**Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation**

**Module 1**

**Assignment (1)**

Rania Kharma

30 October 2018

**ASSIGNMENT**

Q 1: Giving examples differentiate between Monitoring and Evaluation.

Monitoring and evaluation are both tools for management. There are however different characteristics between the two.

Monitoring is an ongoing internal analysis process of the project implementation and performance in achieving the planned activities and outcome, and it helps the project management to answer the question if they are doing things right, identify strength and weaknesses points of the plan and to modify it as needed and to take corrective actions.

Evaluation is a tool to measure the efficiency and impact of the project and is done by external consultants, but also internal staff can contribute to the process. It is usually a mid-term or final evaluation after the completion of the project, and it aims at measuring the impact of the project and the achievement of the overall goals. The results of the evaluation usually support decision makers on the next step; let that be a second phase of the project, or a new project based on the results of the implemented one. It is also a donor request, but usually all stakeholders can benefit from the results of the evaluation.

For example, assume that we are implementing a project with an overall goal of decreasing unemployment level among youth in a certain town, through number of activities including provision of capacity building training on small business management to a group of youth, and the provision of tool kit to help those youth start their own small businesses.

The monitoring system should be developed to assist the project management through providing frequent information on the implementation process and the progress made, for example it would include information on the capacity building trainings; how many youth participated, how many trainings were conducted, how many tool kits were provided to the youth and thus how many small businesses were started, was the implementation of activities in line with the designed timeframe and input, etc, while the evaluation would provide information to decision makers on how successful these small businesses are and do or do not they meet the local market requirements, and if they contributed to job creation and thus to reduce the number of unemployed youth in this city.

Q 2: Why is Baseline survey an important part in Project Management?

According to the FAO definition, baseline survey is *“a descriptive cross-sectional survey that mostly provides quantitative information on the current status of a particular situation – on whatever study topic – in a given population. It aims at quantifying the distribution of certain variables in a study population at one point in time.* ([FAO, 2013](http://www.fao.org/docrep/008/y5793e/y5793e07.htm))”

Once a project idea is determined and planning process starts, the baseline survey is important to be conducted to establish or describe the current situation of the context where this project is planned to be implemented. Sometimes conducting a baseline survey is one of the donors´ requirements, nonetheless, in general conducting a baseline survey is important method to provide project management with contextual data against which the impact of the project could be measured and evaluated.

The baseline survey also supports both project management and stakeholders to select and prioritize activities and areas of intervention, and it is usually conducted at the beginning of the project implementation process. It is also essential that before structuring the baseline survey, that the performance benchmarks and indicators of the project impact are clearly identified by the project management, so that the designing and structuring of the baseline survey questions is done in a way that would provide detailed information relevant to the planned impact, rather than spending resources in collecting too many information most of which might not be useful.

Q 3: Distinguish between Summative and formative evaluation Methods with examples.

Summative and formative are two methods of evaluation. All assessments can be summative (i.e., have the potential to serve a summative function), but only some have the additional capability of serving formative functions. - Scriven (1967)

Saettler definition of the formative method is that it is used to refine goals and evolve

Strategies for achieving goals, while summative is undertaken to test the validity of a theory or determine the impact of a certain practice so that future efforts may be improved or modified. (Saettler, P. (1990)

According to the reading material, formative evaluation is process oriented that focuses on operational activities, and it entails data collection to assist decision makers during the planning and the implementation process of the project, so it fits more with the monitoring part of the M&E. While summative evaluation is oriented to measure the achievement of the outcome and impact of the project, and it has 2 types; end evaluation, right after the project is ended to identify next steps, and ex-post evaluation, conducted after 2-5 years after the project is ended to measure the impact and to identify the success and lessons learnt.

