online post-graduate diploma in monitoring and evaluation

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STG/010/2018

September 27, 2019

**PGD IN MONITORING AND EVALUATION**

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

**Instructions**

1. Have a cover page for your work and ensure your admission is captured and your names in the order they will appear on your transcript
2. This paper contains SIX (6) questions.
3. Question ONE is compulsory.
4. Answer any other THREE questions.
5. Question ONE carries 25 MARKS and the rest carry 15 MARKS each.

**QUESTION ONE**

Read the Case Study below carefully and answer the questions that follow:

REVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAS GOVERNEMENTS GRANT-FUNDED

MUNICIPAL INFRUSTRUCTURE

The mandate of South Africa's Municipal Infrastructure Program (MIP) is to "improve" the quality of life of the poorest sections of South African communities through ensuring access to at least a basic level of services. The Department of Constitutional Development has been responsible for the integration of MIP projects into broader, multifaceted development programs in order to simultaneously improve economic conditions and enhance the socio-cultural environment of the communities. The MIP ensures community participation and fosters the empowerment of previously disadvantaged groups; program planning and a management are administered through provincial managers and the procedures followed to seek to build a constructive interface between communities, municipalities and provincial and central authorities and to ensure that the process remains community driven.

The strategy assessment framework developed for the review related to MIP project activates to the programs strategic objectives and covered two critical determinants of success: program performance- how well the programs delivered the required services; and strategy assessment: how the programs outputs contributed to fulfilling its strategic objectives. The framework detailed the outputs regenerated by each activity and defined indicators to measure achievements for each outcome. It was structured to provide the flexibility needed to respond to wide disparities in context, development potential, intuitional capacity, human resources and financial means between the localities where MIP projects have been implemented.

At least one project each province was particularly impressive in addressing infrastructure needs, ensuring sustainability generating economic opportunity, building capacity an fostering improvement through self-reliance. Follow-up visits to these projects permit a better understanding of the process by which these results were achieved and highlight their impacts on the community.

Required:

a) From the case study above, explain the TWO methods which were used for monitoring (4 Marks)

From the case study above, I seem to see more of evaluation than monitoring.

Monitoring is the continual and systematic collection of data to provide information about project progress. If monitoring aspect were in the case, I would have expected to see what the outputs, indicators, outcomes and others were.

On the other hand, evaluation is the process of judging the value of what a project has achieved in terms of effort, performance, adequacy, efficiency and process. The statements such as “how well the programs delivered the required services”, “how the program’s outputs contributed to fulfilling its strategic objectives”, “permitting a better understanding of the process by which these results were achieved” and “highlight their impacts on the community” to me have a lot to do with evaluation than monitoring in my opinion.

In summary, I don’t seem to see much of monitoring in the case above, instead the evaluation aspect seems to be highlighted. For example, the passage stipulates what was done, what were the results, how well the real needs were met, how and why the project worked.

b) Explain the rationale of using Logical Framework approach in project planning. (5 Marks)

Project planning involves reviewing project aims, objectives and required outcomes, analyzing tasks, effort and duration of each task, the logical sequence for each work, its prerequisites and outcomes, project timetable based on the schedule and cost of resources required to complete each activity.

In the same way, a logical framework approach is a tool that helps to clarify the purpose and justification of a project, it identifies information requirements, defines key elements of a project, analyses the project setting earlier on, facilitates communication between all parties involved and identifies how success or failure of the project should be measured.

In conclusion, , the logical framework approach complements project planning by communicating the purpose and the main components of a project in clear and simple terms.

1. Examine the significance of stakeholder analysis. ( 6 Marks)

Stakeholders are persons or organizations who are actively involved in the project or whose interest may be negatively or positively affected by the performance or completion of the project.

A stakeholder analysis is a technique used to identify and analyze the particular needs of each stakeholder. A stakeholder analysis can help identify potential risks, conflicts and constraints that could affect the projects or activities being planned, opportunities and partnerships that could be explored and developed and vulnerable or marginalized groups that are normally left out of planning process.

