Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E Manager

The title "M&E Manager" refers to the position in charge of the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of a food security project/program; the actual job title of the position may vary by program or by organization. The M&E Manager leads M&E strategies for large-scale food security programs (e.g., Development Food Aid Programs). The position is based at program/country office headquarters. The M&E Manager provides oversight of all M&E related duties and management of M&E and/or Data Management Officers.

The M&E Manager's core competencies include:

1. M&E concepts
2. Program design
3. M&E system set-up and operationalization
4. Qualitative techniques for monitoring
5. Quantitative techniques for data collection
6. Data analysis
7. Reporting

1. M&E Concepts

1.1 Understand key fundamental M&E concepts and USAID documents and platforms and their purpose in M&E: theory of change (ToC), log frame, indicators, Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT), Standardized Annual Program Questionnaire (SAPQ), and Performance Indicator Reference Sheets (PIRS) along with other donor compliance requirements (Country Development Cooperation Strategy (CDCS), Automated Directives System/Development Data Library (ADS/DDL), Development Experience Clearinghouse (DEC).
1.2 Be able to clearly define the project cycle: needs and capacities assessment, problem analysis, developing a conceptual framework or ToC, selecting and implementing activities, monitoring and evaluation.
1.3 Understand the results chain: activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.
1.4 Demonstrate knowledge of strategies and tools for tracking project progress and bottlenecks and for monitoring cross-cutting objectives like gender, governance and environmental regulations.
1.5 Understand the difference between descriptive and inferential statistics.
1.6 Understand the concept of participatory monitoring.
1.7 Understand the concepts and approaches of performance versus impact evaluation.
1.8 Know when to plan for and how to use mixed-methods research.

1. M&E Concepts (continued)

1.9 Understand the concept of data quality assurance and how to implement it within the program.

1.10 Be familiar with environmental indicators and initial environmental assessments.

1.11 Be familiar with gender indicators and gender assessments.

2. Program Design

2.1 Know how to diagnose and assess community needs and opportunities.

2.2 Demonstrate the capacity to carry out causal (problem) analysis and objective hierarchy.

2.3 Demonstrate the capacity to design a comprehensive program ToC or development hypothesis.

> 2.3.1 Understand how to create a diagram that illustrates pathways of change, and which includes outcomes from interventions that are not a part of the project.
>
> 2.3.2 Know how to draft a complementary narrative that explains the plausibility of the pathways depicted in the conceptual diagram.

2.4 Understand how to develop a logical framework.

2.5 Know how to describe the M&E plan including strategies for collecting, transferring, collating, processing, and safeguarding M&E data.

2.6 Understand the program M&E staffing needs, roles, and responsibilities.

2.7 Identify performance indicators and tools to inform managers and program staff about the progress toward program objectives and to encourage management to integrate them into the project decisions and designs.

2.8 Contribute to the selection of project activities, outputs, outcomes, and impact.

2.9 Understand how to develop a detailed/itemized M&E budget for annual monitoring needs and periodic evaluations and studies.

3. M&E System Set Up and Operationalization

3.1 Logical framework: Know how to develop a log frame in line with the ToC.

3.2 Theory of change: Leads reviews of and revisions to the ToC when necessary.

3.3 IPTT: Ensures the IPTT aligns to the log frame and demonstrates capacity to:

> 3.3.1 Understand various data collection methods and how to select the appropriate method for various indicators.
>
> 3.3.2 Understands the difference between baseline values and base values.

3.4 PIRS: Knows how to develop and use PIRS.

3.5 Annual monitoring:

> 3.5.1 Oversees the design and revision of tools for routine monitoring data collection and the collection of physical measurements (e.g., anthropometric, infrastructure).
>
> 3. 5.2 Develops protocols for routine monitoring, beneficiary surveys, and collecting physical measurements (i.e., anthropometric, infrastructure).

3. M&E System Set Up and Operationalization (continued)

3. 5.3 Understand how to design instruments for mobile platforms (e.g., smart phones, iPads, iPods).

3. 5.4 Is able to use Geographical Information Systems (GIS) to inform M&E.

