

# 5. Monitoring and Evaluation

## 5.1. Introduction

In the cycle of Program/Project management, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) are two important functions that Program/Project Managers should be well conversant with. It is important to learn the link as well as the difference between Monitoring and Evaluation.

Monitoring of project implementation is the key to achieve the expected results of the intervention. It is therefore very necessary to have a clear understanding on the term "MONITORING", its importance in implementing the activities planned under the project and how to use different instruments/tools of monitoring in order to derive the expected results of the intervention.

## 5.2. Monitoring

Project/Program Monitoring means in simple language "**carefully watching**" or "**surveillance**" on the "**Performance**" of the "**Progress**" of the Project.

In other words, it is carefully watching the manner in which the inputs earmarked are provided and delivered on time, in the right quantity and the best quality with utmost efficiency in order to convert them into intended outputs. The "Outputs" in turn contribute in achieving Results/ Outcomes that eventually bring about the Change expected with the intervention.

Monitoring therefore is the continuous feedback system of tracking inputs to ensure that inputs, activities, outputs and external factors are proceeding according to the plan. This enables the management making decision and taking actions to rectify matters if there are deviations from the plan.

The system by which this vital information on the performance of the project/program received is called "Management Information System" (MIS). It is therefore very important that project managers are fully involved in developing and operationalizing MIS.

**Evaluation** is different from Monitoring. It means "taking a stock" of what has been done under the project/program at a given point of time. Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) or Objective Oriented Project Planning (OOPP in Dutch or ZOOOP in German) the tool effectively used in formulating projects/programs for nearly half a century defines evaluation as:

"A systematic and independent examination of a project in order to determine its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and the relevance of its objectives."

Evaluations may be undertaken

- In the middle of the project/program implementation period (**Mid Term Evaluation or Process Evaluation**). This is the evaluation undertaken during the implementation phase of the project to ascertain whether inputs and outputs accord with the plan.
- At the end or at the completion of the project/program activities (**Terminal Evaluation**).
- After the completion of the project/program to ascertain whether the intended objectives have been achieved and the expected impacts of the intervention have resulted (**Impact Evaluation/ Ex-post evaluation**).

There is a system to evaluate projects/ programs while it is being implemented. It is known as "On-going Evaluation". This is almost synonymous with Monitoring.

However, there is an important difference at this level. Whilst monitoring continuously tracks the inputs and reports the progress, or lack of progress, and the causes for such deficiencies so that remedial measures can be brought in to correct the situation, Mid Term Evaluation helps in taking management decisions to change the policies, project/program design, outputs and even the budget if necessary as all stakeholders are taking part in the evaluation.

An important link between the M&E is that the Monitoring could provide inputs to the Evaluation, a one-point-in-time stocktaking.

Then the questions commonly asked are the following:

1. What are the Types/Levels of Monitoring?
2. Who is interested in monitoring?
3. Who undertakes monitoring?
4. When is it done? Is there a time period?
5. How it is done? With what tools? Or instruments?
6. What are the benefits of monitoring?

The answers to these questions will bring a clear understanding of Monitoring of projects/ programs.

### **1. What are the Types/Levels of Monitoring**

There are two types/levels of monitoring:

- Activity monitoring
- Results-based monitoring or Effect and Impact monitoring

Activity monitoring refers to checking whether planned activities are carried out according to the number, quality, time, etc. This covers the physical implementation of the project activities.

The Results Based Monitoring (RBM) refers to whether the expected effects and impacts have been created. For instance, to 'conduct a training course on Disaster Risk

Assessment' is an activity that can be monitored. Once the training course is conducted with the planned number of participants, delivering the developed training modules, having hired external resource personnel, etc, monitoring the activity is completed and the Project Manager can easily report the progress on the completed activity.

However, in the case of RBM, completing the activity is not enough. RBM requires the Project Management to report whether the trainees acquired the skills of assessing disaster risks and are in a position to apply the skills when the necessity arises.

