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**Subject: Project Evaluation and Monitoring**

**Sessional Assignment**

**Discuss project monitoring and evaluation?**

**Introduction**

Many countries have many projects in an attempt to improve their infrastructure and this progresses the standard of living of its citizens. Huge sums of money are put into this activity and it is important to get value for money.

Two aspects that would donate towards ensuring these are monitoring and evaluation. Unfortunately, many project owners and managers do not recognize the need and usefulness of these two.

This highlights the common constraints and ways in which these constraints can be overcome.

**Monitoring**

Monitoring is the routine checking of information on progress, so as to approve that progress is occurring against the defined direction. It commonly includes monthly to quarterly reporting, on outputs, actions and use of resources (e.g. people, time, money, and materials). It should be used to confirm that what has been planned in going forward as intended and within the resources allocated.

**Evaluation**

Evaluation is used to ensure that the direction chosen is correct, and that the right mix of approaches and resources were used to get there. It can typically be formative (helping to develop learning and understanding within stakeholders) or summative (i.e. indicating the degree of achievement). It typically focuses on outcomes and their relationship with outputs.

**Importance of Monitoring and Evaluation**

To evaluate means "to ascertain the value or value of" accordingly Knowing what difference programs are making motivates workers and their supporters to improved effort. Although evaluations may be retrospective, they are essentially forward looking with regard to their purpose. Evaluation applies the lessons of experience to decisions about current and future programs. Good evaluation presents substitutes for decision-makers to consider. Evaluation can be an excellent learning tool as well as a means to improve program me performance and demonstrate accountability.

**Tools for monitoring**

One of the greatest weaknesses of management information is the lack of active and timely communication of information to the users. Some monitoring supervises often invest too much time and resources in get-together data which they frequently fail to interpret and present in a form that will convey the meaning of the progress made. This should be avoided if possible. Appropriate monitoring tools should be put in place and used accordingly.

The importance of communication in project management is equally critical. It is the “oil” that lubricates the project movement in the attainment of the stated objectives. Some of the most widely used tools for project monitoring, and their limitations include the following:

* **Verbal communication**

This is probably the most effective mode of communication. Among its advantages is that it is quick, and its presentation can be adapted to concerns and questions of the audience. However, this type of tool to communicate monitoring information can lead to misunderstandings and sometimes denial of information.

* **Meetings**

The very nature of project programed management makes it expected that certain meetings are organized to communicate and share project information. Other programs may even require standing committees where outsiders may be invited to review program me performance. One needs to be advised that, while it is important to have meetings, they should be used as effective tools. Meetings can be used for sharing and interchanging information, descriptive, stimulating, and seeking the best solutions regarding project performance.

* **Reports**

The importance of monitoring reports should not be unnoticed. It should be noted that these are an essential part of project program me monitoring. Activities undertaken, inputs supplied, money expended, etc. have to be recorded and accounted for. However, reports are only effective if they are submitted to the right people at the right time to facilitate corrective decision making.

* **Diary notes**

While most people do not use this mode of recording information, it remains an important option. It is essential to record key decisions, which may have been made at formal or informal meetings. Its format should be simple – giving the date, time, place and the names of the people present when the decision was taken.

* **Process monitoring/ physical progress monitoring**

In process monitoring, routine data is collected and examined in order to establish whether the project tasks and activities are leading towards the intended project results. It confirms the progress of the project towards the planned results.

* **Technical monitoring**

Technical monitoring involves assessing the strategy that is being used in project application to create whether it is achieving the required results. It involves the technical aspects of the project such as the activities to be showed. Technical monitoring may establish that this could be a result of installing chlorine dispensers at the water source and women are too time inhibited that they have no time to line up to get chlorine from the dispensers. This may prompt a change of strategy where the project might opt for household distribution of bottled chlorine.

* **Assumption monitoring**

Any project has its working assumptions which have to be clearly outlined in the project log frame. These assumptions are those factors which might determine project success or failure, but which the project has no control over. The drop in use of the contraceptive could however, be attributed to increased taxation on the importation of contraceptives in the country which makes them more expensive, rather than on project failure.

