**Assignments Two**

1. What are the major differences between monitoring and evaluation?

In comparison, major differences between monitoring and evaluation is presented in tubular form below

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| --- | --- |
| **Monitoring** | **Evaluation** |
| * Monitoring is the systematic process of observing and recording on a regular basis, the activities carried out in a project, to ensure that the activities are in line with the objectives of the enterprise. * Monitoring considers optimum utilization of resources, to assist the managers in rational decision making. It keeps a track on the progress and checks the quality of the project or program against set criteria and checks adherence to established standards. * The information collected in monitoring process helps analyses each aspect of the project, to gauge the efficiency and adjust inputs wherever essential. | * Evaluation is defined as an objective and rigorous analysis of a continuing or completed project, to determine its significance, effectiveness, impact and sustainability by comparing the result with the set of standards. It is the process of passing value judgement concerning the performance level or attainment of defined objectives. * In short, evaluation is a process that critically assesses, tests and measures the design, implementation and results of the project or program, in the light of objectives. It can be conducted both qualitatively and quantitatively, to determine the difference between actual and desired outcome. |

**Like those main differences between monitoring and evaluation, some other key Differences between the terms (Monitoring and Evaluation) includes**

The difference between monitoring and evaluation can be drawn clearly on the following premises:

1. By monitoring is meant a routine process, that scrutinizes the activities and progress of the project and finds out the deviations that occur while undertaking the project. As against, evaluation is a periodical activity that makes inferences about the relevance and effectiveness of the project or program.
2. Monitoring improves the quality of the implementation and adjust planning as input to evaluation to judge the impact on the target population, adjust objectives and decide on the future of the program.
3. Monitoring is an operational level activity, performed by the supervisors. On the other hand, evaluation is a business level activity performed by the managers.
4. Monitoring is a short-term process, that is concerned with the collection of information regarding the success of the project. Conversely, evaluation is a long-term process, which not only records the information but also assesses the outcomes and impact of the project.
5. Monitoring focuses on improving the overall efficiency of the project, by removing bottlenecks, while the project is under process. Unlike, evaluation stresses on improving the effectiveness of the project, by making the comparison with the established standards.
6. Monitoring is usually carried out by the people who are directly involved in its implementation process. In contrast, evaluation can be conducted by internal staff of the organization, i.e. managers or it can also be carried out by independent external party, who can give their impartial views on the project or program.
7. Monitoring refers to check that the activities are being implemented as planned while Evaluation is to ensure that the set goals and objectives are be achieved or reached.

**Conclusion**

In the development projects, monitoring and evaluation play diverse roles, in the sense that monitoring is an ongoing process, whereas evaluation is performed periodically. Further, the focus of the assessment also differentiates the two, i.e. monitoring is all about what is happening, evaluation is concerned with how well it happened.

1. **What are the characteristics of good indicators to guide one when projecting for food security projects?**

The following are the characteristics of a good indicator. (S.M.A.R.T): -

* **Specific** (and valid): measures what it is intended to measure.
* **Measurable:** Must allow for regular data collection and updates throughout the entire life of the project.
* **Achievable:** Must be technically possible to obtain data at reasonable cost.
* **Reliable:** Must produce the same result when used more than once to measure precisely the same phenomenon.
* **Timely (and Sensitive to change):** It should be possible to collect and analyze data ‘’reasonably quickly’’.

1. Why is it important to keep information on M&E of past Nutrition and food security projects?

There are quite several reasons to why? it is important to keep information on M&E of past Nutrition and food security projects

* Past M&E information help in guiding in planning and decision making
* It provides reference ideas to develop project and guide on the process of proposal write-ups
* Past M&E for Nutrition and food security project are used in comparing the presence with the past as new initiatives are being implemented
* Decision makes use past M&E information as working aids in implement new project
* Directions toward solution finding is eased by the past M&E information
* It helps in providing clarity on the trends on past project.
* Past M&E information highlights where the project when wrong and right thus shortfalls are avoided in the new projection implementation era.

1. **Discuss the four stages of setting up an M&E system for food security projects**

The follow are the four stages of setting up an M&E system for food security projects: -

* ***Guiding the Project strategy****: understanding* the goals and objectives of the project and then allocating the available resources and guiding relationship between stakeholders to maximize impact.
* ***Creating a learning environment:***Inspiring and helping those involved with the project to reflect critically on progress, to learn from mistakes and to generate ideas for making improvements.
* ***Ensuring Effective Operations:*** *planning* organizing and checking staff inputs, equipment, partner’s contracts, financial resources, (bi) annual work plans, and communications to implement activities effectively and efficiently.
* ***Developing and Using the M&E system****: designing* and implementing information gathering and reflective learning processes it generates insights that help you to improve operations and strategic directions. When you manage for impact, project design, annual planning and M&E become linked processes. Developing M&E therefore starts long before start-up.