One may say that the generation of the Effects or Impacts fall outside the Project period and therefore monitoring the results would be a waste of time and resources. Especially, the Project Managers may not be happy to spend extra time and energy as it is outside the purview of their domain. However, the project implementing agency should take the additional effort in building the monitoring of results also at the stage of developing the Performance Management Plan (PMP). It is always beneficial to involve Project Managers and also beneficiaries in developing the PMP to ensure their understanding and ownership to the PMP. It should therefore not be seen as a tool imposed on them forcibly from the top or from outside, but an important instrument that will make their life easy for which they too committed intentionally.

## **2. Who is interested in monitoring?**

There are number of key partners who are interested in Monitoring. Firstly, the Managers of an intervention/project/program are interested in monitoring as they are responsible to achieve their final goal. They should know whether the planned inputs are ready and supplied on time, in the correct quantity and the quality. If the inputs are not supplied on time, the managers must know what was causing that delay or the lapses as that will affect the final outputs that s/he is responsible for producing. If changes are necessary to the manner the inputs are being supplied, s/he needs to take immediate action before the project activities go out of track. The Managers are answerable to their superiors at the higher level as well as to the project beneficiaries.

Secondly, the donors are also keen to know what is happening with the support that they have extended. It is also important from the beneficiaries' point of view as they would like to know whether benefits assured for them are reaching on time to solve their undesired status.

## **3. Who undertakes monitoring?**

The Project Director/Manager is the key person responsible to carry out this function. S/He should lead the monitoring process. However it does not mean others have no role in the monitoring of projects/programs. There are other stakeholders who should participate in the monitoring function at different levels of the monitoring process. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Levels, Interested Parties, Functions and Tools of Monitoring

Level	Who	Function	Tool/s
At the Project	Project Director /Coordinator	Watch  Take remedial action in case of delays, impediments, constraints, etc  Report progress	Performance Monitoring Plan (PMP)  Monthly/Quarterly Progress Reports
Project/Program Implementing Agency	Program Director/ Manager	Review Progress reports  Field Visits to program sites  Consultations/ discussions with project personnel, beneficiaries	Project/Program work Plan/Implementation Schedule Field visit observations /reports  Monthly/Quarterly Progress Reports
Funding source	Donors	Review Progress Reports	Progress Reports Regular Progress Review meetings
Project/Program	Beneficiaries	Participate	Plan monitoring  Actively providing data, information

#### 4. When it is done? Is there a time period?

The Monitoring is a function that should be done throughout the project/program implementation. It keeps a continuous vigilance on inputs, which determines the final outputs and therefore the outcome that the project/program is designed to achieve.

Therefore, Monitoring should commence from 'Day One' of the commencement of the implementation.

#### 5. How it is done? With what tools or instruments?

There is a range of formal and informal monitoring instruments that can be used for monitoring. The following are the standard instruments that are being used in monitoring the performance of the projects/programs:

- Performance Monitoring Plan - PMP is an effective tool as it provides the basis for monitoring. The activities, sub-activities, who is responsible for performing them, how to measure (indicators), etc are decided at the commencement of the project/program by preparing the PMP. It is therefore very essential that

- Project/program managers prepare the PMP before commencing implementation. That is the period between Approval and Implementation of the Project known as Operationalization Phase of the Project. PMP could be the basis for reporting of monitoring.
- Management Information System (MIS) - This is the system that brings information on project implementation in order to take management decisions and actions. PMP could be the basis for MIS. The MIS should give clearly reporting directives such as what information to be given to who at what time intervals. In addition it should build the two way communication system enabling project partners to translate the management decisions into action and reporting back.
  - Steering mechanisms - There could be project/program level steering, advisory, coordinating, etc committees established for the purpose of steering the project/program through its trajectory. Using PMP, these committees could review the performance of the intervention and make decisions to take corrective measures, if necessary, on time.
  - Participatory mechanisms - Different partners of the project/program i.e. beneficiaries, other project partners, peer groups, etc may be involved in monitoring the performance. Most commonly used tools are: Participatory Project Monitoring (PPM).
  - Field visits - This is a tool that could be used by higher level officials of the implementing agency and/or the donor. It may be useful to arrange Joint Field Visits for ensuring the cost-effectiveness of such visits.
  - Regular reporting, on both Financial and Physical performance, must be an essential instrument in monitoring performance of projects/programs. Particularly "Accountability" could be ensured with regular reporting of this nature.

