ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
FACULTY OF BUSINESS
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

ASSESSMENT OF THE MONITORING AND EVALUATION PROCESSES AND CHALLENGES: THE CASE OF INTEGRATED FAMILY SERVICE ORGANIZATION, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FOR CHILDREN PROJECT

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List of Acronyms

FHI	Family Health International
IFSO	Integrated Family Service Organization
M & E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIS	Management Information System
NGO	Non Government Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

CHAPTER ONE
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

After several decades of experience in designing, financing and managing social and economic development projects, international agencies and governments of developing countries are finding that many such projects still fail to achieve their objectives. The portfolio performance of projects supported by the World Bank, for example, deteriorated steadily from 1981 to 1991, with the share of projects having" major problems" increasing from 11% to 20% in that period. Such figures probably do not even indicate the size of the problem, as they refer only to the stage of project implementation and say little about how well projects are able to sustain the delivery of services over time or produce their intended impacts (Valadez J &Michael. B, 1994:1)

As a result, project monitoring and evaluation has received considerable attention in recent years. This interest has also been fueled by the mounting pressure on governments and donor agencies to broaden the goals of their development strategies to address such issues as the quality of environment; the level of poverty; and the economic, social and political participation of women in developing countries (Ibid).

Monitoring is the routine process of data collection and measurement of progress toward program objectives. It involves counting what we are doing and routinely looking at the quality of our services. Whereas, evaluation is the use of social research methods to systematically investigate a program's effectiveness. It requires study design, a control or comparison group, and involves measurements over time as well as special studies.

Therefore, monitoring and evaluation is a key tool in the project cycle management. It is implemented to compare the projects or programs targets and actual performance of planned activities during the operation, inputs of resources, assumptions, etc. and assess the deviations encountered by making a comparison with the objectives set at the commencement of the project and program (Family Health International, FHI, 2004).

Considering the role that monitoring and evaluation plays, in achieving project goals and objectives, different organizations set and conduct monitoring and evaluation activities in their program or project interventions.

One of these organizations implementing project activities in the city administration of Addis Ababa is Integrated Family Service Organization (IFSO). It is a secular indigenous Non Governmental Organization (NGO) that focuses on mitigating the plight of children at different circumstances in Addis Ababa City Administration. It was established in January 1995 in the city of Addis Ababa. Its vision is striving to help families reduce poverty in Ethiopia and its mission is working for the survival, protection and development of children to bring them in a stable family environment within their socio-cultural context in Addis Ababa City Administration.

The organizational objectives of IFSO are:

- Build the capacity of very weak households with children to increase the family income

- Support children and family through sponsorship intervention

- Rehabilitate the physical, mental and social well being of sexually assaulted children and their families

- Promote the healthy life style of IFSO's beneficiaries

- Ensure the basic needs of children and young, protection and participation.

Whereas, the Values and Principles of the organization include:

- Commitment and dedication to participatory development

- Trust

- Transparency

- Team work

- Love to children

- Gender sensitive

In order to meet its mission, vision and objectives, IFSO has the following hierarchical organizational structure.

- The general assembly of the organization is the supreme organ of IFSO.

- The board comprising five members is elected by the general assembly that directs and regulates the organization.

- The general who is appointed by the board is responsible to manage the overall activities of the organization.

- The finance, the program and the administration officers discharge responsibilities in their respective fields of authorities.

- The project coordinators are responsible to directly executing the respective projects.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Project management is subject to many influences which can hardly be foreseen during preparation. The correctness of project plans can never be assumed and corrective measures are expected during the course of implementation. But different Organizations perceived monitoring and evaluation as a tool for punishment, have different values and believe towards this important management tool, less attention for appropriate time or interval, and unsafe measure of correction are some of the problems.

Accordingly, the monitoring and evaluation system set up and process of organizations and projects operating in the same socioeconomic, political and cultural contexts differ one from the other.

Therefore, this paper was intended to assess the monitoring and evaluation processes and challenges of projects of NGOs working in Addis Ababa in general and Sustainable development for children's project of Integrated Family Service Organization in particular.

1.3 Research Question

Hence, this descriptive case study will try to address the following basic research questions.

1) What are the tools to monitoring and evaluation processes for sustainable development for children project?
2) How are the monitoring and evaluation processes?
3) Who is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the project activities?
4) When do the monitoring and evaluation activities carried out?
5) What are the challenges during the monitoring and evaluation process?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

General Objective

The over all objective of the study is to asses the monitoring and evaluation processes and challenges of Sustainable Development for Children Project being implemented by IFSO.

Specific Objective

The specific objectives of the study include:

- To investigate the existing monitoring and evaluation practice and method
- To investigate when the monitoring and evaluation process carry out.
- To examine the perception of the management about monitoring and evaluation.
- To identify the challenges occurring during monitoring and evaluation process.
- To suggest monitoring and evaluation methods to be used in the future to overcome the challenges.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The significance of this study is that, to create a base line of information from which actions for addressing the problem ware possible.

Although there are different practices and innovations employed to achieve project objectives in other organization's projects, studying the monitoring and evaluation practice of IFSO will contribute to broaden the knowledge and understanding of planners and managers of other organizations and projects in the city to consider whether or not, the monitoring and evaluation practice of sustainable development for children project of IFSO is an appropriate approach to meet project target.

The findings of this study can, therefore,

- Be used for assessing the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation as a project management tool in general;
- Used as instrument for project cycle management in the project understudy, sustainable development for children project;
- Used as best monitoring and evaluation process for other similar project implementing organizations and projects;
- As an alternative process, researchers and consultants on the area can recommended for other organizations and projects.

1.6 Delimitation of the Study

The study is focused on the monitoring and evaluation practice of the organization, which is located in Addis Ababa city administration. In this regard the practice of Oasis - Sustainable Development for Children project of integrated family service organization (IFSO) which was commenced on 2007 and running to date. The informants of the study was staffs of the organization.

1.7 Definition of Terms

Monitoring*: is a continues process of gathering , analyzing and interpreting of information of the daily use inputs and their conversion into outputs in order to enable timely adjustment or correction on the development program or project when necessary.

Evaluation: is a systematical and periodical gathering, analyzing and interpreting information on the operation as well as the effects and impacts of a development program or project.

Project: is a project can be defined as a large or important item of work, involving considerable expense, personnel, and equipment. It is typically a one-time endeavor, with a specific result or end-state envisioned.

1.8. Research Design and Methodology

Methodology is the application of scientific procedures towards acquiring answers to a wide variety of research questions (Sisay, 2008 cited in Adams and Schvaneveldt, 1991, p.16). It provides tools for doing research, for obtaining useful information. Methodology incorporates the entire process of a study that is conceptualizing, observing the problem understudy, research questions to be investigated, data collection, data analysis and generalization of the results.

1.8.1. Research Design

The design of this study was descriptive in nature; where by quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from the sample population of the study.

1.8.2 Population, sample size and sampling techniques

Purposive sampling technique is used to select the project based on proximity and good reputation of the project in Addis Ababa city administration. Participants of the study was selected using censes survey and purposive sampling techniques. Key management staffs and coordinators purposively selected. As a whole, sixty two (62) staff members of IFSO excluding the management and coordinators were selected and questionnaire was administered accordingly.

1.8.3 Types of Data Collection

This study was used data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources of data are employees of the organization/project.