* **Financial Monitoring**

Just like the name proposes, financial monitoring simply refers to monitoring project/ program spending and comparing them with the budgets organized at the planning stage. Financial monitoring is also important for accountability and reporting purposes, as well as for measuring financial efficiency (the maximization of outputs with minimal inputs).

* **Impact Monitoring**

Impact monitoring is a type of monitoring which continually Indeed, impacts are usually the long term effects of a project. For example, in a Water and Sanitation program, there may be a need to monitor the change in Under 5 Mortality in the program area over time. In this case, rather than being identified as an impact evaluation, this would be identified as impact monitoring.

**Purpose of Evaluation**

It assists to determine the degree of achievement of the objectives. It determines and identifies the problems associated with program me planning and implementation. It generates data that allows for cumulative learning which, in turn, contributes to better designed programs, improved management and a better assessment of their impact.

* **Formative evaluation**

The formative evaluation is showed mainly to review the existing status in the besieged population, which in turn informs project focus.  The formative evaluation is an important type of evaluation as it is not only the starting point of a project, but also forms the basis for evaluation. Additionally, the tools and methodologies that are used at the formative evaluation are usually the ones that are agreed on to other stages of evaluation such as the mid-term and summative evaluation.

* **Mid-term evaluation**

This is also commonly stated to as the mid-term reviews. Just like the name suggests, the mid-term reviews are conducted mid-project. The mid-term evaluations are important for the purposes of establishing whether a project is heading towards the set goals and objectives, thereafter informing management and control decisions by the project management. It is however important to note that in the case where a project has a long life cycle, it might be important to conduct periodic evaluations before the actual mid-term assessment, although this might depend on management goodwill and availability of funds.

* **Summative evaluation**

This evaluation type is also known as the end-term evaluation or the project completion evaluation. This evaluation generally informs stakeholders on the project achievement and is important for verifying success stories and lessons learnt. This evaluation is also usually carried out by the project team.

* **Ex-post evaluation**

This type of evaluation is most often disorderly to be synonymous with the summative evaluation, while in actual sense it is not. This type of evaluation is also called the post- application evaluation. This is not only because external evaluators need to be outsourced, but also because it is proposed to capture the impacts of the project. It is usually the final evaluation associated with a project.

* **Meta-evaluation**

Meta-evaluation is a type of evaluation that is based on several different sources of information. In other words, meta-evaluation is based on several evaluations. While in some cases organizations may hire numerous evaluation teams in order to conduct a meta-evaluation, while in other cases, different evaluations directed by different institutions on similar initiatives can be considered for meta-evaluation.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Monitoring and evaluation when approved out correctly and at the right time and place are two of the most important features of ensuring the success of many projects. Unfortunately, these two although known to many project inventers tend to be given little importance and as a result they are done simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most funding agencies without the intention of using them as a machine of ensuring the success of the projects.

**2. What is project management?**

**Introduction**

Project management is an activity to plan and attendant a project from the start until finish. Project management usually only one time projects, not on going activity. Project management needs human resource and financial resource. Product life cycle is important and helpful. Formanager project and project groups to achieve the project. Product life cycle has four stages they aredefining (goals, specifications, tasks, responsibilities), planning (schedules, budgets, resources, risks, staffing), executing (status reports, changes, quality, forecast) and closing (train customer, transfer documents, release resources, evaluation, lesson learned). Project manager has the important role in project management. The project manager is the one who will define the goals of the project and also the objective, motivate their team member so they can do their job properly, decide when the variety project components are to be completed and who is going to complete it and control the process to ensure that the completed components are meet the expectation. Successful project is the result from a good management that managed by the project manager. The project managers are using charts and Gantt charts to decide which tasks have to be completed bywhich departments.completed by which departments.

**Project**

A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result. A project is done only once, whereas most jobs are ongoing or repetitive, and managing one-time jobs is different from managing ongoing ones. For one thing, the people who work on a project may be reassigned to other jobs once the project is completed, so the team is temporary.

