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**Africa**

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**Admission Number : DDA/003/2019**

**Course : Monitoring and**

**Evaluation**

**Level : Diploma**

**Date : 31/10/2019**

**Assignment : 3**

**1.Why is choosing the right question important in Monitoring and Evaluation?**

Evaluation questions are important in Monitoring and Evaluation as they guide or put checks and balancing mechanism in the direction the project is moving. These questions articulate the main issues that will be explored by the evaluation assessment.  The questions are usually developed after the [goals and objectives](http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/29/21/2754804.pdf) of a program have been decided and the activities to support those objectives have been determined.  UN Women Virtual Knowledge Centre to End Violence Against Women and girls (Evaluation Questions, 2010 <https://www.endvawnow.org/en/articles/338-evaluation-questions.html>) asserts that these questions are useful as they focus and provide structure to an evaluation, they give guide to the evaluation planning process including data gathering and methods of obtaining important information required by the stakeholders, beneficiaries, donors and other interested parties. The questions also inform how the results will be incorporated into the planning and implementation for the improvement of the program.

As the trajectory of the project is always to effect change or create an impact as per developed plan, it is always good to have guiding parameters in the form of evaluation question so as to guide the processes and not to stray from the initial intended plan. These evaluation questions will help show if things are better when evaluating than they were before the project started. These questions also help determine what is being done right and what is being done wrongly, hence a change can be implemented.

Evaluation questions should be chosen, and the evaluation planned when planning the overall program. This gives you time and room for a participatory process and gives the chance to use the evaluation as an integral part of the program.

Evaluation questions help in many ways to shape the correct direction of the program or even show if the program is losing its focus and direction. These questions help to understand the effects different parts of the efforts are having on the program. With carefully framed questions it is possible to evaluate all different parts of the efforts that has been put. Such questions as - Does the construction of a new road has an effect in farm production as the new market is open in the city? – they will show the effects of the construction of the new road. Since there is easy access to the market, is this road going to motivate the farmers to produce more?

The evaluation questions will make it possible to define what the intention is. The evaluation will highlight or determine what is intended to be accomplished. The evaluations questions that are chosen at the start of the program clearly defines what accomplishments are targeted and what results are expected. The questions will also highlight where changes are to be made, where the program is doing well and when the program is not having the intended effects. Unintended effects can be detected. These unintended effects can be positive or negative.

The questions also guide in future choices as there is room to see the success of the program in some areas. One may decide to emphasize the successful areas more, or to completely change the approach in the unsuccessful areas. The focus to the program is maintained through the guidance of these evaluation questions. The questions create a route to follow instead of becoming haphazard and end up doing too many things at once thereby becoming ineffective. Through the guidance of the questions the data to be captured can be determined and only relevant data collected.

**2. Using Archival data has its own bottlenecks. Name five and explain how to overcome them.**

Archival data is data that has been previously collected by some entity, used and stored in storage devices for future use and is usually archived. C. Jones (2010), asserts that, “Archival data may be thought of as any sort of information, previously collected by others, amenable to systematic study”. The focus on this information may be to answer questions related to research phenomena, with an overview of the myriad sources of data available to the researcher, and the advantages and disadvantages of secondary.

With archival research, one advantage is that the experimenter does not have to worry about erroneously introducing changes in participant behavior that would affect the outcome of the study.  The archival method is more cost-effective, because researchers can use internet databases to locate free archives. Another advantage is that archival research can be inclusive of long periods of time, thus allowing for a broader view of trends or outcomes.

One of the bottlenecks caused by archival data is that this type of data is fixed it does not change with the dynamic change of the demography. In this case if it was a population census conducted this year after two years a lot would have changed but the data recorded then will be fixed and not changing with the new changes. This type of a bottleneck can be overcome by the evaluator through selecting the specific data of interest and updating it. A survey or physical count of the intended target can be performed to update the statistics or data of interest.

Archival data may contain a lot of summarized data which may pause challenges in decoding hence in this regard a lot of effort to decode and gather the information the researcher requires may take a long time to gather and use.

Archival data may have already been processed by people with more statistical expertise and the data may be complex to decode, understand and use unless the researcher is a statistician. For easy use of this data the researcher can hire an expert or find a volunteer to help.

Archival data may also be private and confidential to an organization that collected it. The organization may have collected data for its private use. The organization that is interested in having access to such information may have to negotiate for its release. The requester may have to have a good reason as to why they need that information. The requester may have to prove that if the data is shared it should be kept confidential and that the supplier has to benefit in cash or through the production of a better worked data analysis of which the custodian of data tends to benefit.

**3.Why is research an important component in monitoring and evaluation? Give and explain four.**

Two aspects of Monitoring and Evaluation are research and evaluation. Evaluation of projects is usually done at specific times, most often mid- term and at the end of the project. Evaluation questions are really formulating a research problem. This defines what you want to examine in your research. Evaluation, whether formal or informal, is in fact research.

Research is important in Monitoring and Evaluation as it guides the direction of the project. The research question articulates the main issues that will be explored by the evaluation assessment.  The research gives guide to the evaluation planning process including data gathering and methods of obtaining important information required by the stakeholders, beneficiaries, donors and other interested parties.

The research gives guiding parameters in the form of evaluation questions so as to guide the processes and not to stray away from the initial intended plan. The research shall help show if things are better during the evaluating than they were before the project started. The research also paves way to help determine what is being done right and what is being done wrongly, hence a change can be implemented.

Research helps in shaping and formulating the correct direction of the program to be undertaken. The questions asked during the research to formulate the evaluation questions help to understand the effects different parts of the efforts shall have on the program.

The research makes the evaluation questions define what the intention is. During the research, the evaluation will highlight or determine what is intended to be accomplished. The evaluations questions that are chosen at the start of the program clearly defines what accomplishments are targeted and what results are expected. These research questions will also highlight where changes are to be affected, where the program is doing well and when the program is not having the intended effects.

Reference

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