Whereas, the secondary sources of data for the study was include: relevant reports, archival and project documents, progress report, review meeting, minutes, etc.

1.8.4. Methods of Data Collection

For the purpose of producing a complete set of data for analysis and achieve the study objectives, the student researcher was employed two different data collection techniques.

First, a comprehensive survey questionnaire, which is encompasses closed and a few open ended question, was developed to get basic information about the monitoring and evaluation practice of the project.

Secondly, key informant interview was conducted with management staffs.

1.8.5. Data Analysis Method

The data collected from primary and secondary sources was first edited centrally. Then the edited data was coded (responses were categorized under limited number of classes). Finally the coded data was classified numerically based on common characteristics. And descriptive analysis was made by using the following tools:-

Tabulation: - The processed data arranged, orderly in a table.

Percentages: - The data is expressed relative to the relevant variables so as to compare among categories.

➢ Then tests for association were made. Based on these formulated analysis, all responding interpretation was made. Finally the findings were reported together with supporting data in appropriate format along with the generalization of the results.

1.9 Limitation of the Study

Due to time and resource constraints, the paper could not include more organizations working in the city of Addis Ababa and is limited to the case of the M&E practice of only one organization or project.

1.10 Organization of the Study

The paper was organized in to four chapters. The first chapter is discussing the introductory part. The second chapter is presenting the review of related literature. The third chapter is devoted for the presentation and analysis of data, and the final chapter is discussing about the summary, conclusion and recommendation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

2. Review of Related Literature

2.1. The Concept of Monitoring and Evaluation

The term monitoring and evaluation has been defined by different scholars in a variety of ways. For instance, Samrawit (2010:6) stated that monitoring is a continuous process of gathering, analyzing and interpreting of information of the daily use of inputs and their conversion into outputs in order to enable timely adjustment or correction on the development program/project when necessary. Hence it is a basic part of implementation management.

FHI (2004:2) also defined monitoring as a process of data collection and measurement of progress toward program objective. It further stated that monitoring involves counting what we are doing and routinely looks at the quality of our services.

Similarly, Stufflebeam et.al (1971) defined evaluation as it is the process of delineating, obtaining, and providing useful information for judging decision alternatives.

According to Patton (1986), the practice of evaluation involves the systematic collection of information about the activities, characteristics, and out comes of programs, personnel, and products for use by specific people to reduce uncertainties, improve effectiveness and make decision with regard to what those program, personnel or products are doing and affecting.

In view of the OECD (cited in Jody and Ray, 2004), monitoring and evaluation is defined, separately as:

> *Monitoring is a continuous function that uses the systematic collection of data on specified indicators to provide management and the main stakeholders of an ongoing development intervention with indications of the extent of progress and achievement of objectives and progress in the use of allocated funds (p. 27).*

Whereas,

> *Evaluation is the systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, program, or policy, including its design, implementation, and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfillment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors (p. 21).*

In a similar view, Dolley (1994) defines evaluation as the systematic process of collecting, analyzing and interpreting information that enables judgments to be made about the value of a program and its effectiveness and/or efficiency in achieving a set of out comes.

Therefore, evaluation is the use of social research methods to systematically investigate a program's

effectiveness, which requires study design, a control or comparison group, involves measurements over time, and special studies.

It is a systematical and periodical gathering, analyzing and interpreting information on the operation as well as the effects and impacts of a development programme/project. It is an assessment of; the functioning of the project activities, physical and financial performance and any impact resulted from it (FHI, 2004).

2.2 Purposes and benefits of Monitoring and Evaluation

Chimwendo (2004: pp 4-5) extensively discusses the purpose of monitoring and evaluation and proceeds to the key benefits of monitoring and evaluation distinguishing the benefits at sectoral and project level.

Monitoring and Evaluation systems provide managers and other stakeholders with regular information on progress relative to targets and this enables managers

- **Accountability**: demonstrating to donors, taxpayers, beneficiaries and implementing partners that expenditure, actions and results are as agreed or can reasonably be expected in the situation.
- **Operational management/Implementation**: provision of the information needed to co-ordinate the human, financial and physical resources committed to the project or programme, and to improve performance.
- **Strategic management**: provision of information to inform setting and adjustment of objectives and strategies.
- **Capacity building**: building the capacity, self-reliance and confidence of beneficiaries and implementing staff and partners to effectively initiate and implement development initiatives.
- **Organizational learning and adaptive management**.

In line with the purposes, Chimwendo (2004: pp 5), as I mentioned earlier, tried to state the benefits of monitoring and evaluation both at sectoral and project level as follows.

.
 Benefits at a sector level:
- Improve project and programme design through feedback provided from baseline, mid-term, terminal and ex-post evaluations
- Inform and influence sector and country assistance strategy through analysis of the outcomes and impact of interventions, and the strengths and weaknesses of their

implementation, enabling governments and organizations to develop a knowledge base of the types of interventions that are successful (i.e. What works, what does not and why.)

- Provide the evidence basis for building consensus between stakeholders

Benefits at the project level:
- Provide regular feedback on project performance and show any need for 'mid-course' corrections

- Identify problems early and propose solutions

- Monitor access to project services and outcomes by the target population;

- Evaluate achievement of project objectives

- Incorporate stakeholder views and promote participation, ownership and accountability

2.3. The Relationship and Differences between Monitoring and Evaluation

Concerning the relationship between monitoring and evaluation it is customary to refer to the two together (as in the term <M/E>) ,many aid agencies and project implementing agencies treat as distinct activities conducted by separate agencies and having separate objectives .

Casley and Kumer (1987; 8) support this separation. In contrast ,most of the U.S. evaluation literature assumes monitoring and evaluation to be closely related, and frequently the term<program evaluation > is taken to mean both monitoring and evaluation ,as in the work of Hatry ,Winnie , and Fisk (1981;4); < Program evaluation is the systematic examination of a specific government program to provide information on the full range of the program's short- and long –term effects .In many cases;

- ➢ both M&E use the same data collection and analysis system
- ➢ The indicators for monitoring may be included in the range of information required for evaluation.

However, according to Girma (n. d) there is complementary feature and difference between monitoring and evaluation

MONITORING	EVALUATION
✓ Implementation oriented	▪ Policy oriented
✓ Tracks results	▪ Explain results
✓ Assess intermediate results	▪ Assess attributes
✓ Focus on timeliness	▪ Focus in rigor

✓ Emphasis on multi-level results	▪ Emphasis on final results
✓ Informs Budgeting	▪ Informs broad resources allocation
✓ Strengthens accountability for managing results	▪ Strengthens accountability for results themselves
✓ Essential for program implementation and Improvements	▪ Essential for strategy development
✓ Can use disaggregated data	▪ May need aggregated data

Having discussed about the relationship, it is necessary to outline also the key components of functional monitoring and evaluation. On these Chimwendo (2004) listed out the following functional components of M and E.

- Clear linkage with the National Development Strategies
- Clear statements of measurable objectives for the project and its components.
- A structured set of indicators covering: inputs, process, outputs, outcomes, impact, and exogenous factors.
- Data collection mechanisms capable of monitoring progress over time, including baselines and a means to compare progress and achievements against targets.
- Availability of baselines and realistic results framework
- Clear mechanisms for reporting and use of M&E results in decision-making.
- Sustainable organizational arrangements for data collection, management, analysis, and reporting.

