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| Post-Graduate Diploma in Monitoring and Evaluation |
| Module 2 Assignment: Understanding Indicators in M&E |
| Martina Lappo |
| Strategia Netherlands |

**Q1. To what extent would a Program manager be challenged when determining which indicators to employ in Monitoring and evaluating a project? (10 Mrks)**

Without a sound knowledge of the characteristics of impact, outcome and output relating to their project, a programme manager would struggle to create relevant indicators and methods of verifications. This because often the elements of intervention mentioned above often overlap in three areas: the difference between activities and outputs, outputs and outcomes, and outcomes and impact (INTRAC, 2015). Once the distinction is made, a programme manager should evaluate the type of indicators to apply according to the implication of an M&E framework. What that means is that they need to be able to translate what the indicator would be able to portray and at what point of the implementation. Furthermore, a programme manager needs to employ indicators that would allow data or information to be gathered *exclusively* for the purpose of indicating the process (Pandey, 2008). Therefore, one should be aware of effective data collection methodologies and techniques that would be specifically applicable within the framework of the programme (survey vs focus group, etc.). When deciding on the indicators to apply, a programme manager should ensure that they are not a re-iteration of the outputs, outcomes or impact, that they are verifiable (hence the importance of using practical methods of verification), and clear on the time of application (through a programme planning) (Pandey, 2008).

During the creation of indicators, an approach that would perhaps render the process clear, would the employment of M&E methods that were established to deal with various levels of complexity, such as Theory of Change, Outcome Mapping, etc. (INTRAC, 2015). To do so, however, one needs to be familiar with such approaches and should be able to indicate when one should be used over another.

Another aspect that a manager needs to take under consideration is also the donor’s requirement and preferences regarding not only indicators and methods of verification, but also of terminology. The European Union, in fact prefers the terminology *overall objective, specific objective,* and *outputs* (Europeaid, 2018)*,* while a UN agency such as UNICEF requires the format to state *goal, objective, result, activity* (Unicef, 2018)*.*

When selecting indicators, a Programme Manager will always encounter challenges that will doubt their decisions. However, if one is familiar with the concepts of the required logical framework, the terminology given by the donors, the aspects to measure according to the context, and is open to an exchange with colleagues, the work should be smooth sailing.

**Q2. Citing key characteristics of indicators, explain the fundamental differences between output and outcome indicators. (10 Mrks)**

According to many development and M&E experts, along with various other acronyms, characteristics of a good indicator should form the word *SMART*: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound (Sharmav, 2018).

In more depth, a SMART indicator is:

* Specific, in the sense that it should indicate the objective mean to measure;
* Measurable, meaning that one should be easily able to apply data collection methods to figure out the progress on attaining the objective;
* Attainable, so that fund-wise it is easily feasible and would not invest too much of the budget otherwise needed for the implementation of activities;
* Relevant, so that it would explicitly indicate the progress of the output or outcome it references to;
* Time-bound, so that it would comply to the planning created for the implementation of the activities.

Although all indicators must have the above-mentioned characteristics, output and outcome indicators refer to the specifics of such qualities:

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| **Quality** | **Output indicators** | **Outcome indicators** |
| **Specific**: | Measure products, capital goods and or services resulted from the interventions (Results in UN terminology). | Measure the specific objectives (if using UN terminology) that would lead to an impact. |
| **Measurable:** | Considering it would collect number and types of activities, it would use mainly quantitative data to extract progress | As at this level the progress of change is studied, the use qualitative data is encouraged |
| **Attainable:** | Both types should take under consideration the budget requirement and apply them proportionally, taking under consideration the costs of implementation and other administrative fees. | |
| **Relevant:** | Progress should be given under the form of brief reports, highlighting the outputs the indicator refers to. | A more extensive evaluation should be carried out, considering the aim of the outcomes and the breadth of its scope. |
| **Time-bound:** | Measured throughout the entire process of implementation and frequent and regular periods, so to immediately rectify implementation if needed. | Measured at larger intervals so to allow changes to be visible, through an evaluation. Reporting of progress measured through indicators should be given to all staff involved so that work methodology can be adapted if needed. |

(Information gathered from Scottish Community Development Centre, 2018)

Overall, the knowledge of the difference between outputs and outcomes is what defines a SMART and efficient indicator and without so, progress, change, impact, activities or results will not be measured correctly.