The stakeholders are usually analyzed in terms of the levels of importance and influence they may have on a project. Armed with this information, you can identify the most powerful stakeholders and have them shape your project in its early stages. Performing a stakeholder analysis does not preclude the interests of the powerful stakeholders overriding the interests of the other stakeholders affected by the project. At the same time, care should be taken to ensure that all stakeholders’ interests are taken into consideration. This will ensure their buy-in, support and any other input they could have towards the project.

To sum it up, before the project can be implemented, it is necessary to know your stakeholders well in terms of their power and influence and ensure that their interests are considered. The end justifies the means.

1. Access the rationale of using Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (I0 Marks)

Participatory monitoring and evaluation is a process by which project stakeholders become actively involved in its implementation, progress tracking and collective assessment of the performance and success of a project.

Participatory monitoring and evaluation increases local level capacity in monitoring and evaluation ensuring monitoring and evaluation findings are relevant to the local context because participants are key informants who can relate what happened during implementation of a project and other events that followed simultaneously.

This in turn increases stakeholders’ understanding and ownership of their own project strategy and processes, that is, what works, what does not and why; this contributes to learning and sustainability.

The effective use of lessons learned acquired from participatory monitoring and evaluation in future decision making promotes a more efficient allocation of resources.

Finally, participatory monitoring and evaluation contributes to improved communication and collaboration between project actors that are working at different levels of project implementation. For example, in form of early wins to increase support and ensuring access of early products and services intended for beneficiaries.

To conclude, participatory monitoring and evaluation strengthens learning, accountability, improves ownership of evaluation results and ensures appropriate use of findings in future decision making.

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| **QUESTION TWO** |  |
| a) Discuss FIVE of indicators of a successful project. | ( 10 marks) |

b) Identify any FIVE types of reports as used in project monitoring and evaluation environment management. (5 marks)

**QUESTION THREE**

1. Explain in details each of the following terms as used in project evaluation:

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| i. Effectiveness: the extent to which the project attains its objectives. For instance, in evaluating a project team’s performance, an evaluation team may look for improvement in skills that allow individuals to perform their assignments more effectively. As a result the evaluation team’s findings may provide information to assist to identify the training required to improve the project team’s performance should they find it wanting. | (3marks) |
| ii. Impact: this is the positive or negative changes produced by a development intervention, directly or indirectly, intended or unintended. For example, a microfinance institution through its loan scheme may start a money lending project to members of a community to enable them get increased capital in their businesses with the aim of alleviating poverty in that community. However, the microfinance institution may charge the customers high interest rates apart from the initial capital they started out with. So it may not to be surprising to find that instead of alleviating poverty, the community members actually become poorer than they were before they signed up for loans. This negative change in the community is the impact of the loan scheme project. | (3 marks) |
| iii. Sustainability: the extent to which the benefits of a project are likely to continue after monetary or non-monetary support has been withdrawn. That is, will the benefits continue to be felt by the project beneficiaries for a number of years after the project has been completed or project funding has ended? For example, a project may target women in a community with the aim of making them financially independent. The donor may sponsor the pilot project and activities may include equipping a few women with skills in making a product. The women may then start a small scale industry to produce the product for sale and the proceeds are used to pay salaries for the women, pay operation costs and also pay a trainer to continue to train other women. The project in this case was sustainable without donor funding and continues to prosper given that more women are made financially independent through training and employment. | (3marks) |
| iv. Relevance: the extent to which the project is relevant to priorities, needs and opportunities of target group, recipient and donor. A vivid example I can think of is when a project under an International WASH program took up the mandate to drilling boreholes with the aim of providing a water source nearer to a community. The donors were made to understand that the sources of water for the community were the rivers and streams that were about one and a half miles away. Surprisingly, after the project implementation and inauguration of the boreholes, the women continued to collect water from the rivers and streams and not from the boreholes. Later, a focus group discussion with the women revealed that the women preferred the long walks to collect water as it was their way of socializing with other women. The borehole project was a flop because much as the donors thought it would be beneficial to the recipients (the community), the target group (women who formed the majority of the community members who collect water for their households) differed as the project was not relevant to them. | (3 Marks) |
| v. Efficiency: the extent to which the project uses the least costly resources possible in order to achieve the desired results. It seeks to find out whether the project achieved its planned outputs on the planned timeline, if so why and if not, why not. For example, a project may procure used but functional printer for project-related printing purposes instead of purchasing brand new printer. As a result, readable questionnaires and reports will be printed out for the project just the same as a new printers would. This is efficiency on the part of acquiring a used printer (as opposed to a brand new printer )for the project. | (3 Marks) |

**QUESTION FOUR**

* 1. Analyze the rationale of project indicators to project teams (5 Marks)

Indicators are the quantitative or qualitative variables that provide a simple and reliable means to measure achievement, to reflect changes associated with an intervention.

