**ASSIGNMENT 4**

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1.a) Collecting information or data is just one part of the process of monitoring and evaluation.

What is meant by data analysis?

Data analysis is defined by International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC 2017) “A Guide for Humanitarian Work” as the process of converting collected (raw) data into usable information. Data analysis involves summarizing the collected data and organizing them with the purpose of answering program/project objectives, indicators and research or evaluation questions. Once data is analyzed, it leads to interpretation. Prior performing data analysis, there is need for “Data Analysis Plan” based on the needs of M&E data users and decision makers. The data analysis plan should cover: data analysis methodology, necessary statistical tools and/or templates, disaggregation (for instance: sex, age, location, sector and type of assistance), interpretation of results and purpose. There are different types of data analysis however, below are methods which mostly applied by practitioners:

* Quantitative data analysis
* Descriptive data analysis
* Simple Aggregated and Disaggregated data analysis
* Simple-regression analysis
* Multi-regression analysis

Type of methods applied will depend on the purpose of data analysis and results we want to draw therefore, data analysis plan should cover all the aspects of analysis in detail as a guideline or separate document.

1. State any three uses of monitoring and evaluation results.

As stated in the S. Adamchak, K. Bond, L. MacLaren, R. Magnani, K. Nelson, J. Seltzer “A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent Reproductive Health Programs” (2000) M&E results could be used according to the objectives and priorities of the projects. However, in most cases M&E results are used for the following reasons:

* Assess progress/track changes from baseline to desired outcomes
* Validate what results were achieved, how and why they were not have been achieved
* Inform/alert managers and/or decision makers on revealed problems/challenges and provide options for corrective measure

1. Describe any seven factors that may lead to project failure.

There are many internal and external factors that can lead to project failure. One can control internal factors and correct or take necessary decisions to prevent it however external factors are beyond control such as sudden changes in political environment, conflict and significant socio-economic changes. As stated by Discenza, R. & Forman, J. B. (2007) “Seven causes of project failure” Internal factors that may lead to project failure are: 1. Poor design of project document and its scope – this leads to delays of project implementation due to rework/rewriting project document and updating budget lines, if necessary; 2. Lack of stakeholder commitment and coordination – there are various reasons depending on the country context however, major reasons due to lack of involvement on the initial stages of project design, poor communication and lack of explanation of their roles and responsibilities; 3. Poor design of M&E system – efficient M&E system is a powerful management tool when poorly designed due to lack of team and management incompetency the results are not accurate and reliable and learning aspect is not part of it to respond and take decisions on a timely manner and update project implementation plan. In addition, indicators are not culturally contextual and community involvement is not realistic. 4. Too ambitious/unrealistic targets – when goals are set but without following SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, results focused and time-bound). . Given timeframe and budget are not taken into consideration while setting targets. 5. Project team and manager incompetency – when wrong decisions are taken and/or poor performance is delivered due to alck of competency this can lead to poor project implementation, delays and leads to dissatisfaction of clients/beneficiaries, donors and stakeholders. 6. Poor team communication – to avoid conflict, arguments, missed deadlines and confusion it is important to set up efficient communication among the team and management it is important to held regular meetings, check-ins between manager and team members as well as clear communication strategy and guidelines with project stakeholders. In addition, it is important to conduct team-building activities; 7. Poor management and allocation of human and financial resources – due to incompetency of the management budget planning is not realistic and time-bound and lack of constructive feedback leads to demotivation, high turnover and absence of accountability.

2. Identify any six parts of a monitoring and evaluation report

1. Include table of contents
2. Brief Summary, Objectives and Questions
3. Data Sources and Collection Methods
4. Present data with figures, summary tables, maps, photographs, and graphs (with the focus on results achieved compared with the expected results)
5. Add brief interpretation
6. Include findings and references

3. Why is feedback an important component of project monitoring and evaluation?

Feedback is the process of communication which helps to learn about quality of your work and improve and correct shortfalls. In field of M&E regular and constructive feedback should be included at every stage of project cycle. There are internal feedback within the organization/teams and external which is beneficiary feedback mechanism. According to J. Heirman, A. Ling, Dr. Y Pinto, (2012) The Use of Feedback in M&E, on the initial stages of building M&E system, it is essential to take into consideration adding feedback component as a systematic approach. Feedback generates data about perceptions of beneficiaries on how well intervention being implemented during the project cycle. Feedback can monitor quality and quantity of services provided by staff and achieved results, and improves practice at the field level. It also strengthens relationship through regular communication among the team members and management and it is the way to proactive approach to improve performance. Collecting information about the view of beneficiaries is similar to customer satisfaction in businesses. There is a tendency to treat M&E as a side activity however, feedback system built on regular interactions and follow-up should be integrated into project core implementation process to ensure effectiveness.

References

International Committee of the Red Cross (2017) Acquiring and Analyzing Data in Support of Evidence-Based Decisions, A Guide for Humanitarian Work, p 16;

Susan Adamchak, Katherine Bond, Laurel MacLaren, Robert Magnani, Kristin Nelson, Judith Seltzer, (2000) A Guide to Monitoring and Evaluating Adolescent Reproductive Health Programs, Chapter 9, p 149-154 ;

Discenza, R. & Forman, J. B. (2007). Seven causes of project failure: how to recognize them and how to initiate project recovery. Paper presented at PMI® Global Congress 2007—North America, Atlanta, GA. Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute.

Jonas Heirman, Andre Ling, Dr. Yvonne Pinto, (2012) Agricultural Learning and Impacts Network, The Use of Feedback in M&E, p 1-17