in planning a monitoring system.**

**Step 1: Define the scope and purpose**

This step involves identifying the evaluation audience and the purpose of the M&E system.  M&E purposes include supporting management and decision-making, learning, accountability and stakeholder engagement.

Will the M&E be done mostly for learning purposes with less emphasis on accountability?  If this is the case, then the M&E system would be designed in such a way as to promote ongoing reflection for continuous programme improvement.

If the emphasis is more on accountability, then the M&E system could then collect and analyses data with more accuracy and to coincide with the reporting calendar of a donor.

It is important that the M&E scope and purpose be defined beforehand, so that the appropriate M&E system is designed. It is of no use to have a M&E system that collects mostly ***qualitative data*** on an ***annual basis*** while your ‘evaluation audience’ (read: 'donor') is keen to see the ***quantitative results*** of Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) ***twice a year***.

**Step 2: Define the evaluation questions,**

Evaluation questions should be developed up-front and in collaboration with the primary audience(s) and other stakeholders who you intend to report to. Evaluation questions go beyond measurements to ask the higher order questions such as whether the intervention is worth it or if it could have been achieved in another way.

**Step 3: Identify the monitoring questions,**

For example, for an ***evaluation question*** pertaining to 'Learning’s', such as "What worked and what did not?" you may have several ***monitoring questions*** such as "Did the workshops lead to increased knowledge on energy efficiency in the home?" or "Did the participants have any issues with the training materials?"The monitoring questions will ideally be answered through the collection of quantitative and qualitative data. It is important to not start collecting data without thinking about the evaluation and monitoring questions.  This may lead to collecting data just for the sake of collecting data (that provides no relevant information to the programme).

**Step 4: Identify the indicators and data sources,**

In this step you identify what information is needed to answer your monitoring questions and where this information will come from (data sources). It is important to consider data collection in terms of the type of data and any types of research design. Data sources could be from primary sources, like from participant themselves or from secondary sources like existing literature. You can then decide on the most appropriate method to collect the data from each data source.

**Step 5: Identify who is responsible for data collection, data storage, reporting, budget and timelines**

 It is advisable to assign responsibility for the data collection and reporting so that everyone is clear of their roles and responsibilities. Collection of monitoring data may occur regularly over short intervals, or less regularly, such as half-yearly or annually. Likewise the timing of evaluations (internal and external) should be noted.

You may also want to note any requirements that are needed to collect the data (staff, budget etc.). It is advisable to have some idea of the cost associated with monitoring, as you may have great ideas to collect a lot of information, only to find out that you cannot afford it all. Additionally, it is good to determine how the collected data will be stored. A centralized electronic M&E database should be available for all project staff to use. The M&E database options range from a simple Excel file to the use of a comprehensive M&E software such as [LogAlto](https://www.logalto.com/en/). [LogAlto](https://www.logalto.com/en/) is user-friendly cloud-based M&E software that stores all information related to the programme such as the entire log frame (showing the inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes) as well as the quantitative and qualitative indicators with baseline, target and milestone values. [LogAlto](https://www.logalto.com/en/) also allows for the generation of tables, scorecards, charts and maps. Quarterly Progress reports can also be produced from [LogAlto](https://www.logalto.com/en/).

**Step 6: Identify who will evaluate the data and how it will be reported,**

 In most programmes there will be an internal and an independent evaluation (conducted by an external consultant). For an evaluation to be used (and therefore useful) it is important to present the findings in a format that is appropriate to the audience. A 'Marketing and Dissemination Strategy’ for the reporting of evaluation results should be designed as part of the M&E system.

**Step 7: Decide on standard forms and procedures,**

Once the M&E system is designed there will be a need for planning templates, designing or adapting information collection and analysis tools, developing organizational indicators, developing protocols or methodologies for service-user participation, designing report templates, developing protocols for when and how evaluations and impact assessments are carried out, developing learning mechanisms, designing databases and the list goes on **(Simister, 2009).**

However, there is no need to re-invent the wheel. There may already be examples of best practice within an organisation that could be exported to different locations or replicated more widely. This leads to step 9.

**Step 8: Use the information derived from Steps 1- 7 above to fill in the 'M&E System ‘template,**

 You can choose from any of the templates presented in this [article](https://www.annmurraybrown.com/#!How-To-Design-a-Monitoring-and-Evaluation-ME-System/czf9/57092b650cf27cb8ad1e245e) to capture the information. Feel free to add extra columns or categories as you see fit.

**Step 9: Integrate the M&E system horizontally and vertically,**

Where possible, integrate the M&E system horizontally (with other organisational systems and processes) and vertically (with the needs and requirements of other agencies).  **Simister, 2009**

Try as much as possible to align the M&E system with existing planning systems, reporting systems, financial or administrative monitoring systems, management information systems, human resources systems or any other systems that might influence (or be influenced by) the M&E system.

**Step 10: Pilot and then roll-out the system**

Once everything is in place, the M&E system may be first rolled out on a small scale, perhaps just at the Country Office level. This will give the opportunity for feedback and for the ‘kinks to be ironed out’ before a full scale launch. Staff at every levels be should be aware of the overall purpose(s), general overview and the key focus areas of the M&E system. It is also good to inform persons on which areas they are free to develop their own solutions and in which areas they are not. People will need detailed information and guidance in the areas of the system where everyone is expected to do the same thing, or carry out M&E work consistently.

 This could include guides, training manuals, mentoring approaches, staff exchanges, interactive media, training days or workshops.

References

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