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A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY SURVEY ON: IMPORTANCE OF MONITORING AND EVALUATION SYSTEM AT NGOs

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Abstract:

The Monitoring and Evaluation Department is considered one of the most important departments that can help business organizations measure the organizations' progress and evaluate their efficiency in implementing strategies. Monitoring and evaluation systems allow project activities to be measured and analyzed. Moreover, it helps to identify problems early and adopt the necessary solutions. In addition, the Monitoring and Evaluation Department helps identify the resources needed for the project. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system is important for (NGOs), as it helps improve programs and determine whether they meet set objectives. This work is typically performed through data collection, analysis, and reporting. Furthermore, the monitoring and evaluation system helps achieve transparency and accountability, and provides donors, community members, and beneficiaries with key evidence for making decisions and actions throughout the duration of the project. The M&E system also helps determine whether the funds allocated to the project have been used effectively in achieving the desired Goals.

The purpose of the survey paper was to highlight the importance of strengthening monitoring and evaluation systems in non-governmental organizations for the sake of integrated work between the systems and the workers in this unit within the organizations. This research aims to help employees in the monitoring and evaluation unit to complete the work in the fastest time, with less effort, and with more transparency and accuracy. By examining the different methodologies, tools and procedures of the system that helps this sector. This system also gives a comprehensive overview of current methodologies and best practices for monitoring and evaluation. Unfortunately, there is a gap in systems design, M&E through the planning process.

Keywords: Monitoring & Evaluation System, non-governmental organizations

1. INTRODUCTION

The Concepts of monitoring and evaluation are influenced by the aim-based management approach, particularly by its emphasis on observable outcomes, impacts, and goals from development initiatives [1]. In keeping with this, it's important to keep in mind that Monitoring and Evaluation Systems are "management toolkits" that support organizational decision-making and increase the efficacy of development by producing outcomes .

Using conventional instruments including goals frameworks, strategic planning, monitoring, and program evaluation, the method enhances organizational performance. As part of the reform initiatives of the 1980s and 1990s, it was first implemented in private sector organizations before being transferred to the public sector. Multilateral organizations and development agencies are using it more frequently [2] . Theory of OC is a particular kind of planning, involvement, and assessment methodology utilized in government, not-for-profit, and philanthropic sectors to support social change. Whether utilizing the narrative approach, the diagram and graph method, or both, change theory is an efficient means to work toward the desired outcome in the short-, medium-, or long-term. Organizational development is based on change management. Organizations can utilize change management techniques to enhance performance monitoring and evaluation, such as persuasive power, education, and communication tactics. [3]. The distinction between desired and actual outcomes, along with the requirement that stakeholders model their intended objectives prior to selecting intervention strategies to attain those outcomes, are the two key innovations of Theory of Change. Thinking the Theory of Change as just a planning and evaluation framework is a prevalent misperception [4]. Rather, Theory of Change is a type of critical theory that guarantees an open exchange of power. In addition, to achieve solutions, the process must inevitably include a wide range of viewpoints and participants. The goal of organizational capacity theory is to enhance the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation within organizations through a collection of ideas and techniques. The primary objective of this theory is to enhance an organization's organizational capabilities through the development of individual and team members' managerial and organizational skills [5]. As monitoring and evaluation data for inputs, processes, outputs, impacts, and outcomes become available, stakeholders can periodically adjust the Theory of Change and OC theory considering the evidence. This involves identifying the processes, outcomes, and impacts that need to be monitored and evaluated as well as choosing the appropriate indicators for these processes. Furthermore, the data provided by monitoring and evaluation systems is used as an essential management tool to meet objectives and produce desired outcomes. Managers who want to achieve objective need to have access to this information, which shows the state of performance, goals problems, and progress [6, 7].

2. RELATED WORK

2.1 Definition, roles, and scope of non-governmental organizations (NGO):

NGOs can be defined in a variety of ways, according to Sayarifard [8]. Organizations with humanitarian or cooperative objectives as opposed to commercial ones, and those that are wholly or partially independent of the government, are referred to as non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Nearly all organizations that are not supported by the government are referred to as non-governmental organizations (NGOs); these organizations must be fully voluntary and must adhere to the legal requirements of the nation in which they operate [9]. An NGO, according to Wadongo [10], is an organization having non-profit status under law that is financially independent of the government, actively involved in the political, social, and economic transformation of society, and able to mobilize people for development beyond basic needs on a personal and a national level. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) offer social services, advocacy, relief, and social development.

