

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring

“Monitoring is about collecting information that will help you answer questions about your project.”

Monitoring is an integral part of a day-to-day management. It is important that information is collected in a planned, organized and routine way. NGO can use this information to report on ongoing project and to help them evaluate.

Monitoring is the regular collection and analysis of information to assist timely decision making. It is a continuing function that uses methodical collection of data to provide management and the main stakeholders of a project or program with early indications of progress and achievement of objectives.

All organizations keep records and notes, and discuss what they are doing. This simple checking becomes monitoring when information is collected routinely and systematically against a plan. The information might be about activities or services, NGOs’ users, or about outside factors affecting organization or project.

Monitoring information is collected at specific times: daily, monthly or quarterly.

At some point NGO needs to bring this information together so that it can answer questions such as:

- How well are we doing?
- Are we doing the right things?
- What difference are we making?

At this point NGO is starting to evaluate. While monitoring is routine and ongoing, evaluation is an in-depth study, taking place at specific points in the life of the project.

Evaluation

“Evaluation is an assessment that refers to design, implementation and results of completed or on-going project / program / policy.”

Why Evaluate?

Evaluation has two main purposes:

Evaluation for Learning and Development: Using evaluation to learn more about an organization's activities, and then using what has been learnt.

For learning, you might ask:

- What are the project's strengths and weaknesses?
- What are the implementation problems?
- Why have things worked, or not?
- What are the good practice issues?

Evaluation for Accountability: Funders and other 'stakeholders' want to know whether a project has spent its money appropriately. There is pressure from funders to provide them with evidence of success. Evaluation provides these evidences.

The purpose of evaluation will change the type of questions asked. For accountability, the questions might be:

- Has the project worked?
- How has money been spent?
- Should the project continue?

What is Self-Evaluation?

When an organization uses its own people and their skills to carry out evaluation (as opposed to hiring an external agency to carry out the evaluation) this is known as self-evaluation.

Characteristics	Evaluation	Monitoring
Subject:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">usually focused on strategic aspects	<ul style="list-style-type: none">addresses operational management issues
Character:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">incidental, flexible subject & methods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">continuous, regular, systematic
Primary client:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">stakeholders and external audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none">program management
Approach:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">objectivity, transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none">utility
Methodology:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">careful research methodologies, refined tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">rapid appraisal methods
Primary focus:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">focus on relevancy, outcomes, impact and sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">focus on operational efficiency and effectiveness
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">to check outcomes / impact, verify developmental hypothesisto document successes and lessons learned	<ul style="list-style-type: none">to identify and resolve implementation problemsto assess progress towards objectives