2.4 Key steps in designing an effective M & E system

Setting up an M&E system often involves the following key which has to be considered during the planning stage and then fulfilled during start-up and implementation phases. These steps, as put forwarded and discussed thoroughly by *Chimwendo (2005: pp 6-11),*are presented here under*:*

(1) Assess the existing readiness and capacity for monitoring and evaluation
(2) Establish the purpose and scope
(3) Identify and agree with main stakeholders the outcomes and development objective(s)
(4) Select key indicators
(5) Developing and Evaluation Frame work
(6) Setting baselines and planning for results
(7) Setting targets and developing a results framework

(8) Plan monitoring, data analysis, communication, and reporting: Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

(9) Plan the form and timing of critical reflection and interim evaluations

(10) Facilitating the necessary conditions and capacities to sustain the System

Further discussing specifically on how to select key indicators, Chimwendo defines indicators as qualitative or quantitative variables that measure project performance and achievements and asserts that they should be developed for all levels of project logic considering the their relevance, clarity and should be also specific, measurable, consistent, and expect changes sensitively.

Leveling the indicators, Cimwendo levels the indicators into six:

Input indicators are quantified and time-bound statements of the resources financed by the project, and are usually monitored by routine accounting and management records. They are mainly used by managers closest to implementation, and are consulted frequently (daily or weekly).

Process indicators monitor the activities completed during implementation, and are often specified as milestones or completion of sub-contracted tasks, as set out in time-scaled work schedules. One of the best process indicators is often to closely monitor the project's procurement processes

Output indicators monitor the production of goods and delivery of services by the project. They are often evaluated and reported with the use of performance measures based on cost or operational ratios

The indicators for inputs, activities and outputs, and the systems used for data collection, recording and reporting are sometimes collectively referred to as the project physical and financial monitoring system, or management information system (MIS).

Outcome indicators are specific to a project's purpose and the logical chain of cause and effect that underlies its design. Often achievement of outcomes will depend at least in part on the actions of beneficiaries in responding to project outputs, and indicators will depend on data collected from beneficiaries.

Impact indicators usually refer to medium or long-term developmental change to which the project is expected to contribute. Dealing with the effects of project outcomes on beneficiaries, measures of change often involve statistics concerning economic or social welfare, collected

either from existing regional or sectoral statistics or through relatively demanding surveys of beneficiaries

Exogenous indicators are those that cover factors outside the control of the project but which might affect its outcome, including risks (parameters identified during project design that might compromise project benefits) and the performance of the sector in which the project operates.

2.5. The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation in Project Management

The 5 managerial functions are: *Directing (Leading) :* Providing vision, strategic direction and inspiration

Planning: Setting and adjusting goals and objectives and then deciding when to achieve them and what needs to be done, how and by whom, including resource allocation, etc.

Organizing: Setting up the internal structures and processes for the project to operate.

Staffing: Employing, supervising, training and monitoring those involved in the project.

Controlling (Checking): Ensuring that planned actions have been carried out and resources have been allocated and used appropriately.

Therefore, M&E is a management tool to acquire information required for the above management functions.

- ✓ Whatever concentration is made on financial, economic, and technical feasibility studies, projects inadequately managed during implementation continue to fail or be expensively delayed.
- ✓ Project Management is subject to many influences which can hardly be foreseen during preparation.

Whatever concentration is made on financial, economic, and technical feasibility studies, projects inadequately managed during implementation continue to fail or be expensively delayed.

- ✓ Project Management is subject to many influences which can hardly be foreseen during preparation.

The correctness of blueprint project plans can never be assumed and corrective measures are expected during the course of implementation .Particularly project objective, planning hypothesis, implementation method etc must be continuously questioned on the basis of project implementation experience and changes observed (internal and external changes like in policy, environment, population, etc.)

- ✓ Project management needs continuous flow of information on these changes in order to be able to mange properly the implementation.
- ✓ The best management instrument for obtaining adequate flow of information is establishment of M&E system.

- ✓ Hence, adequate attention should be paid to design and use practicable M&E system to ensure effective project implementation.

2.6 Types of Monitoring and Evaluation

Before we proceed to actual M&E activity we need to design and set-up a system. Precise design for M&E information system may differ from organization to organization or from sector to sector and from project to project depending on each project's objectives, nature and environment. The system designed must provide the information required at different levels (national level, line ministries, regional and local level agencies, project financers, project management bodies and the like) or it must ensure effective vertical and horizontal information flows between the different levels of organizations.

According to Jody and Ray (2004), there are two possible approaches
1. Conventional or "blueprint" and
2. The process approach.

Conventional or "Blueprint" approach
◆ Here the project planning and appraisal team specify;
 - the M&E system's objectives,
 - the required data,
 - the studies to be undertaken,
 - the organizational placement of the unit,
 - the personnel and budgetary needs, and
 - the formats used and the reporting
  mechanisms.

The "process" approach

- Permits project managers, partners and M&E staff to develop formats to collect and analyze data on the subjects and problems they view as important for project implementation.

- In many instances a monitoring information system can incorporate both approaches. A broad design for the M&E system can be blueprinted at the design and appraisal stage of a project, and through out the implementation process the staff can exercise considerable flexibility in responding to new challenges and opportunities emerged.

Monitoring and evaluation at the project level, the emphasis is on monitoring project implementation (to ensure that resources are used efficiently) ,assessing the quality and timeliness of the production of out-puts, identifying and correcting problems , and ensuring the benefits and services are accessible to the intended target group.

A strong monitoring and evaluation is one of the possible steps that need to be taken to rise implementation of any project. M &E is part of the process of project management &mainly focus on stipulation on requirements, collecting and processing information, comparing target and actual performance of planned activities, inputs of resources, assumption and assessing deviation of the project. Monitoring is the responsibility of the project coordinator and may be carried out informally (through weekly meetings) or formally (through written reports). Regular monitoring enables the project coordinator to identify actual or potential problems as early as possible in order to facilitate timely adjustments in project implementation.

UNDP (2002) has mentioned what good monitoring would consist. These are:
- *(a)* Focus on results and follow -ups: It looks for "what is going well" and "what is not progressing" in terms of progress toward the intended results;
- *(b)* Regular communication by the project coordinator or manager: The project coordinator or manager should be dedicated to assessing progress, looking at the big picture and analyzing problem areas. They should ensure continuous documentation of the achievements and challenges as they occur and avoid having to try to remember the events some time later;
- *(c)* Regular analysis of reports : The project coordinator or manager should review project –related reports, including financial reports, by the implementing partners to serve as a basis for their analysis;

(d) Use of participatory monitoring mechanisms to ensure commitment, ownership, follow - up, and feedback on performance: These include outcome groups, stakeholder meetings, steering committees, and focus group interviews;

(e) Ways to objectively assess progress and performance based on clear criteria and indicators stated in the logical framework matrix of the project document: The project team should agree on a performance measurement system by developing indicators and baselines;

(f) Active generation of lessons learned, ensuring learning through monitoring tools, adapting strategies accordingly and avoiding repeating mistakes from the past

The current status of monitoring and evaluation in developing Countries the available evidence suggests that a significant proportion of this project fail to fully achieve their objectives. Of the 192 completed by the World Bank in 1985, approximately 20 percent had unsatisfactory or uncertain outcomes (World Bank 1987; 5). Success rate have been even lower for complex projects in low-income in need of major social and economic reform, notably in Africa. The success rate for such Countries is often less than 50 percent (World Bank 1987; 28)

The figures do not fully reflect Project performance, however, because they usually refer to the project implementation stage (in which infrastructure is constructed, equipment installed, and service delivery systems established). Little is known about how well projects able to sustain the delivery of ser vice over time, and even less about the extent to which projects are able to produce their intended impact

Many governments are finding the constraints on their resources are increasing, they are in addition being pressed to use those resources effectively. The need for improved monitoring and evaluation systems comes at the time when the industrial nations have made numerous advances in the theory and practice of programme evaluation.