#### **6. What are the benefits of Monitoring?**

Proper monitoring guarantees that everything goes as nearly as possible according to the plan and resources are not wasted. In addition, the following are the advantages of having a proper monitoring system in place of a project/program:

- It gives early warning of impending threats, crises or conflicts so that remedial action can be taken
- It enhances the efficiency of managing the inputs

### **5.3. Evaluation**

Evaluation is not strictly a part of project implementation. In fact, evaluation is not compulsory.

However, evaluation serves an important purpose in the Project/Program Management Cycle. It helps the funding agency to ascertain to what extent her/his investment was able to yield the expected results. The Project/Program proponent too wishes to know what was planned in fact was achieved or not achieved and also the degree of the achievement and/ or failure. In addition, the Project Proponent wishes to learn what the underlying courses for the success / failure are, which should be shared with other partners in the development business.

Logical Framework Analysis (LFA) defines evaluation as:

“A systematic and independent examination of a project in order to determine its efficiency, effectiveness, impact, sustainability and the relevance of its objectives.”

The main concerns of evaluation as per this definition are the following;

1. Efficiency
2. Effectiveness
3. Impact
4. Relevance
5. Sustainability

**Efficiency** refers to the ‘economical use of resources in the generation of outputs’. It is assessed by considering and comparing the inputs and outputs.

**Effectiveness** refers to ‘a measure of the extent to which the project/program is successful in achieving its objectives’. This is assessed by considering outputs, purpose and goal of the project/program.

**Impact** refers to the positive and negative changes produced directly or indirectly as a result of the Project/program. This is assessed by considering the purpose and the goal.

**Relevance** is the degree to which the rationale and objectives of the project/program are significant and worthwhile or remain pertinent in relation to the identified priority needs and concerns. The assessment here is similar to assessing the Effectiveness as it considers outputs, purpose and goal of the project/program.

**Sustainability** is the continuation of the achieved level after the completion of the project/program by the proponent and the beneficiaries. This is assessed by looking at inputs, outputs, purpose and goal of the project/program.

The types of evaluations are given in Section C above. Irrespective of the type of evaluation undertaken in projects/programs, a number of advantages entail in that exercise. These are the following:

1. Evaluations lead to better development practice and theory - Evaluations contribute to understand the development theory in practice. Particularly the lessons learnt and documented in the evaluations will be of immense importance for others when shared among similar development partners.
2. Evaluations lead to further development – the evaluation reveals the possibility of replicating or upscaling the intervention, developing new interventions to build upon the experience gained so as to generate multiple effects.
3. Evaluation may enhance understanding and confidence between the donor and the proponent, which may further strengthen the development cooperation between the two partners.

## CONCLUSION

M&E are two key elements in the Project Management Cycle that is highly critical for the success of the project/program. The success or failure of the project/program depends on the implementation. Poor implementation will end up in failure. M&E are directly related to project implementation and therefore it is an integral component of project implementation.

Nobody wants to plan for failure. In fact, fail to plan is plan to fail. It is therefore vital for development practitioners to plan every element in the Project Management Cycle carefully and systematically and direct the process as planned to achieve expected results.