1. **Discuss the seven steps of a log frame approach (LFA) as a planning methodology**
2. **Analysis of the project’s Context**

This step of the logical framework is a process of change are part of a wider context. It is looking at how the project is influenced continuously by different economic, social and political processes taking place in society? It is essential that the project group has a clear picture of the context when planning the project. What environment will the project be implemented in? What external factors are important for the fulfilment of the project’s objectives? It is therefore necessary to make an initial overall “scanning” of the project’s context (an exhaustive analysis of risks and assumptions is made late

1. **Stakeholder Analysis**

Different stakeholders have different opportunities to exert an influence on a given project. A survey of the project’s stakeholders and their relationship to the project is an important part of the project planning process. Stakeholders can be divided up into four main groups:

1. Beneficiaries/Target group 2. Implementers 3. Decision-makers 4. Financiers
2. **Problem Analysis/Situation analysis**

Any given number of projects are started in which the solution is given, without an analysis being made of the focal problem and its causes and effects. The causes are analyzed in order to find the reasons for the focal problem and, thereby, the solutions/the relevant activities. The effects demonstrate the arguments (the needs) for implementing the change/the project.

A complex problem is easier to deal with if its causes and effects are thoroughly analyzed. The causes could be divided into several groups of problems or clusters. Sometimes this has the effect that, in the end, the project is divided into different projects. If the project is to be manageable,

1. **Objectives Analysis 5 Plan of Activities**

When the stakeholders have identified the problems that the project shall contribute to eliminating, it is time to develop the objectives, to make an objective tree/analysis. If care has been taken on the problem analysis, the formulation of objectives shall not result in any difficulties. The objective analysis is the positive reverse image of the problem analysis. During the objective’s analysis, the project group should set three levels of objectives: – Overall objectives – Project purpose – Results

1. **Resource Planning**

Before the project starts, the project group needs to make a detailed plan of the resources which are needed to implement the project. The project plan, including the plan of resources, is formulated in the Scope of Work, an appendix to a contract. Resources provided for implementing activities within the framework of the project can consist of:– Technical expertise (local and/or foreign expertise: what kind of know-how is needed to support the development of capacity) – equipment /spare parts /training in the use of the equipment – premises – funds – time

1. **Indicators/Measurements of Objectives**

Is the project achieving its goals? To answer this question, the project group needs to identify indicators, which make it possible to measure the progress of the project at different levels. Establishing a suitable indicator for an objective is a way of ensuring that an objective becomes specific, realistic and tangible. There should be at least as many indicators as

there are results and some for the project purpose. An indicator may be, for example, a statistical source – if it is possible to see from the statistics that a change has occurred as a result of the project.

It is important to think about the following when establishing indicators of the fulfilment of objectives and results:

– What shall the project achieve in the terms of quality? – What shall the project achieve in terms of quantity? – During which period? When shall the fulfilment of objectives have taken place? – Which group is the target group? – Which geographical region or sector is affected by the project?

1. **Explain the influence of initial project design on M &E**

* As we can see, project planning sets the crucial foundation for project M&E, and these can significantly affect the success or failure of an M&E process. Unintentionally, M&E is often set up to fail during the initial project design. Initial project design fundamentally influences M&E through five key design weaknesses.
* First, during project implementation, the effectiveness of M&E will be greatly influenced by the attitude and commitment of local people and partners involved in the project and how they relate and communicate with each other. A poorly planned project will in most cases not generate positive relationships.
* The second design fault is when project lacks logic in its strategy of has unrealistic objectives, making good M&E almost impossible. This is because the evaluation questions and indicators often become quite meaningless and will not produce useful information. Furthermore, if you don’t know clearly where you are heading then you will not know how best to use any information that might be produced.
* The third is when the design team does not allocate enough resources to the M&E system. Critical resources include funding for information management, participatory monitoring activities, field visits, etc. time for a start-up phase that is long enough to establish the M&E and monitor and reflect, and expertise, such as a consultant to support M&E development.
* The fourth factor is critical if M&E systems are to generate the learning that helps a group of project partners continually improve implementation and strategy. The more rigid a project design is, the more difficult the project team will have in adjusting it because of change in the context and understanding of interim impacts.
* Fifth, it is important that during design, the broad framework of the M&E is established. It is still unfortunately the case that most project plans do not pay enough attention to M&E planning, with the result that M&E is “tagged on” as an afterthought.