In the opinion of many leading evaluation practitioners, satisfactory solution have been found to most the basic problem of evaluation design and analysis, It is possible to produce methodologically sound and operationally useful evaluations for a broad range of development programme. Rossi and Wright (1984; 332), in a review 0f the status of evaluation research.

Differently, UNEP (UNEP, 2007, pp 55-56) uses four major types of evaluation**;** desk evaluations, in-depth evaluations, impact evaluations, and self -evaluations.

(a) Desk evaluations

Desk-evaluations focus on the process – the planning and implementation of activities and outputs – and less on results. Desk evaluations are limited to the review of existing data and information; no field visits take place.

(b) In-depth evaluations

In-depth evaluations are comprehensive and examine a programme or a project in its entirety by using multiple data sources and methods, such as desk evaluations, field visits and interviews. Usually, these evaluations address the process – the planning and implementation of activities and outputs – as well as the overall effectiveness, efficiency and impact.

(c) Impact evaluations

Impact evaluations are concerned with the entire range of effects of the programme or project activity, including unforeseen and longer term impacts as well as impacts on affected people outside the immediate target groups. They are particularly useful in assessing the overall performance of the project in achieving long-term improvements in the quality of the environment and sustainability of the impacts against the stated objectives.

(d) Self-evaluations

Self -evaluations are assessments of programme or project activities carried out by individuals who manage implementation of the activities.

2.7 Methods and tools for monitoring and evaluation

2.7.1 Methods for monitoring and evaluation

Different organizations use different methods of monitoring and evaluation. According to the user guide of USAID (2004), there are two broad categories. These are quantitative and qualitative methods. The manual differentiates further into methods and tools.

Quantitative monitoring (measuring how much, how many, *quantity*) tends to document *numbers* associated with the program. It focuses on which and how often program elements are being carried out and tend to involve record keeping and numerical counts.

Quantitative methods are those that generally rely on structured or standardized approaches to collect and analyze numerical data. Almost any evaluation or research question can be investigated using quantitative methods because most phenomena can be measured numerically. Some common quantitative methods include, for example, the population census, population-based surveys, and standard components of health facility surveys, including a facility census, provider interviews, provider-client observations, and client exit interviews. Whereas, qualitative

methods are those that generally rely on a variety of semi-structured or open-ended methods to produce in-depth, descriptive information. Some common qualitative methods include focus group discussions and in-depth interviews (USAID, user guide pp 8-9)

2.7.2 Tools for Monitoring and Evaluation

Whereas a method refers to the scientific design or approach to a monitoring, evaluation, or research activity, a data collection tool refers to the instrument used to record the information that will be gathered through a particular method (Jody and Ray). Continuing their discussion, tools are central to quantitative data collection because quantitative methods rely on structured, standardized instruments like questionnaires. Tools (such as open-ended questionnaires or checklists) are often also used in qualitative data collection as a way to guide a relatively standardized implementation of a qualitative method. Tools may be used or administered by program staff or may be self-administered (meaning that the program participant or client fills in the answers on the tool). If tools are to be self administered, there should be procedures in place to collect the data from clients who are illiterate. Space, privacy, and confidentiality should be observed.

Examples of *qualitative* M&E tools include:
• Focus group discussion guide
• Direct observation checklist

Some common *quantitative* M&E tools include:
• Sign-in (registration) logs
• Registration (enrollment, intake) forms; checklists
• Program activity forms
• Logs and tally sheets
• Patient charts
• Structured questionnaires

Projects which are being financed by NEPAD also follow, more or less, the same monitoring and evaluation. As potential approach, NEPAD uses commonly:

- The Most Significant Change Technique
- Earned Value Analysis
- The Systematic Screening and Assessment Method
- Expert Panel Reviews
- PESTO Analysis
- Formal Surveys

- Semi Structured Interviews
- Key Informant Interviews
- Focus group interviews
- Community meetings

Similarity the World Bank (2004), utilize rapid appraisal, participatory, public expenditure tracking survey, and cost – benefit and cost effectiveness analysis as methods of monitoring and evaluation.

2.8 Participatory monitoring and evaluation

Recently, many development projects or activities are getting involved stakeholders especially end user of the project in project monitoring and evaluation. This is in part to strength the participation of the stakeholders and this also in part to build the sense of ownership of the projects. This time the very definition of participatory monitoring and evaluation comes in the mind of the reader. There is no single definition or approach to participatory M&E leaving the field open for interpretation and

experimentation. Here under different definitions and points which differential participatory monitoring and evaluation to conventional monitoring and evaluation are stated by UNFPA (2004; pp 1-2, citied in Estrella 1997)

- *is a process of individual and collective learning and capacity development through which people become more aware and conscious of their strengths and weaknesses, their wider social realities, and their visions and perspectives of development outcomes. This learning process creates conditions conducive to change and action*
- *emphasises varying degrees of participation (from low to high) of different types of stakeholders in initiating, defining the parameters for, and conducting M&E*
- *is a social process of negotiation between people's different needs, expectations and worldviews. It is a highly political process which addresses issues of equity, power and social transformation*
- *is a flexible process, continuously evolving and adapting to the programme specific circumstances and needs.*

In elaborating the stakeholders who possibly participate in project monitoring and evaluation, Davies, (1998) lists the following stakeholders as the most common one;

- **The community** whose situation the programme seeks to change
- **Project Field Staff** who implement activities
- **Programme Managers** who oversee programme implementation
- **Funders and other Decision-Makers** who decide the course of action related to the programme
- **Supporters, critics and other stakeholders** who influence the programme environment.

When we come to the rationale why these stakeholders are needed to include in the monitoring and evaluation process, *Aubel(1999)mention briefly stakeholders:*

- Ensures that the M&E findings are relevant to local conditions;
- Gives stakeholders a sense of ownership over M&E results thus promoting their use to improve decision-making;
- Increases local level capacity in M&E which in turn contributes to self-reliance in overall
- programme implementation;
- Increases the understanding of stakeholders of their own programme strategy and processes; what works, does not work and why;
- Contributes to improved communication and collaboration between programme actors who are working at different levels of programme implementation;
- Strengthens accountability to donors;
- Promotes a more efficient allocation of resources, etc.

Which stakeholders should participate in evaluation and what role should they play might be decided based on the situation and activity and the roles also might vary.