## **5.4. Observation on Monitoring of PROMISE Activities**

### **1.4.1. Problems**

1. A common problem reported by all partners is that they have experienced difficulty in mobilizing community support and organizing urban communities for participation in disaster risk management activities. Therefore, this indicated that training is needed to improve the networking capacity of the partner staff, especially those who work at the community level.
2. Most partners have had suffered setbacks due to staff turn over. That was one of the problems faced by the regional team at ADPC too.
3. Project partners are not used to report the project progress using the formats suggested by ADPC. Also some of them need additional knowledge and skills to undertake assessments, especially using participatory tools. This is an area that requires more attention and capacity building of partner staff.

### **1.4.2. Opportunities**

1. UNHABITAT and the UDRM team have organized the course on Urban Risk Management and Governance in Manila. It is expected that this collaboration will further mutual benefits and fulfill the objective on networking to a great extent.
2. Discussions were held with UNDP South-South cooperation and UNIFEM offices in Bangkok for obtaining resource inputs for organizing the regional course on Urban Risk Management and Governance. Although this was not eventually carried out, these discussions are important starting points for future networking and collaborations.
3. Discussions are being held with the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) to obtain their support for use of ICTs for development of early warning system for the PROMISE-Bangladesh project. This would have potential for replication in the other PROMISE country projects.

### **1.4.3. Lessons Learned**

1. It is too early to draw concrete lessons learned from project activities since the program is at a very early stage of implementation.
2. Nonetheless, one of the main lessons learned is the challenges faced by partners in selecting target communities for demonstration projects since the selected cities are large in size and the period allocated and money available is not sufficient to work in many vulnerable communities.
3. Since some cities are subjected to geological hazards also, one of the lessons learnt is the difficulty in addressing only one type of hazard in a multi-hazard situation.
4. There is great scope for experience and knowledge sharing between the different PROMISE country partners. The Regional Working Group meeting, Coordinators

meeting and Governance and Risk Management course held during September-October 2006 provided opportunity for that, but this may have to be followed up by cross-country visits.

5. The PROMISE activities in different countries represent remarkable achievements in the field of DRM and require to be documented extensively. UDRM team representatives carry out photographic documentation during field visits and this has great potential for a database. However, especially when mitigation activities begin to be implemented, there is a need for video documentation. The partners should also be motivated to undertake documentation for their own records and also to contribute to the regional office database.



## PROMISE Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)

### STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE AND RESULTS FRAMEWORK

**Objective 1:** Adoption of specific hydro-meteorological disaster preparedness and mitigation measures *to manage hydro-meteorological disaster risk* by stakeholders in targeted cities.

Expected Result 1.1: Increased resilience of selected communities to hydro-meteorological disasters

Expected Result 1.2: Improved capacities of public and private sector practitioners to apply skills and technologies for community preparedness and mitigation and to manage hydro-meteorological disaster risk

**Objective 2:** Increased stakeholder involvement and further enhancement of strategies, tools and methodologies related to community preparedness and mitigation of hydro-meteorological disasters in urban communities.

Expected Result 2.1: Increased adoption of tools and methodologies for community preparedness and mitigation of hydro-meteorological disaster by stakeholders in the selected cities

Expected Result 2.2: Improved practices (techniques, methodologies, tools) and strategies for hazard mitigation and community preparedness throughout the region.

**Objective 3:** Enhanced coordination with USAID Missions to promote sustainability and ensure program activities accord with USAID country and regional strategies.

Expected Result 3.1: Enhanced coordination and linkages between USAID country and regional offices and program partners at national and regional level to ensure program activities accord with USAID country and regional strategies.

Expected Result 3.2: Increased visibility of USAID humanitarian assistance to at-risk communities in 05 target countries

**Objective 4:** Strengthened networks and regional linkages among relevant risk management institutions/organization for improved capacity for application and dissemination of lessons learned.

Expected Result 4.1: Increased collaboration and partnership among stakeholders at city and national levels

Expected Result 4.2: Increased collaboration and partnership with regional and international institutions for wider dissemination and enhanced capacity for adoption of tools and methodologies for community preparedness and mitigation