**AFRICA CENTER FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

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**MODULE ONE ASSIGNMENT**

**Module 1 Questions:**

**Q1**: Explain in about 350 words why M&E informs good programming practice. (10 marks)

**Answers**

Monitoring and evaluation are ways of systematically measuring and assessing programme activities and results. Their purpose is to check on the progress of implementation and outputs systematically. They help to determine when a programme is going to plan and when changes may be needed. They form the basis for modification of interventions, and of assessing the quality of any activities that are being conducted. Moreover, with a positive outcome, they can be used to demonstrate that programmes have been implemented effectively and have had a measureable impact.

Together, monitoring and evaluation provide the necessary data to guide planning, to allocate resources, to design and implement programmes and projects and, if necessary, to re-allocate resources in better ways. They are essential in providing planners, implementers, policy makers and donors with the information and understanding they need to make informed decisions about the operation of their programmes.

* It informs good programming practice by providing the consolidated source of information showcasing project progress;
* It allows actors to learn from each other’s experiences, building on expertise and knowledge;
* It often generates (written) reports that contribute to transparency and accountability, and allows for lessons to be shared more easily;
* It reveals mistakes and offers paths for learning and improvements;
* It provides a basis for questioning and testing assumptions;
* It provides a means for agencies seeking to learn from their experiences and to incorporate them into policy and practice;
* It provides a way to assess the crucial link between implementers and beneficiaries on the ground and decision-makers;
* It adds to the retention and development of institutional memory;
* It provides a more robust basis for raising funds and influencing policy.

**Q2**: Describe the fundamental similarities and differences between Monitoring and Evaluation. (10 marks)

**Answers**

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 them. Some major differences between monitoring and evaluation are listed below:

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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 |
| It gives answer about the present scenario of the project towards achieving planned results considering the human resources, budget, materials, activities and outputs | It assesses the relevance, impact, sustainability, effectiveness and efficiency of the projects |
| Information obtained from monitoring is more useful to the implementation/management team | Information obtained from evaluation is useful to all the stakeholders |
| Regular report and updates about the project/program act a deliverables here | Reports with recommendations and lessons act as a deliverable here |

**Q3:** Describe the difference between formative and summative evaluation process and explain the time of each process in the life of a project.10mrks)

**Answers**

A **formative evaluation** is a method for judging the worth of a program while the program activities are *forming* (in progress). They can be conducted during any phase of the process. This part of the evaluation focuses on the process. A **summative evaluation** is a method of judging the worth of a program at the end of the program activities (summation). The focus is on the outcome.

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| Basis for Comparison | ****Formative Evaluation**** | ****Summative Evaluation**** |
| Meaning | Is a method for judging the worth of a program while the program activities are *forming* (in progress). | Is a method of judging the worth of a program at the end of the program activities (summation). The focus is on the outcome. |
| Nature | Diagnostic | Evaluative |
| Timing | At early stage of project/program | At end of period |
| Frequency | Daily routine during project execution | End of period, monthly or quarterly |
| Goal | Focus on project/program output | Focus on project/program outcome |

**Formative evaluation** is normally carried out at an early stage (during scoping) and helps develop the intervention and its evaluation, including setting a baseline. **Summative evaluation** normally carried out at the end of project period such as mid-term or annually

**Q4:** With brief explanations, outline the key questions both formative and summative evaluations seek to answer. (10mrks)

**Answers**

**Formative Evaluation key question**

To what extent do the activities and strategies correspond with those presented in the plan? If they are not in harmony, why are there changes? Are the changes justified?

To what extent did the project follow the timeline presented in the work plan?

Are activities carried out by the appropriate personnel?

What barriers were identified? How and to what extent were they dealt with?

To what extent are beneficiaries of the project active in decision-making and implementation?

To what extent do project beneficiaries have access to services provided by the project? What are the obstacles?

To what extent are the project beneficiaries satisfied with project services?

**Summative Evaluation key question**

To what extent did the project meet its overall goals and objectives?

What impact did the project have on the lives of beneficiaries?

Was the project equally effective for all beneficiaries?

What components were the most effective?

What significant unintended impacts did the project have?

Is the project replicable?

Is the project sustainable?

**Q5:** Explain the main limitations of the pretest-post-test model of evaluation

(10mrks)

**Answers**

## Pretest-Posttest Model

The pretest-posttest model is a common technique for capturing change in Extension programming (Allen & Nimon, 2007; Rockwell & Kohn, 1989). In this model, a pretest is given to participants prior to starting the program to measure the variable(s) of interest, the program (or intervention) is implemented, and then a posttest is administered to measure the same variable(s) of interest again (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). With measurements being collected at the beginning and end of the program, program effects are often revealed by calculating the differences between the two measures (Pratt et al., 2000).

### Limitations of the pretest-posttest model

* **Time constraints:**

1. **Instrument creation:** More time is required to create solid items that assess factual knowledge than is needed to capture perceptions.

2. **Program delivery:** It takes time to administer both a pretest and posttest questionnaire (Pratt et al., 2000); therefore, in short educational activities, it may not be worth the time necessary to conduct both.

* **Attendance concerns:** Meaningful pretest-posttest comparisons require that participants be present at the start and end of the program; however, consistent attendance can be difficult to obtain, especially among high-risk groups (Pratt et al., 2000). Without pairs of responses (a pretest and a posttest), comparisons cannot be made and the available data are reduced.
* **Measurement error through response-shift bias:** Meaningful pretest-posttest comparisons require a participant to use the same frame of reference to measure himself against; when this is missing, it makes the pretest-posttest comparison invalid (Howard, 1980). There is also the potential for the limited information a participant has prior to the program to affect his ability to properly judge baseline functioning (Allen & Nimon, 2007; Howard et al., 1979).

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