2.9 Challenges of monitoring and evaluation

Factors contributing to failure of M&E Systems

For the question what are the contributing factors for the failure of monitoring and evaluation, Chimwendo (2004) mention the following factors which, most probably, affect the monitoring and evaluation process of a project:

- Poor system design in terms of collecting more data than is needed or can be processed
- Inadequate staffing of M&E both in terms of quantity and quality
- Missing or delayed baseline studies. Strictly these should be done before the start of project implementation, if they are to facilitate with and without project comparisons and evaluation.
- Delays in processing data, often as a result of inadequate processing facilities and staff shortages.
- Personal computers can process data easily and quickly but to make the most of these capabilities requires the correct software and capable staff.
- In adequate utilization of results

There are a variety of political and technical challenges involved in building results-based systems.

Political and Technical Challenges

The political are often the most difficult to overcome. M&E systems may pose special challenges for countries that have been previously ruled by centralized, authoritarian political regimes. Instituting M&E systems that will highlight outcomes—both successes and failures—and provide greater transparency and accountability may be especially challenging and even alien to such countries. It may require a longer time for the political class, citizenry, and culture to adapt and change. Finally, one cannot build strong economies on weak governments.

Results-based M&E systems can help strengthen governments by reinforcing the emphasis on demonstrable outcomes. Getting a better handle on the workings and outcomes of economic and governmental programs and policies can contribute to poverty reduction, higher economic growth, and the achievement of a wide range of development goals.

The Technical Side of M&E—Building Institutional Capacity

Designing and building a reporting system that can produce trustworthy, timely, and relevant information on the performance of government projects, programs, and policies requires experience, skill, and real institutional capacity.

Many organizations would prefer to operate in the shadows. They do not want to publish data about their performance and outcomes.

Instituting a result based M&E system shed slight on issues of organizational performance. Not all stakeholders will be pleased to have such public exposure.

This is just one of the ways in which M&E systems pose a political more than a technical challenge. Introduction: Building a Results-Based Monitoring and Evaluation System 21 By comparison with the politics of instituting results-based M&E systems, technical issues are relatively Instituting a results based M&E system shed slight on issues of organizational performance. Not all stakeholders will be pleased to have such public exposure. This is just one of the ways in which M&E systems pose a political more than a technical challenge.

CHAPTER THREE

3. Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

This section is concerned about presenting, analysing and interpreting data that are collected through questionnaires. Questionnaires were distributed to the whole staff of Integrated Family Service organization and 47 (75%), out of the total respondents, were participated in filling the questionnaire.

3.1. Characteristics of the respondents

Based on the information given above, the table below indicates that majority of the respondents are female; that is 28(60%) and 19(40%) of the respondents are male. This means the participants of women's involvement in the monitoring and evaluation process is high compared to their counter male staff members.

Table 1:   Characteristics of respondents

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency (N = 47)	**100 %**
Q1	**Sex**	Male	19	40
		Female	28	60
Q2	**Age**	20-25	6	13
		26-30	11	23
		31-40	12	12
		Above 41	11	24
Q3	**Level of Education**	12/10 complete	2	4
		12+i/10+1	2	4
		12+2/10+2	1	2
		Diploma	10	21
		BSC/BA Degree	29	62
		MSC/MA	3	7
		PHD	-	-
		Others	-	-
Q4	**Duration in the organization/project**	One year	11	23
		Two years	8	17
		More than two years	28	60

When we look at the academic status of the respondents, 29(62%) of the respondents have first degree, 10 (21%) diploma holders and 3(7%) of the respondents have pursued their masters degree. The rest 5(10%) of the participants have awarded with certificate of 12/10 complete or 12+2/10+2.

For the question posed for how long each participants stay in the organization, 28(60%) of the respondents were replied that they have served the organization more than two years, 11(23%) of the respondents have served for one year and the remaining 8(17%) of them have two years experience in the organization.

From the table one could understand that the participation of women in monitoring and evaluation is very high. Depending on the data, we can conclude that many of the respondents are competent academically to provide answers to the questions raised and few staff members have ample experience in monitoring and evaluation of the organization.

3.2. Monitoring and Evaluation system in the project

As entry to the second part of the questionnaire, an enquiry was shot to the respondent for their confirmation whether the organization has established a monitoring and evaluation system in the projects and if not why.

Table 2: Monitoring and Evaluation system in the project

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q5	**Is there established monitoring and evaluation system in the projects?**	Yes	47	100
		No	-	-

According to the answers provided by the respondents, the total 47(100%) participants were confirmed a positive reply and the system of monitoring and evaluation process is within their knowledge.

3.3. Types of evaluation

In connection with the above answer, the participants were asked to identify what kind of evaluation technique that the projects are using to assess the projects' outputs.

Table 3: Types of evaluation

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q6	**If your answer for the above question is yes, what kind of evaluation carried out in the project?**	Mid term evaluation	15	32
		Terminal		
		Both	32	68
Specify other, if any:				

As the above table indicates, 32(68%) of the respondents were reported that the project possibly use both mid term and terminal evaluation, the remaining 15(32%) respondents were said projects use mid term evaluation only. None of the respondents were assumed the projects use terminal evaluation.

This implies that the project, most of the time, use both types of evaluation alternatively.

3.4. Methods and tools used in monitoring process

As the questionnaire moved to the methods and tools that projects use during monitoring process, the respondents were supplied various answers.

Table 4: Methods and tools used in monitoring process

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q7	**What methods and tools do you use for the Monitoring?**	Meeting	7	15
		Group discussion	4	9
		Reporting	8	17
		Practical site visit	1	-
		All	27	57
Specify other, if any:				

As table 3.4 pointed out, 27(57%) of respondents, as a whole, were agreed that projects uses meeting, group discussion, reporting and practical site visit. Out of the given responses, 8(17%) of the staff members were noted that the project use reporting as monitoring tools and methods to follow up the projects on going activities, whereas, 7(15%) of the staff members were replied meeting as the second common method and tool of monitoring. Group discussion and practical were the least reported; 4 (9%) and 1(2%) respectively.

This entails that all the stated methods and tools are used optionally as the project's activity demands.

3.5 Planning of the monitoring and evaluation process

Pondering on who might plan the monitoring and evaluation process, the research participants were asked who is responsible to plan the process. As the table below depicted, almost half, 21 (44.7), of the respondents were replied the management plan the process, secondly the project coordinators, (27.7%) and donor, 10 (21.2%) and the project staff initiate the monitoring and evaluation process.

Table 5: Methods and tools used in monitoring process

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	%
Q8	**Who plan/initiate the monitoring and evaluation?**	The management staffs	21	44.7
		the project coordinator	13	27.7
		Project staff	3	6.4
		Community representatives	-	-
		Donors	10	21.2
Specify others, if any:				

The involvement of the community representatives in the planning of the monitoring and evaluation process is null.

From the analysis, it is clear that the management take the most part in planning or initiating the monitoring and evaluation process although others also have the possibility to involve in the planning process and yet, the participation level of community representatives is very less, if any, none.

3.6. The time period for monitoring the projects

Timely, projects are monitored during their projects life time. To enlighten when do the organization carried out the monitoring and its frequency of the activity, the staff members were asked to provide their answers.

Table 6: Table showing the frequency of monitoring activity

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	%
Q9	How frequent do the organization monitor the projects' activities?	Every quarter	28	59.57
		Biannually	2	4.26
		Once a year	-	-
		as required	6	12.77
		Every quarter +as required	9	19.5
		No response	2	4.26

As table 6 indicates 28(59.57%) of the staff members were responded the projects monitor their activities every quarter, whereas 9(19.15%) of the respondents were answered, projects keep an eye on their activities every quarter and 6(12.77%) of the population were replied the projects perform monitoring only as required, 2(4.26%) of the population were said projects check their progress on ongoing activities biannually and the remaining 2(4.26%) of the respondents have no response for the question.