NPOs in developing nations are occasionally divided into groups according to their scope, activities, content, and program kinds [10]. NGOs are formal, independent social organizations whose main objective is to advance shared objectives at the national or international level, according to Martens [11]. A wide range of entities or organizations that fall somewhere between the family, the market, and the state are considered non-profit organizations. These organizations collectively make up a unique non-profit sector. NGOs, a term typically used by governments to refer to entities that have no official status, are organizations that work with the main objective of benefiting society at large. This can include eradicating poverty, providing food, education, medical relief, sustainable development, and protection of the environment.

Role and Activities of NGOs:

NGOs work to effect change in a variety of ways, ranging from immediate humanitarian relief to long-term political empowerment, but their common goal is to have some sort of impact on the world [2]. Non-governmental organizations have a wide range of responsibilities in the political, humanitarian, and other domains. Their primary responsibilities include setting priorities, gathering resources, and distributing resources to those in need. Non-Governmental Organizations, particularly in developing nations, are essential in assisting governments in providing goods and social services, according to Owa [13]. Furthermore, the NGOs were characterized as significant political players for transparency by Petersson et al. [14]. The study's focus was on how NGOs fit into the global fisheries governance system in terms of transparency. Three broad aspects of transparency were introduced, namely: public involvement, information accessibility, and outcome accessibility. It also took into account the worries raised by NGOs regarding obstacles to openness. NGOs also help to create a coordinated and efficient response to crises and events, like the COVID-19 response [8, 15–18]. Zihnioğlu [19] asserts that NGOs serve as intermediaries. Furthermore, as stated by Wadongo [10] There are three categories into which NGOs can divide their roles and activities:

- Activities aimed at aiding victims of significant emergencies.
- Development activities: longer-term assistance with an emphasis on sustainability and self-sufficiency in the community.
- Advocacy - NGOs that strive to ensure equality for underrepresented groups by defining their rights and securing the necessary services.

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) is being shaped by NGOs in both developed and developing nations [20]. The functions and operations of non-governmental organizations are still being researched, particularly considering recent developments like [21–23].

NGOs' Purpose: Traditionally, NGOs have been categorized into local, national, and international organizations. Since NGOs are the ones entrusted by donors to carry out aid programs for the beneficiaries, they play a significant role in the development of societies. To further social and political objectives, NGOs are tasked with designing and implementing the most effective projects that are in line with the needs and growth objectives of the respected communities.

INGOs regularly hire local NGOs to assist in distributing their food aid, allowing the NGOs to decide who gets aid and how it is distributed. In conflict areas, this allows the NGOs to divert aid to conform to the dogmatic allegiances of the "local NGO." NGOs may not lessen the impact of war on the impoverished; instead, their actions may serve to strengthen the war economy. Among those impacted by the war, mistrust of international organizations and national and international NGOs has skyrocketed" [24]. NGOs that the groups founded to raise money from abroad. Some NGOs were pre-politicized and directed funds to areas or factions in order to gain military and political leverage. Furthermore, the research evaluates Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) methods regionally, revealing a range of experiences and difficulties in carrying out projects for Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs). For example, reference number Nasampo J.2016(1) discovered that the project teams in

Uganda were able to meet the needs and were implementing comparatively few projects. Additionally, NGOs pledged financial support to carry out the Monitoring and Evaluation Action Plan [25]. NGOs would still have to keep an eye on spending trends and educate the public about digital payments.

2.2 Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E):