**Phases of Project Managment**

1. **Initiation**

In this first stage, the scope of the project is defined along with the approach to be taken to deliver the desired outputs. The project manager is appointed and in turn, he selects the team members based on their skills and experience. The most common tools or methodologies used in the initiation stage are Project Charter, Business Plan, Project Framework (or Overview), Business Case Justification, and Milestones Reviews.

1. **Planning**

The second phase should include a detailed identification and assignment of each task until the end of the project. It should also include a risk analysis and a definition of a criteria for the successful completion of each deliverable. The governance process is defined, stake holders identified and reporting frequency and channels agreed. The most common tools or methodologies used in the planning stage are Business Plan and Milestones Reviews.

1. **Execution and controlling**

The most important issue in this phase is to ensure project activities are properly executed and controlled. During the execution phase, the planned solution is implemented to solve the problem specified in the project's requirements. In product and system development, a design resulting in a specific set of product requirements is created. This convergence is measured by prototypes, testing, and reviews. As the execution phase progresses, groups across the organization become more deeply involved in planning for the final testing, production, and support. The most common tools or methodologies used in the execution phase

1. **Closure**

In this last stage, the project manager must ensure that the project is brought to its proper completion. The closure phase is characterized by a written formal project review report containing the following components: a formal acceptance of the final product by the client, Weighted Critical Measurements (matching the initial requirements specified by the client with the final delivered product), rewarding the team, a list of lessons learned, releasing project resources, and a formal project closure notification to higher management. No special tool or methodology is needed during the closure phase.

**Managing a project**

* **Team**

A project team is comprised of a group of people who will realize the project result. The group is often comprised of people who have various backgrounds, each of whom contributes knowledge and skills.

* **Goal** A product result (or goal) is chosen. After a project has been completed, something has been realized. A new piece of software has been written, a re-organization has been carried out or a connection has been built. The project goal is sometimes indefinite or less firmly recognized. In many projects, it is necessary to acclimate the goal as the project proceeds.
* **Limited resources** The amount of time and money that is available for completing a project is always limited. No project is completely free of time pressure.
* **Uncertainty (risk)**

One characteristic feature of projects is that their success is never guaranteed beforehand. Even if the desired goal is already being reached, it is uncertain whether it will be realized within the available budget or within the proposed time. It is also not unusual for only thirty per cent of the unique project team members to be working on the project upon its completion. Although project managers must attend to many matters, they actually direct projects along only five parameters:

• Time • Money • Quality • Organization • Information

These five parameters, which are often known as the ‘control factors’, are described further below. The control factors appear in project plans, progress monitoring and project reporting.

* **Time**

Regulator which activities should take place in which phase Estimate how long each activity will take. Allocate people and materials. Allocate activities over time. Determine the (most important) deadlines.

* **Money**

The money factor establishes itself in the project budget. The management of money within a project involves ensuring that the costs remain within the budget. Given that the majority of the costs in most projects are comprised of labor costs, the factors of money and time (the number of labor hours) are closely intertwined.

* **Quality**

The project result must achieve a number of quality requirements. This also applies to the various intermediate products of the project. When managing a project, it is particularly important for eminence requirements to be determined, agreed upon and recorded in writing during the definition phase. These requirements should never remain contained. A clear list of requirements can be checked at the end of the operation phase.

* **Organization**

Within a project, the team must be managed. In the narrowest sense, team management involves determining who will do what from the list of activities. In broader terms, it also comprises all of the soft skills (e.g. motivational techniques, communication skills, leadership styles) that are needed to accomplish a goal with a group of people. Regardless of their importance, these soft skills beat the scope of this handbook.

* **Information**

The information factor concerns how, by whom and on which basis decisions can be taken. Who may decide about which matters in the project? Is it the project leader, the client or an applicable expert within the team? What will be archived and by whom? Will tools (e.g. project website, issue tracker, e-mail notification, joint agenda) be used? These and other informational questions must be answered before a project can be started. Organizations that regularly work with projects have a number of tools (e.g. Word templates) on hand for handling information within a project.