In light of the responses given, one can wrap up that the project is monitored every three months and also as required.

3.7 The tendency to participate stakeholders
Following the methods and tools and time period of monitoring and evaluation, the staff members were asked whether the monitoring and evaluation process is participatory in the sense that if other stakeholders, other than the concerned individuals in the office, are involved in the process or not.

Table 7: Participation in monitoring and evaluation process

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q10	**Is the monitoring and evaluation process participatory?**	Yes	43	91
		No	4	9

Based on the answer given by the participants, 43(91%) of the staff members were given their response that the monitoring and evaluation process is participatory, and the rest 4 (9%) of the staff members were said the monitoring and evaluation is carried out by the program officer in charge in the office without involving other stakeholders.

From the data, anyone may come to the conclusion that the monitoring and evaluation process is participatory in a way that it involves stakeholders including beneficiaries of the project.

3.8. The involvement of stakeholders

On the top of the above question raised, again, the staff members were opted to answer which stakeholders involve in the monitoring and evaluation process.

Table 8: Involvement in monitoring and evaluation process

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q11	**Who is involved in the monitoring and evaluation process?**	Children and youths	4	8.5
		External stakeholders	-	-
		Representatives of the community	4	8.5
		Staff members		
		External evaluators	4	8.5
		Donors	4	8.5
		Community representatives + staff members	9	19
		All mentioned above	22	47
Specify others, if any: Participants differs according to the term of evaluation.				

As table 8 shows 22 (47%) of the population were reported that stakeholder who are involved in monitoring and evaluation process are children /youths, external stakeholders, representative of the community, staff members, external evaluators and donors. 9(19%) of staff members says community representatives and staff members are only involved in monitoring and evaluation process of the organization and the rest were confirmed that only community representative, external evaluators, children/youth and donors which represented 4(9%) each involve in the process.

In addition to the above responses, participants, 22(47%) of the respondents, were mentioned that all stakeholders are involved in the process.

The result of this data analysis is the bi implication and confirmation of the data which was presented on participation (table 7) because it was stated that the process of monitoring and evaluation is participatory. So that this data also confirms all stakeholders mentioned as well as children and youths participate in the monitoring and evaluation process

3.9. Children and youth participation

As key stakeholders, there was a need to check if children or youth participate in the overall operation of the project or they participate in children or youth related activities only or both.

Table 9: Children/youth participation in monitoring and evaluation process

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	%
Q12	**If youths or children participate in the monitoring and evaluation process, in which of the activities do they participate mostly?**	In children/youth related activities only	17	68
		In the overall operation of the project	5	20
		Both	3	12
		No response	22	21

More than half of the respondents, 17(68%), were agreed that children participate in the activities they are actively involved and monitor and evaluate such activities. Whereas 5(20%) of the respondents were reported children/youths participate in the monitoring and evaluation

process of the overall activities of the project and to lesser extent, 3(12%) of the respondents agreed children/youths participate in both activities.

This simply implies majority of the responses are in the position to give no answer and based on the responses provided it is possible to conclude that children and youths may participate specifically in their own activities they allowed in the project. For some reason, their participation in the monitoring of the overall activities of the project is very limited.

3.10. Spheres of children/youth participation

There are many ways or mechanisms by which a particular group participate once they are allowed to involve or participate in the monitoring and evaluation process

Table10: Ways how children/youths participate in monitoring and evaluation

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	%
Q13	How do children or youths participate?	In self monitoring meeting	8	32
		Involving in steering committee	4	16
		Self monitoring + steering committee meeting	2	8
		Self monitoring + filling questionnaires	2	8
		In filling a questionnaire which is provided by the project for monitoring or evaluation purpose	_	_
		All	9	36

As table 10 shows 9(36%) of the staff members from that of 25 gave their response that children/youths participate in monitoring and evaluation process by involving in self monitoring

meeting (children or youths monitor or evaluate activities that are initiated by themselves and it is the children or youths who monitor these activities), some other staff members, 4(16%), were replied that children and youth involve in the steering committee as a member and have a say on the activities which concern them. The other 2 (8%) of the staffs were replied children and youths are involved in steering committee and help in filling a questionnaire which is provided by the project for monitoring and evaluation purpose but the greatest number of staff members agreed that children and youths participates in all, possibly.

In this data, one can see that children/youths participate in self monitoring in which the project organizes. It is evident that also this is one of the strategies that the project is being following to involve children/youths in the monitoring and evaluation process.

3.11. The time period when children/youths participate in M & E

Provided that we are assuming the participation of children and youths and are participating in various ways, how habitually they participate was the next question, as the continuation of the above question, posed to the staff members.

Table 11: The time period when children/youths participate in M & E

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q14	**How often do children/youths monitor the project?**	Every quarter	17	68
		Biannually	-	-
		Once a year	-	-
		As required	8	32
		No response	22	25

Table 11 clearly depicts out of 25 respondents, 17(68%) of them gave their responses that children or youths monitor the activities every quarter and the rest 8(32%) of the staff member were responded youths participate in monitoring process as required.

From the analysis, again, we can conclude that children and youths are invited to play their part in the process every quarter but when we bring the case to earth, it seems questionable. That is what the majority of the responses imply.

3. 12. Benefits of monitoring and evaluation

As a last remark, the last questions provided to the participants were who might benefit from monitoring and evaluation.

Table 12: Benefits of monitoring and evaluation

S/N	Item	Response	Responses given	
			Frequency N = 47	**%**
Q15	**Who will benefit from the monitoring and evaluation process?**	The organization	2	4
		the respective project	6	13
		The community	2	4
		Stakeholders	-	-
		All	37	79
Specify others, if any:				

According to the responses put forwarded by the staff members, it is the organization and the community who might be benefited from monitoring and evaluation process. The total number of staff members who are positive for this answer were 4 (8%) but majority of the staff members, 37 (79%), were agreed that all; the organization, projects, the community and other stakeholder enjoy the benefit of the monitoring and evaluation process.

Simply to say, the counting implies all groups mentioned could benefit from the result of monitoring and evaluation in one way or another.

3.13. Summary of the Interview question

To fit the purpose of this paper, an interview was conducted to the executive director, deputy director and project coordinators on the major aspects of monitoring evaluation and the processes, practices of the organization and the challenges they encounter. Hereunder, the major findings of the interview are discussed briefly.

1. As the first way in to the interview the participants were asked whether they believe that adequate attention is given to the design and use of monitoring and evaluation system. It is the strong belief of the executive director, director and project coordinators that proper attention is given the monitoring and evaluation process.

2. For the question asked what design is set by the project for monitoring and evaluation system or to put it explicitly, whether it is implementation focused or result based, the respondents' were replied that the monitoring activities are implementation focused. Whereas the evaluation information system is result oriented. That is, the evaluation is carried out to check weather there is a link between the activities and out put and the out put vice versa the project objectives.

3. For the enquiry put forwarded what are the tools/instruments/used to collect information, all, unanimously, answered that:
   - Focus group discussion
   - Direct observation
   - Field observation
   - Review of documents
   - Structured question, are the main tools to record information.