Since the goal of every NGO and every NGO program is to have a significant impact, it stands to reason that an NGO needs a strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system to track its progress toward its objectives. The monitoring and evaluation system is made up of two main processes: evaluation and monitoring. Evaluation is an analysis of the impact, effectiveness, efficiency, and relevance of activities in relation to predetermined objectives, while monitoring is a continuous assessment of programs based on early, detailed information on the progress or delay of the ongoing assessed activities. Monitoring is a management tool that helps find discrepancies between the plan and reality so that corrective action can be taken, according to Msongo [26]. It guarantees that things get done the way they are supposed to. The methodical and impartial analysis of a process, project, program, strategy, policy, industry, and operational performance is called evaluation. The degree to which both expected and unexpected goals were achieved is analyzed by evaluating the aim chain, process, contextual elements, and causality using pertinent criteria like relevance, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability [27]. According to Hubert [28], monitoring is a continuous process that uses the methodical gathering of information about indicators in public projects. Additionally, Masuku [29] described monitoring as the process of continuously gathering and analyzing data on a project, program, or policy to report progress made toward predetermined goals and objectives to management and other stakeholders. The systematic and periodic assessment of a project, program, or policy, whether it is ongoing or completed, with respect to its design, implementation, and outcomes based on predetermined criteria, is known as evaluation. The monitoring and evaluation function frequently serves two separate but related goals that have different effects on the location of the organization [30]. But there are other distinctions between monitoring and evaluation tasks besides just the type of questions posed. The goals, frequency, timing, and ways in which data are used vary between monitoring and evaluation activities [31]. The questions (and answers) that monitoring and evaluation pose are one area in which they diverge. As an illustration, the majority of projects seek to gauge their success in the following three domains: project coverage, project process, and project objective. Activities related to monitoring and evaluation can be used to investigate these three areas. But the questions posed during evaluation will be substantially different from the questions posed to investigate these areas through monitoring.

Table1: Monitoring Questions versus evaluation Questions

Area of interest	Monitoring questions	Evaluation questions
Project coverage	"How many people or communities were reached?"	"Is the project reaching (or did it reach) those with greatest need? If not, why not?"
Project process	"Did project processes complete activities on time and on budget?"	"Did the project effectively and appropriately invest its time and budget to conduct its activities?"
Project results	"Was the project successful in achieving the targets set for its intended outcomes?"	"How have outcomes achieved varied by different groups within the target area?"

Even though monitoring and evaluation have different goals and methods, it's crucial to understand how they work together. For instance, data generated by monitoring operations can assist in addressing evaluation-related queries. On the other hand, monitoring activities can determine whether changes recommended by a midterm evaluation are improving the project and its aim. This is the case if the project conducts evaluations.

Table 2 Comparing the purpose and processing of Monitoring and evaluation

	Monitoring	Evaluation
Purpose	Tracking inputs, activities and progress toward achievement of agreed outcomes and impacts	A systematic and objective assessment of the merit, value or worth of an ongoing or completed project
Frequency	Regular and ongoing during project implementation	Periodic, one-off events during and, if funding permits, after project implementation
Responsibility	Activities are conducted by members of the project team	Activities are often externally led, although they should involve the active participation of project staff
Use of data	Informs timely decision-making and short-term corrective action in support of adaptive management	Identifies potential course corrections Contributes to longer-term organizational learning

Monitoring often relates directly to the audit and accountability, goals of an M&E system and speaks to the efficacy and efficiency with which organizations work toward predetermined organizational objectives. On the other hand, evaluation addresses more general governance choices about whether goals are being achieved and whether the program's implementation in the given context makes these goals feasible (30).

Every phase of a project, from the initial stages of design to the final tasks of project closure, involves ongoing monitoring and evaluation. The activities of Project MEAL are divided into five phases, as shown in figure 1 below.

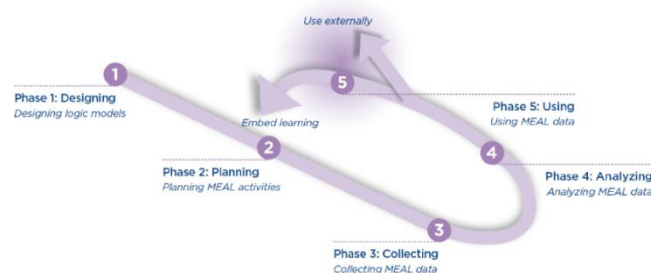


Figure 1: Phases 5 of the M&E cycle

As an objective, the guide employs call-out boxes at each stage of the M&E cycle to draw attention to chances for participation and critical thinking to enhance M&E processes [31]. Stakeholders can participate in different ways, ranging from giving very little advice or input to actively and extensively designing and implementing tools and processes for gathering data. A partner organization or a project participant may be considered a stakeholder. The project's donor organization or a local

government office may also be considered stakeholders. Relevant parties will change based on the environment in which you live Involving stakeholders in the planning and execution of MEAL has several benefits. Making sure that MEAL findings are applicable to the local context is one of the benefits of participatory M&E.

- Improve stakeholders' comprehension and sense of ownership over their own program's approach and procedures, including what functions well and what doesn't.
- Expand M&E's local level capacity.
- Encourage better coordination and communication amongst project participants operating at various stages of project execution.