**Q3. Organisation XYT, based in Juba, South Sudan is funded by DFID to roll out mass measles campaign targeting all children under the age of 5. Key activities include setting up maternal care resource centres, providing information to key opinion leaders on value of child immunisation; procurement of cold chain boxes; development of IEC materials for the public sensitisations and actual immunisation; working from the known to the unknown, develop a project outline, with a maximum of 3 output indicators; 3 outcome indicators and 2 impact indicators.**

In an emergency contexts such a South Sudan, the spreading of measles can be considered at very high risk. This because, the propagation of the disease increases in areas where there is a high prevalence of malnutrition, a high population and/or high birth rate, an overcrowding (such as in the case of IDP camps) and overall insufficient access to health facilities (WHO, 2017). To prevent the spreading and an eventual epidemic, Organisation XYT aims to decrease the risk of propagation and increase the health through activities that would improve health care in maternal health centres and increase the population’s knowledge on the illness and the methods to prevent it. In coordination with the Cluster leading organisation and the government authorities relevant for child’s health and nutrition, XYT wants to immunise children under the age of 5 who are also at risk of malnutrition and ensure that through this process and the vulgarisation of informative material, the population is made aware of the high risk.

Throughout these activities, XYT also aims at creating an environment of community and solidarity for the population, so that once the emergency subsides, all will be able to strive and overcome future obstacles, thanks to the knowledge acquired.

In order to measure the efficiency and effectiveness of the programme, and also in order to be completely accountable to the donor DFID, XYT has established certain indicators that cover all activities and expected results in this interventions. They are listed here below:

*Output indicator 1:* XX maternal care resource centre are established;

*Output indicator 2:* XX focus groups on child immunisation carried out involving leaders, teachers and youth leaders;

*Output indicator 3:* % children are immunised;

*Outcome indicator 1:* XX members of the community become active members of the vulgarisation on child immunisation (measured through initiatives organised spontaneously, follow-up visits, etc.);

*Outcome indicator 2:* % of children registered in health centre following immunisation

*Impact indicator 1:* % of child mortality rate as decreased to ….%

*Impact indicator 2:* Communities display heightened knowledge on child immunisation and health (which can be carried out by the use of the U-Report tool facilitated by UNICEF).

**Q4. Work-plan and indicator development:**

**Your organisation, Malakal Community Empowerment Organisation (MACEPO) has received a funding of SSP 50,000 to undertake a project on reintegrating returnees into their original family systems. The project involves among others, trainings in family reunions and reintegration for village elders, opinion leaders, pastors, youth and vigilante groups. It also entails provision of seeds, fertilisers and other start-up tools for livelihoods such as funds for small businesses to the returnees. It also involves group meetings for returnees on family reintegration and reunion.**

**Develop a 3-month work plane with SMART objectives, specific activities, assigned budgets and process and outcome indicators to facilitate effective management, monitoring and evaluation. Present your work in a tabular form.**

*Please see next page for table to answer of Question 4.*

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|  | **Description** | **Indicators** | **Assigned budget (50,000 SSP / 383$)[[1]](#footnote-1)** | **Planification of activities** | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Objective 1** | Promote good reintegration practices within community of X | No. of returnees involved in village management |  | Month 1 | Month 2 | Month 3 | Month 4 | Month 5 | Month 6 | Month 7 | Month 8 | Month 9 | Month 10 | Month 11 | Month 12 |
| **Objective2** | Encourage resilience and economic independece with the returnee population | % increase in revenue per HH |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Objective3** | Create a cohesive environment and communities between the two populations | Increased positive attitude towards host and returnees' respective habits and constructs |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity0.1** | Carry out a KAP Evaluation to create baseline on populations's expectations | No. of questionnaires filled No. of reports prepared | 12,000.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity1.1** | XX trainings on family reunifications for village leaders | No. of sessions per training Attendance is % throughout Good practices are assimilated and put in place | 5,500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity1.2** | XX trainings on family reunifications for youth | No. of sessions per training Attendance is % throughout No. of agendas of future inclusive activities is put in place | 5,500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity2.1** | XX training on Income Generating Activities for XX returnee families | No. of sessions per training Attendance is % throughout % of activities remain active and produce revenue | 12,500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity2.2** | Distribution of XX start-up kit | No. of bags of seedlings distributed per HH No. of bottles of fertiliser ditributed per HH No. of start-up kit relevant to AGR distributed per HH | 6,000.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Activity3.1** | Create focus groups on civic duty for returnees | No. of monthly sessions of meeting No. community-wide events organised | 5,000.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Structure costs (7%) | 3,500.00 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **Tot** | 50,000.00 [[2]](#footnote-2) |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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1. Conversion rate according to <https://www.mataf.net/en/currency/converter-SSP-USD?m1>= [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Unrealistic cost of programme considering breadth of activities. Budget allocation done according to needed proportion of funds available. 7% of budget left for structure costs [↑](#footnote-ref-2)