4. The same question was posed to the participant who the participants in monitoring and evaluation process are. The answer which was provided the participants is more or less similar as that of staff members; the participants of the monitoring and evaluation process are:
   - Target communities/ children, Youths, women, etc/
   - Government representatives
   - Project staff
   - Donors

5. The response from the participant regarding how the organization gathers information, they replied that the organization gather information using different tools and methods including:
   - review meetings
   - review of documents
   - site visit
   - discussion with the stakeholders
   - progress report

6. The next question was concerning who is responsible or in charge of performing the internal and external evaluation. According to the answer given by the respondents, internal evaluation is carried out by project coordinators, project staff and the program officer

whereas; external evaluation is carried out by external consultant, donors, and respective government office representatives.

7. As a director, project coordinators, and resource officer, they meet a challenge which occurs during the monitoring and evaluation process. So what would be the challenges confronting the process was part of the interview. As the participants identified the two most challenges: limited knowledge and skill in monitoring and evaluation on part of the community, the staff and some government officials and high turnover among officials and the staff are the main challenges.

8. Lastly, to discern the antidote how decisions are made when problems encountered during the monitoring and evaluation process, the officials, especially, in the organization and projects were responded that by organizing orientation and trainings for the staff and community members, by changing the approach for monitoring and evaluation, and enlightening the purpose of monitoring and evaluation to government officials, they believe that they can solve the problem.

3.14. Analysis of the secondary data

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Monitoring and evaluation is a key component of the project. During the inception phase a baseline study is conducted as a benchmark for monitoring and evaluation. Special emphasis will be given to include young people actively in the baseline research and to development a self-monitoring system for children and young people. A Consultant, the Project Coordinator and a group of youth from the community will form a team for the baseline study and to develop the monitoring formats.

The staff of the project chaired by the project coordinator will hold a meeting every fifteen days and monitor the progress of activities according to the monthly activity plan.

The PO from the head office is the overall responsible person for the monitoring of project activities.

The community committees also hold monitoring meetings every quarter to monitor the ongoing process of the project and the youth Self-monitoring will also be a continuous process according to the monitoring scheme set by the 'Baseline-team'.

Evaluation

The project will be reviewed half way through by a consultant and the project coordinator of IFSO and donors. It is part of the review to recommend adjustments of the project document, objectives and indicators. The results and impact of the project will be documented and published upon the termination of the project.

Reporting

Reporting and financial report format will be prepared based on the good experiences from previous projects. Annual activity report on January first and biannual financial statement on January first and July first are issued. Donors will comment and approve the reports within 1 month. IFSO forward quarterly the reports prepared for the Line Bureau to AC International Child Support.

Tools

As it has been discussed in the proceeding paragraphs, IFSO uses, basically, two types of formats to follow the progress of activities in the projects or to monitor the activities in the project and which ultimately used as a report to government authorities and donors; one is quarterly progress report format and the other is weekly action plan format. There is a financial report format which purpose is to report the financial status or expenditure of each project (at the time of collecting the formats, the office was not willing to avail the formats for some reasons).

1. **Quarterly progress report format (physical)**

The format, physically, seems a bit complex to anyone who wishes to use it. Excluding the heading of the format, it has contained:
- List of activities by program or component
- Quarterly planned activities, unit measure and quantity accomplished and percentile
- Annually planned activities and accomplished activities in percentile
- Activities planned throughout the project life and totally accomplished activities till the end of the reporting period

This format is used and prepared by the project coordinators and the deputy director of IFSO submitted to the board, line government authorities at various levels and donors.

2. Weekly action plan format

This is, actually, a working action plan which is utilized by the project staff with close supervision of project coordinators. Weekly, staff members plan their weekly activities. The format is simple and brief containing:

- Key performance area
- Activities
- Starting date
- Ending date
- Persons involved

At the end or starting of a week, the project coordinators checks and follow whether the planned activities are accomplished on timely manner.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the major areas covered by the study and to draw conclusion on the basis of the majority findings and finally, to put ward suggestions on some aspects of the study.

4.1 Summary

The main objective of the study was to assess the monitoring and evaluation process and practice of IFSO. The study has covered types of evaluation in the organization, methods and tools of the monitoring process, participation in the monitoring and evaluation process, benefits of monitoring and evaluation, etc. After analysing and interpreting the data, the following major findings are drawn and itemized accordingly hereunder.

- From the respondents' data, it was found that female respondents outnumbered male respondents by 6:4 ratio and those who filled the questionnaire are academically graduated at degree level.

- Coming down to the monitoring and evaluation system, the organization has already established a system, with this all the staff members were agreed and responded positive.

- About 32 (68%) of the respondents out of the total participants were reported the organization is using both mid and terminal evaluation.

- Regarding the methods and tools used in the monitoring process, majority of the research participants; 27(57%) were agreed that the organization/projects is using meeting, group discussion, reports and site visit alternatively and depending on the projects nature and activity.

- In planning the monitoring and evaluation, greater number of staff members, 21 (44.7%) were responded that the core management of the organization plan the monitoring and evaluation in the first place and secondly, the project coordinators possibly plan the process.

- For the question how timely do the organization monitor the projects activities, 28 (59.57%) of the participants were replied the organization monitor the projects every quarter and at required by the management.

- About 43 (91%) of the staff members were given their answer favoring the monitoring and evaluation is participatory.

- When I come to the involvement of children/youths, external stakeholders, external evaluators, community representatives and donors in the monitoring and evaluation process, almost half of the respondents 22 (47%) were agreed that all the aforementioned bodies involve in the process.

- The consecutive inquires followed were concerning children and youths participation in the monitoring and evaluation process. Majority of the staff members, 17 (68%), were confirmed children/youths participate in activities which they actively involve, this can be also in self monitoring meetings, in filling the questionnaire which is provided by the projects for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation purpose or involving in the steering committee with other staff members every quarter.

- Concerning the benefits carrying out the monitoring and evaluation, about 37 (79%) of the participants were replied the organization, the projects, the community and other stakeholders benefit in the process.

4.3 Conclusions

From the major findings, the subsequent conclusions can be pinpointed

- As the study result shows, it is the full knowledge of the staff that the organization use both mid and terminal evaluation

- Even though projects are using meetings, group discussion, reporting and site visits as methods and tools alternatively, the focus is on the paper work (reporting) and meeting in the office. Less attention is given to group discussion and site visit where the actual activity is being carried out. All in all, the methods and tools of monitoring and evaluation and data gathering instruments used in the project are very limited.

- In planning or initiating the monitoring and evaluation, the bright side of the process is almost all bodies are involved though each of them participates to some extent. For others the involvement is minimal but the participation of community representatives in planning the monitoring and evaluation is null.

- It is one of the good of the organization for being monitoring the activities of the projects every quarter.

- From the finding, it seems that participation as core elements in monitoring and evaluation process and which is encouraged in the organization and throughout its projects.

- In identifying who is part of the monitoring and process and who is left behind, the finding depicted that children/youths, the stakeholders, community representatives and donors equally participate though their level of participation varies but the contribution of external stakeholders is minimal.

