**AFRICA CENTER FOR PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

**POSTGRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MONITORINGAND EVALUATION**

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**MODULE 7 ASSIGNMENT**

**Q1:** Where M&E necessitates revision of project plans, outline key steps Program Management teams need to take towards this end. (10 mrks)

**Review and revision of project plans**

By analysis of the data collected, compare what has been achieved with what was intended. Identify problems in the implementation of the plan, or in the data or assumptions on which the plan is based.

There are a wide variety of reasons for failure. The first is that the plan was found to be based on incorrect assumptions; for example, that low crop yields were caused by a lack of fertilizer when in fact the major constraint is water. There may be changes in economic circumstances, such as when the world price of a cash crop falls. Often, failures occur in the logistics of implementation; if monitoring finds that fertilizers are not reaching farmers, is this a result of inefficiencies in the distribution system? Lastly, there may be problems of communication and participation, such as farmers who are not in fact planting the multipurpose trees that are recommended. Such problems should first be approached by finding out the reasons through talking to farmers.

The following are steps to follow when conducting revision of project plans

1. List the goals and criteria achievement agreed. Add any that emerged later in the planning period.
2. Gather data relevant to each criterion of attainment: physical, economic and social.
3. Compare what has been achieved with what was planned. Identify elements of success and failure.
4. Seek explanations for failures. Were they caused by:

* Incorrect assumptions of the plan?
* Changed economic or political circumstances?
* Logistic problems of implementation?
* Problems of communication and participation?

5. Review the goals: are they still valid?

6. Initiate modification or revision of the plan:

* Minor modifications through action by implementing agencies;
* Larger revisions by the preparation of proposals and reference back to decision-makers.

**Q2:** Briefly explain in about 250 words the key actions required at project-level monitoring work and describe the key variances between project level monitoring and program level monitoring. (10mrks).

**Key actions required at project-level monitoring work**

**Designing an efficient plan for Monitoring**

Designing an effective plan is the most important activity in the project monitoring process. Though, it might look simple, but there are lots of aspects which the project leader must consider while designing this [plan](https://www.greycampus.com/blog/project-management/10-steps-to-create-a-project-plan). They have to identify the key areas in the project life-cycle that needs continuous attention. After identifying the key areas, project leads must set the targets that need to be achieved. Project leads must also take a note that, they cannot commit to a target which is difficult to attain. They have to set targets that can be achieved by the team members. Project managers must also take a note of the resources that are available to them. These resources can be human as well as technological. If required they must request for more resources. Apart from the outputs, project leaders also have to focus on the efficiency of their team and quality of the output.

**Designing Effective Report Management Mechanism**

Project leaders can conduct meetings with the team members on a regular basis. This can be a formal meeting or an informal one. They have to ensure that these meetings take place at regular time intervals. Doing this, project leaders will have a clear picture about the project progress, and also help them in identifying the problems that might hamper the progress or speed of the production process, and give them time to plan accordingly. They also have to keep an eye on the [budget](https://www.greycampus.com/blog/project-management/determine-budget-planning-process-group-how-much-will-it-all-cost), and if they feel that the project might exceed the budget allocated, they have to pass this information to the top-level management. The project lead must also ensure that the team is performing in accordance with the specified deadline of the project.

**Recommendations for Project Improvement**

This is one of the important activities in project monitoring. The project lead has to design a report management mechanism that effectively passes the information among the team members, top tier management, and other people linked to the project process. This is important because the project leads get feedback and advises from the top level management teams which will give him better ideas for the project monitoring process.

**Ensuring Guidelines and Recommendations Are Followed Accordingly**

Project managers must also ensure that the team is working according to the guidelines given by the client and also must see that the recommendations made by the top tier management team is implemented by the production team. Project managers or leads can also make use of technology for tracking the performance of their team members and give recognition to the top performers in the team. This will boost the morale of the team member and also inspire the other members in the team.

**The key variances between project level monitoring and program level monitoring**

**What is a project?**

A project refers to a specific, singular endeavour to deliver a tangible output.

#### Project Monitoring refers to the process of keeping track of all project-related metrics including team performance and task duration, identifying potential problems and taking corrective actions necessary to ensure that the project is within scope, on budget and meets the specified deadlines

#### What is a program/programme?

A program refers to multiple projects which are managed and delivered as a single package.

#### Program Monitoring refers to the process of keeping track of all multiple projects and -related metrics including team performance and task duration, identifying potential problems and taking corrective actions necessary to ensure that the project is within scope, on budget and meets the specified deadlines

* **Structure:**
  + The components of a project are specific and exact.
  + The scope and goals of a project are well-defined – while programs are typically less clear-cut.
  + Because a program covers multiple projects – a program team tends to be larger as it also incorporates the project managers and their project team members.
* **Effort:**
  + A project represents a single, focused endeavour.
  + A program is a collection of projects – together all the projects form a connected package of work. The different projects complement each other to assist the program in achieving its overall objectives. It’s likely the different projects within a program will overlap – the program manager will therefore assess these overlaps and work with the relevant project managers to ensure the program’s smooth progression.
* **Length:**
  + While some projects take several years – the typical project will not take very long to complete.
  + Programs often take a very long time to complete as they intend to deliver more. It’s therefore common for programs to be organised into phases or tranches.
  + A particularly long project may also be organised into multiple phases – but this is less common.
* **Benefits:**
  + Projects focus on achieving tangible outputs, i.e. what you gain upon completing the project.
  + Programs focus on outcomes – which are often not tangible. The benefits provided by a program depend on the collective benefits of its projects. Examples of a program outcome include a cultural or political change within an organization – or a change in the way in which an organization operates.

**REFERENCES**

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