Example: Part of my tasks in Libya was to engage the civil society organizations in south Libya in soft activities that aims at enhancing social cohesion in a city divided by tribal conflict. However, the capacity of such CSOs was very weak to actually manage to implement, and they refused to cooperate and work collectively together. We have designed a project to achieve the following:

Impact/goal: enhance social cohesion in the community

Objectives: build capacity of local CSOs

Enhance cooperation between CSOs to engage them to work together to identify social cohesion soft activities

Support the implementation of proposed soft activities by CSOs

Activities: Provision of capacity building training: The capacity building part was over 6 months, where every month there will be a training for one week over certain technical issues such as role of CSOs in social cohesion, project development, problem identification, project design, stakeholders identification, financial planning, reporting, etc. After the training week, CSOs were divided into groups and were requested to go back to their community and start working on identifying a problem. Next month, there will be a review of what they have been working on, and what ideas they have brought, a discussion on how they experienced working together, what were the cons and the pros, etc. Another training will be given to them and they go back to their community and work on designing the project, then again they come back the next month and we discuss their interactive relations, engagement of the community, technical capacities, etc. By doing this assessment and revision of CSOs enhances capacities and engagement during the implementation process, we are executing the formative evaluation, which will help us identify how many CSOs participated in the training, how many of them actually continued the whole training and worked together to identify activities, how many activities were identified, and do they correspond with the concept of social cohesion, and have they been achieved properly and if not, what were the problems. What went right and what went wrong, why, and how to be fixed.

Once the 6 months are over, and activities are identified, CSOs will start implementing these activities in their community.

A summative evaluation will be then conducted after the implementation process is finalized, to measure and assess how successful the activities were implemented, the engagement of the society in social cohesion activities, the networking between CSOs, etc. Later, there would be another evaluation to see if such activities have actually helped enhancing social cohesion and bringing fighting tribes closer together, and if our efforts to bring the CSOs to cooperate together has succeeded and is sustainable after our project is over.

Q 4: Monitoring and evaluation uses both qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the success and impact of the projects. However, economists and statisticians adapt a one sided method (quantitative) to analyze the results.

a) Identify the potential dangers of a one sided monitoring system.

Monitoring is a continuous process of collecting information on the operational progress of the project towards achieving its objectives. When designing a monitoring system, usually the project management selects methods to gather information, and usually combines different qualitative and quantitative methods of monitoring to get as much accurate and objective information as possible.

Choosing to use quantitative method only has disadvantages. The feedback information collected through this method might not be comprehensive enough as it fails to explain the why and how changes have occurred. It also lacks the method to verify its accuracy because it is not used under controlled conditions, especially in developmental projects; it is sometimes very difficult to measure success in numbers only. It can also be costly if used with large number of participants, and can be bias if the number is small and the selection criteria is not balanced enough.

b) Critically analyze the quantitative method often employed by economists and statisticians in monitoring and evaluating development projects

Quantitative method provides numerical information to measure the impact that the project has on specific variables, for example number of women benefiting from health project. Such information are usually gathered through a designed form of data collection with specific questions. On the other hand, the qualitative method is used to gather information from beneficiaries or stakeholders in a way that gives the participants a chance to elaborate more on how they feel about the project implementation process and the benefits of the project is achieved, what their observations and comments are, and usually the information is collected through open-ended approach and textual answers.

Therefore, using only one of these methods will provide results that are not as comprehensive and accurate as required, will not be credible enough to take decisions regarding the success of the project or the needs to modify or change any of the project implementation methods. Based on the nature of the project and the success indicators, it is important to design monitoring tools that combine both qualitative and quantitative methods based on the required data, that is to say a suitable balance between both methods should be applied based on what kind of information is needed to measure the success of the impact.

Q 5: a. Define Logical Framework

According to the manual, the logical framework approach is a structural thinking in project design, and is a tool that helps project management for utilizing logical thinking in project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. From my understanding and work experience, the logframe is the roadmap of the project; it is the structure that includes project components and helps us keep activities and actions in track and in alliance with the over all goal and the objectives.

Q 5: b. Define and Explain key components of Logical framework

The logical framework has both vertical components and horizontal components. The vertical components include:

Goal: which is the broader impact or the long-term objective of the project. It is usually at a national or sectoral level, and it describes the change that the implementation of this project is expected to have, at a wider level.

Purpose:

Objectives: the expected short or medium term outcomes of producing each component’s outputs, at a beneficiary level.

Outputs: the deliverables or the immediate results achieved after implementing the project activities.

Activities: the tasks or actions carried out to implement the project and deliver the identified outputs, using the available resources or inputs

The horizontal components are:

Assumptions: are the external factors or conditions that have effect on the project implementation process and contribute to its success. Such conditions are not controlled by the management of the project.

Indicators: they are information to measures the progress of the project to achieve its objectives. They give a sense of what has been achieve and what is yet to be completed. They must be as precise and objective as possible.

Means of Verifications: these are the data or information that would help measure the indicators effectively.