- Since the organization, naturally, design child focused projects, the participation of children/youths are compulsory. This is what the study shows. The level of their participation also various according to the projects objective and activity. Despite their participation in the activities they are invited, their level of participation in the overall activity or operation of the project is very less. When we look at the mechanisms to involve these children/youths, we found them involving in different activities especially in self monitoring which prescribed to them by the project. This arises a question and doubts that children/youth are participating to fit the purpose of the project's aims only.

- In summarizing the interview results, the executive director, deputy director and the project coordinators have, more or less, similar views in most of the questions asked. They, especially, emphasis on the challenges of the monitoring and evaluation process.

- From the practice of IFSO and as the working document of the organization shows, in the monitoring and evaluation process, the management, project coordinators, and the community are involved. During the evaluation period, consultants are hired and evaluate the impact of the project. At project level, chaired by the project coordinator, a weekly monitoring is carried out regularly. The two mostly used reporting formats are quarterly report format and weekly action plan formats. The former is a bit complex and difficult to understand but the content is somewhat comprehensive which encompasses all the necessary information to monitor quarterly planned activities.

4.3 Recommendations

Referring various theoretical concepts and practices, it is possible to put forward the following suggestions on the existing monitoring and evaluation process and practice of sustainable development for children project of IFSO:

- Although the organization and the project have given proper attention to monitoring and evaluation, there is no a single M & E unit either at organization level or at project level. So it is the recommendation of this paper that there should established monitoring and evaluation unit which is responsible to carryout, specifically, the M & E. This will ease the burden of the projects.

- Involving beneficiaries or the target group is essential. Let alone involving them in the monitoring and evaluation process, they should participate from the very planning of the project to implementation of the project. The organization, especially the project need to reconsider the participation of the beneficiaries to enhance it since the entire project activity is about targeting them. To sum up, the cooperation of the target group is compulsory.

- There are many methods and tools that can be used for monitoring and evaluation purpose. Some of the methods that are introduced and being on practice and exercised by different organizations are formal survey which can be used to collect standardized information from a selected household, rapid appraisal methods which can be used to gather the views and feedback of beneficiaries and other stakeholders, expenditure tracking survey which track the flow of funds and determine the extent to which resources actually reach the target groups, etc. The management should adapt various tools and methods of monitoring and evaluation and practice it in such a way that it suits with its existing system and capacity.

- The other recommendation is related with the community participation. The project should not necessarily rely on highly trained experts or consultants leaving the community representatives behind. There should be a possibility of increasing their participation at some point. This can be done by strengthening their skills. The organization, particularly the project should provide trainings on monitoring and evaluation methods and tools, how to gather and record information on the ongoing activity, carry out informal M & E, etc, to community members,.

- The provision of training on monitoring and evaluation is recommended to professional staff members to acquaint them with new methods and tools.

- The timing for evaluation should be before the project is commenced, during the activity and after the project is terminated. The mid term and terminal evaluation can not measure the effectiveness, efficeinty and impact of the project without conducting a base line or some sort of preliminary assessment taking various aspects of the project which likely affect the project during the implementation period. As the mid term evaluation is necessary to make mid course corrections and the terminal or ex post evaluations analyze the relevance, effectiveness and impact after the completion of an activity, the ex ante evaluation is necessary equally.

- Due emphasis should be given to site visit. As the best tool for monitoring, the field visit helps us in various ways. It is also one way or method to meet and interview a broad range of individual or the target beneficiaries. What is more, it is a friendly approach to meet with the community whereby it creates trust between the community and the organization or the project.

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ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
BUSINESS FACULTY
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT

Questionnaire

To be filled by employees of Integrated Family Service Organization /IFSO/.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to assess the monitoring and evaluation processes and challenges of Integrated Family Service Organization, which is non governmental organization. This research is to be made as partial fulfillment for a Bachelor of Art Degree in Management. Also it is the strong belief of the researcher that the result of this paper might help to establish improved monitoring and evaluation process. Your responses are confidential and used for research purposes only. Information acquired from respondents has significant contribution for the success of the paper

Instruction

1. Don't write your name on the questionnaire
2. Put a tick mark (√) on the box provided
3. List down your answers for open ended questions
4. You can give more than one answer whenever is necessary

Note: I would like to express my sincere appreciation in advance for your generous time and frank responses.

Part One - Personal Data

1. Sex

Male ☐   Female ☐

2. To which age category do you belong?

20-25 ☐

26-30 ☐

31-40 ☐

Above 41 ☐

3. What is your Level of Education?

12/10 complete ☐   BSC/BA Degree ☐

12+i/10+1 ☐   MSC/MA ☐

12+2/10+2 ☐   PHD ☐

Diploma ☐   Others ☐

4. For how long did you work in the project?

One year ☐   Two years ☐

More than two years ☐

2

PART TWO

The following questions are posed to assess the practical experience of projects on monitoring and evaluation processes

1. Is there established monitoring and evaluation system in the projects?

Yes ☐   No ☐

2. If your answer for the above question is yes, what kind of evaluation carried out in the project?

Mid term evaluation ☐   Termal ☐

Both ☐

Specify other, if any_____

3 . What methods and tools do you use for the Monitoring?

Meeting ☐   Group discussion ☐

Reporting ☐   Practical site visit ☐

Specify others, if any _____

4. Who plan/initiate the monitoring and evaluation?

The management staffs ☐   the project coordinator ☐

Project staff ☐   Community representatives ☐

Donors ☐

Specify others, if any_____

5 . How frequent do the organization monitor the projects' activities?

Every quarter ☐   biannually ☐

Once a year ☐   as required ☐

6. Is the monitoring and evaluation process participatory?

Yes ☐   No ☐

7. Who is involved in the monitoring and evaluation process?

Children and youths ☐   External stakeholders ☐

Representatives of the community ☐   Staff members ☐

External evaluators   Donors

Specify others, if any_____

8. If youths or children participate in the monitoring and evaluation process, in which of the activities do they participate mostly?

In children/youth related activities only ☐

In the overall operation of the project ☐

9. How do children or youths participate?

In self monitoring meeting ☐

Involving in steering committee ☐

Filling a questionnaire which is provided by the project for monitoring or evaluation purpose ☐

Specify others, if any_____

10. How often do children and youths monitor the project ?

Every quarter ☐   biannually ☐

Once a year ☐   as required ☐

11. Who will benefit from the monitoring and evaluation process?

The organization ☐   the respective project ☐

The community ☐   Stakeholders ☐   All ☐

Specify others, if any_____

Interview guide

During the course of implementation corrective measures are expected on the bases of project implementation experience and changes observed. So project management needs continuous flow of information on these changes to be able to manage properly the implementation.

1. **Can you tell me your occupation?**

2. **For how long did you work in this organization?**

3. **Is adequate attention given to the design and use of monitoring and evaluation systems?**

4. **What design is set by the project for monitoring and evaluation information system?**

   Implementation focused or result based? elaborate it

5. **What are the tools/ Instruments /used to record the information?**
   Group discussion, direct observation, structured questions,...? elaborate it.

6. **Who are the participants in monitoring and evaluation process?**

7. **How the organization gathers information for monitoring?**
   Progress report, review meeting, site visit?

8. **Who perform internal evaluation? External evaluation?**

9. **What are the major challenges faced during the monitoring and evaluation process?**

10. **How decisions are made when problems encountered during the monitoring and evaluation process?**

11. **In general, what do you comment personally on the monitoring and evaluation process of the projects other than the points that mentioned/discussed above?**