3.5.5 Know how to design and use databases.

3.5.6 Demonstrate capacity to design reporting formats and timelines.

3.6 Data Quality Assurance. Must know how to:

3.6.1 Develop and implement strategies to improve data quality.

3.6.2 Design a data flow diagram and identify bottlenecks.

3.6.3 Develop and manage tools and methods for assessing data quality for all indicators.

3.6.4 Design and implement an internal data quality assessment.

3.6.5 Promote and apply the five attributes of data quality.

3.6.6 Design protocols and procedures for proper data management and safeguard.

3.7 M&E Staffing. Understand how to:

3.7.1 Determine adequate staffing levels.

3.7.2 Develop a staff capacity building plan.

3.7.3 Assess skill strengths and gaps of the M&E staff.

3.7.4 Design training to improve skills based on the identified skill gaps.

3.7.5 Organize and facilitate skills training.

3.7.6 Coach/mentor staff to improve skills.

3.7.7 Design and provide on-the-job training to improve skills.

3.7.8 Assess the knowledge change of participants.

3.8 Evaluation. Know how to:

3.8.1 Design a sampling strategy using probability and or purposive sampling method.

3.8.2 Calculate a representative sample size.

3.8.3 Develop the sampling frame and draw samples.

3.8.4 Design evaluation questions and methods.

3.8.5 Develop criteria for when and how to use control and comparison groups.

3.8.6 Develop/provide input into terms of reference for baseline/final evaluation surveys.

3.8.7 Review tools/instruments and field manuals developed by the survey contractor.

3.8.8 Review qualitative tools and methods for baseline and final evaluation surveys.

3.8.9 Develop terms of reference for a mid-term evaluation.

4. Qualitative Techniques for Monitoring

4.1 Identify indicators for qualitative monitoring.

4.2 Understand a variety of qualitative methods and tools, and how to select the most appropriate method or tool for various purposes.

4. Qualitative Techniques for Monitoring (continued)

4.3 Develop topical outlines to guide structured and semi-structured qualitative interviews for exploratory open-ended inquiry.

4.4 Know how to organize and analyze qualitative data in order to:

4.4.1 Inform quantitative data collection design (e.g., data to collect, coded responses).

4.4.2 Interpret and verify quantitative data.

4.5 Possess skills for using and monitoring/supervising the use of key qualitative tools, including:

4.6.1 Key informant interviews.
4.6.2 Focus group discussions.
4.6.3 Use of direct observations as an M&E tool.
4.6.4 Commonly used interactive tools (e.g., maps, matrix, calendars).

5. Quantitative Techniques for Data Collection

Demonstrated capacity to serve as key point of contact for consultants conducting formal surveys. The M&E Manager must be able to support the following activities.

5.1 Supervise the design of structured surveys including:

5.1.1 Design and test questionnaires.

5.1.2 Gather required information to construct the sampling frame.

5.1.3 Employ strategies to minimize sampling and non-sampling errors.

5.1.4 Design field tests for data validity and reliability.

5.2 Competently supervise and manage surveys, including:

5.2.1 Plan and oversee logistics.

5.2.2 Design and facilitate training for enumerators and supervisors.

5.2.3 Oversee data collection including anthropometric measurements

6. Data Analysis

6.1 Know how to develop a data analysis plan.

6.2 Conduct quantitative data analysis, including:

6.2.1 Create indices and computed variables.

6.2.2 Design a data entry application for survey data using common software applications (e.g., Microsoft Access, CSPro, SPSS Statistics, Epi Info™).

6.2.3 Use and interpret frequency tables, bivariate cross tables, t-tests, confidence intervals, multivariate

6. Data Analysis (continued)

6.2.4 Design a data entry application for routine monitoring data using Microsoft Excel.

6.2.5 Clean data using standard acceptable techniques.

6.2.6 Analyze quantitative survey data using data analytic software (e.g., SPSS Statistics, STATA, Epi Info™, NutriSurvey, SAS, and R).

6.2.7 Analyzing routine monitoring data using computer packages (i.e., Microsoft Excel, Microsoft Access).

6.2.8 Reporting quantitative data.

6.2.9 Interpreting statistical data to inform decision-making.

6.3 Carry out qualitative analysis, including:

6.3.1 Descriptive, content, inductive, and logical analysis.

6.3.2 Synthesize and report qualitative information.

7. Reporting

7.1 Know how to write narrative reports, including the ability to:

7.1.1 Write executive summaries.

7.1.2 Create and use tables in reports and presentations effectively.

7.1.3 Produce and use graphs and charts in reports and presentations effectively.

7.1.4 Develop and present case studies in reports effectively and responsibly.

7.1.5 Collect and use quotations in reports effectively and responsibly.

7.1.6 Present and use statistics effectively and responsibly.

7.2 Know how to make clear and effective oral presentations, including the effective design and use of PowerPoint

7.3 Know how to develop and present success stories effectively.

7.4 Know how to present GIS data and maps.

Notes

- While M&E Managers should propose the sampling frame, in most cases additional technical support may be needed for sample size calculation and developing sampling strategies, even for M&E Managers**.**
- Where an external consultant is required (i.e., in final evaluations), M&E Managers will work with the consultant to ensure that all required data for the evaluation is collected as per the M&E plan. At the same time, the M&E Manager will ensure that data required to answer key questions needed to fulfil the evaluation's terms of reference are included in quantitative surveys and qualitative studies.
- Though USAID now requires baselines and possibly final evaluations to be conducted by external contractors still, management of the whole process needs to be done internally. A lot of logistics need to be coordinated during the process, whether the organization/program is carrying out a survey, a qualitative study, or both. M&E managers need to know their role in this process so they can manage it successfully. This should be clearly outlined during the evaluation design.

Notes (continued)

- While the M&E Manager or data analysts conduct statistical data analysis, the analysis is sometimes reviewed by others to ensure quality and accuracy.
- While report writing is often conducted in collaboration with others such as the program manager, technical specialists, and/or consultants, report writing is a key role of the M&E Manager, as he/she must be able to tell the organization/project's story to donors and others.

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