To begin with, setting indicators helps project teams to measure progress in inputs, activities, outputs, outcomes and goals which are important in providing necessary feedback to the project. This is because indicators drive all subsequent data collection, analysis and reporting.

Secondly, indicators enables project teams to assess the degree to which intended outcomes are being achieved. The project team can find out whether projects are on track, off track or even doing better than expected against the target set. This provides an opportunity to make adjustments, correct course and gain valuable project experience and knowledge.

In short, without project indicators, it can be difficult for a project team to know whether the project is progressing or stagnating. Project indicators are critical to projects and project teams alike.

* 1. Examine the relevance of evaluation findings to the project manager.

(10 Marks)

Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project with the aim of determining the relevance and fulfillment of project objectives, efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability.

By providing objective and independent assessments, evaluations support accountability towards project managers.

Secondly the evaluation findings generate evidence enabling project managers to make informed decisions, plan strategically and convince management or gain support among stakeholders.

Thirdly, evaluation findings can be documented as part of institutional memory and can thereafter be revisited and consulted by another project manager at a later time just in case the current project manager changes jobs or passes away. In other words, it promotes the understanding of projects for users to explore and investigate by seeing what works, what does not and why.

In conclusion, evaluation findings serve many purposes. The central purpose however is to deliver the message by informing the project manager about the findings of the evaluation which in turn can be used to educate, convince and to gain support.

**QUESTION FIVE**

* 1. Highlight the factors that determine the choice of communication technology in project management. (10 Marks)
  2. There is a significant relationship between project Evaluation and Auditing.

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| Discuss this statement citing relevant examples.  **QUESTION SIX**  a) Discuss the following types of evaluation. | ( 5 marks) |
| 1. Ex-ante Evaluation (Need Assessment)   Your project could be an online learning project about healthy eating and its aim can be to change eating habits. One indicator of the impact might be a reduction in the number of times per week the members of a target community eat meat. To find out whether behavior ( in this case eating habits) within your target community has changed as a result of your online learning project, you might doing an evaluation before begins (this is an ex-ante evaluation) to gather information from the community about how many times they eat meat in a week. This will be your baseline information. | (3 Marks) |
| ii. Formative Evaluation: a formative evaluation starts much earlier in the life of a project and it provides the feedback to guide project change during its implementation by collecting data focusing more on providing short reports at appropriate times. These reports provide a basis for the continuation of project implementation as planned or modification of the project in some way or stop the project in the worst case. For example, when you conduct frequent surveys again and again during the project implementation, and findings show that the community’s eating habits are not changing, then probably it’s time to stop the online learning project about healthy eating. | (3 Marks) |
| iii. Summative Evaluation: a summative evaluation is undertaken to measure the result of a project; it’s a verdict on whether or not the project succeeded. At the end of the project, you might conduct a survey and find that most people have become vegetarians (eating less meat per week) or vegans altogether (no meat at all). The answers will provide information on whether the desired impact has happened and to what extent in terms of proportion of target community it happened. | (3 Marks) |

1. Use relevant examples to analyze at least THREE Monitoring and Evaluation

Challenges. (6 marks)

There are many challenges that can stifle the monitoring and evaluation process. To begin with monitoring and evaluation has been expanded to many sectors, from construction to education, nutrition, and many others to mention but a few. Lack of knowledge and information on how to conduct monitoring and evaluation in a sector can be a challenge because monitoring and evaluation requires skilled personnel with well-defined roles and responsibilities.

Secondly, the funders might dictate terms by stipulating interests that are different from the interests of other stakeholders and this might frustrate the monitoring and evaluation process.

Thirdly many projects lack resources in terms of funding and time to conduct the monitoring and evaluation. Deploying the right people to the right projects at the right time with the right resources is critical for objective, independent and successful monitoring and evaluation.