Encourage the more effective use of available resources. Frameworks with pertinent indicators and an organized approach to gathering, processing, and utilizing data are necessary for the monitoring and assessment of policies and programs in an efficient manner (32). A project's financial summary, updates on its progress and accomplishments, activities carried out, inputs provided, funds distributed, important discoveries, outcomes, impacts, as well as conclusions and suggestions from the interventions that have been gathered from diverse monitoring, are all included in M&E. Improving the management of outputs, outcomes, and impact both now and in the future is the aim of monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities can assess service uptake, diagnosis and treatment accessibility, as well as organizational performance and knowledge, according to Rae [33]. The project teams must be involved in all stages of the project lifecycle for a higher chance of success, including monitoring and evaluation The approach to monitoring and evaluation, the competency of monitoring and evaluation, downward accountability, and the proper integration of monitoring and evaluation throughout the project life cycle are all necessary for effective monitoring and evaluation, according to Dejene [34].

Regardless of the methodology, a reporting tool should incorporate at least the fundamental concepts of monitoring and evaluation: measurable objective, performance indicator, target, and periodic reporting [34]. To make informed decisions and apply the lessons learned to future programming and evaluation, the MEAL Plan, IPTT (Indicator Performance Tracking Table), and SPEL (Strategic Monitoring Evaluation and Learning) are the methods used to track project progress in relation to the original plan.

2.3 Monitoring and Evaluation System and Performance

Since studies have demonstrated that the monitoring and evaluation system effectively affects performance, whether in the governmental or non-governmental sector, it is imperative that the system be incorporated into all project phases to ensure project success. The purpose of this study [36] is to look into the connection between the district's urban local governments' performance and their monitoring and evaluation systems. Studies [36–40] indicate that the monitoring and evaluation system has positively impacted the performance of different government sectors and contributed to the accomplishment of projects in those sectors. Research has examined the ways in which Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) systems have influenced project performance in the non-governmental sector. Numerous researchers used a variety of criteria to present multiple studies on the relationship between project performance and its outputs, monitoring, and evaluation.

Additionally, NGOs pledged financial support to carry out the Monitoring and Evaluation Action Plan. According to another study conducted by Banteyirga [41], the majority of implemented projects lacked adequate monitoring and evaluation. Thus, in my view, we sought to incorporate technology to attain transparency, stay current with the times, and invest the necessary time [41]. It was also discovered that Organizational Capabilities (OC), acting as a mediator, can offer useful information about how Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) and CRM determine a model relate to one another

because CRM is appropriate for the type of work environment where the monitoring and evaluation unit's system implementation and organizational performance occur.

Even so, there are numerous research studies and projects whose performance is positively and effectively impacted by monitoring and evaluation. But most of the projects that were put into action lacked adequate monitoring and evaluation [27]. The studies listed below offer strategies for enhancing monitoring and assessment performance:

A new ontology for the monitoring and evaluation cycle of humanitarian projects was suggested by the authors [42]. It offered a wide range of semantic rules for automatically determining the status of a project and its evaluation cycle. Project actors (participants, staff) and project activities can all be automatically analyzed and queried in this way, encompassing all project phases. Extensive semantic rules also allow us to deduce implicit information about project outcomes. This work [43] provides an introduction. The author's concept outlines design principles for creating an index of the nonprofit sector and provides a framework for developing a dynamic assessment of the nonprofit sector. Using axiology (philosophy of values) and complexity theory, the paper clarifies basic issues and values considerations to support index developers in formulating practical policies. It makes the case for using a capabilities approach as the design architecture, which is operationalized as several capitals. It recommends using the Integrated Reporting social accounting framework to track these capitals across a range of levels and time periods. presented a novel tool in this paper [44] to make it easier for practitioners to create thorough evaluation plans. They put forth a methodical strategy for making the most of M&E tools, which consists of three steps: (1) a well-defined theory of change that encapsulates all program pathways and illustrates all intermediate objectives required to achieve impact; (2) indicators that directly correspond to the theory of change's intermediate and ultimate objectives; and (3) a data collection plan that includes suitable techniques for measuring indicators and answering stakeholder questions.

3. CONCLUSION

We conclude that in this survey it showed that the monitoring and evaluation system helps improve programs and determine whether they meet established objectives, helps achieve transparency and accountability, and provides donors, community members, and beneficiaries with key evidence for making decisions and actions throughout the duration of the project.

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