



The Role of Monitoring and Evaluation in Projects Management in Nigeria

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The role of Monitoring and Evaluation in Projects Management in Nigeria

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Abstract: Many projects in Nigeria fail to achieve successful completion due to several reasons. Neglecting or lack of in-depth knowledge of monitoring and evaluation. The aim of this paper is to highlight the importance of monitoring and evaluation as it applied to successful completion of a projects in Nigeria and beyond. This paper analyzed several project in Abuja and their common constrains that affect monitoring and evaluation and also, suggest ways to improve the process.

Keywords: constraints, evaluation, monitoring, projects, successful, Nigeria.

I. Introduction:

In Nigeria government embarks on so many project with the aim improving the livelihood of the citizenry. Many third world countries have numerous projects in an attempt to improve their infrastructure and this improves the standard of living of its citizens. Many project received fund with the aim to improve the infrastructures across the country and without monitoring and evaluation value the funds injected into a project cannot be realized.

II. Definitions of project monitoring and evaluation

- Physical and financial monitoring
- Process monitoring
- Impact monitoring

A. Projects are monitored so as to:

Monitoring and evaluation they work hand in hand with distinct functions and it is important in the execution of a projects.

B. Monitoring:

is a continuous process that aims primarily to update management and main stakeholders of with programme of evet with early indication progress, or shortcomings in the achievement of results. It is viewed as a process that provides information and ensures the use of such information by management to assess project effects-both intentional and unintentional- and their impact. It aims at determining whether or not the intended objectives have been met.

C. Role of Monitoring:

As the term monitoring is being defined, many concept were developed. Monitoring is the continuous assessment or process of a programme or projects in relation to the agreed implementation schedules drafted. It is also good too use management tool which would properly provide continuous feedback on the project implementation as well assist in the identification of potential setback or faster successes to facilitate timely decisions. Most projects Managers tend to neglects the roles played this concept. Monitoring is also, concerned with.

- Assess the stakeholder' understanding of the project;
- Minimize the risk of project failure;
- Promote systematic and professional management; and

- Assess progress in implementation.

In many developing countries, one tends to find the following aspects in monitoring and evaluation of projects:

- There is mostly use of external consultants in monitoring and evaluation.
- Sustainability is often not taken into account.
- In most cases Monitoring is sometimes used to justify past actions.
- Concerns of stakeholders are not normally included.
- Lessons learned are not properly incorporated.

III. *Decision – making in monitoring and design of project monitoring system:*

The purpose of decision making in monitoring is to provide a conceptual framework that may be used in design a project monitoring system.

- *Tools for monitoring:*

Timely Information to management is a key to success and lack of effective and timely communication of information to the users also affect the progress of works. This should be addressed if possible. Appropriate monitoring tools are put in place and used accordingly.

Most widely used tools for project monitoring include:

- *Verbal communication:*

This tool is faster mode of communication. Among its advantages is that it is quick, and its presentation can be adapted to concerns parties.

However, this type of tool to communicate monitoring information is not effective and can be misunderstood and sometime even denial of information or misleading.

- *Meeting:*

The nature of project/programme management makes it inevitable that certain meeting must be convened to communicate and share project information.

- *Report:*

The importance of monitoring report is an important aspect of a successful projects. It is important to note

that these is an essential part of project/programme. Activities undertaken, materials supplied, input supplied, funds disbursed, and many other input have to be recorded and accounted for. However, reports are only effective if they are submitted to the appropriate parties at the right time for corrective decision and stand.

A. *Preparation of monitoring reports:*

The primary purpose of a project monitoring report is to provide information to assist stakeholders in comparing performance, progress and to make plans against current or potential problems so that it may be identified and analyzed.

B. *The uses of project monitoring reports are to:*

- Document completion of project activities;
- Identify significant deviations from plans;
- Reveal problems to appropriate stakeholders;
- Assist in corrective decision-making;
- Monitor implementation of corrective actions;
- Identify shortcomings of existing management and monitoring systems;
- Provide information for coordination of national development programme;
- Provide reference material for planning of subsequent projects; and
- Provide information for future evaluation.

C. *Potential limitations of project monitoring report:*

- They tend to focus on a pre-determined set of data for information.
- The attitude of the persons doing the reporting may cause them to hide problems.
- They may emphasize problems rather than opportunities.
- They may not be shared with those who provide the data.
- The information may be too subjective.

D. *On the other hand, some advantages of good project monitoring reports are:*

- They provide the regularized flow of information needed for decision-making.

- They provide a history of the project which can be basis for lessons learned and evaluation of the project.
- They assist in fostering discipline among stakeholders.
- They may give sense of responsibility to the target group.
- They can be used to identify skill building needs of those responsible for collecting data and preparing the reports.

IV. *Evaluation:*

is a process of collecting data and information gathered by the monitoring system to analyze the trends or the curve in effects and impact of the project. Most cases or in some cases, monitoring data might reveal significant departure from the original project projects goals or expectations. In some case early assumptions may need to be re-examined based on projects design.

In most cases, evaluation is not given emphasis in projects, as what is normally considered is monitoring.

A. *Purpose of evaluation:*

- It assists to determine the degree of achievement of the objectives.
- It determines and identifies the problems associated with programme planning and implementation
- It generates data that allows or cumulative learning which in turn, contributes to better designed programmes, improved management and a better assessment of their impact. Here what is important is the lessons learned.
- It give a clear direction in the reformulation of objectives, policies, and strategies in projects/ programmes.

It should also be noted that in some cases, evaluation has been used to resolve non-programme issues affecting different donors. For instance, two organization involved in separate but similar programmes on land management may undertake an evaluation of the entire programme to assess the extent to which they can cooperate. Consequently, evaluation can be seen as a process that determines the viability

of programmes/project and facilitate decisions on further resource commitment.

B. *Usage and limitations of the various types of evaluation:*

- Interim evaluation

As the name implies this normally takes place at initial or mid-term point during the life of a programme.

- Terminal evaluation

This limitation assesses the progress made towards the achievement of the pre-determined objectives at the end of the programme and provides a basis for decisions on future action. Its findings and recommendations are often used to decide whether or not to stop the project or when a new phase is under consideration.(1)

- Ex-post evaluation

This is conducted after a sufficient number of years (depending on the project) have elapsed since project completion so as to measure the impact.

It is accepted that, if the evaluations are to be objective, they have to be undertaken by external consultants. However, there is a general feeling that at times external consultants are overused. They recommended that external consultants should work in a conducive environment to facilitate the transfer of knowledge to their counterparts. Governments should take the lead in promoting this aspect.

V. *Conclusions and Recommendations:*

Monitoring and evaluation when carried out correctly and at the right time and place are the most important aspects of ensuring the success of many projects. The challenges are Monitoring and evaluation not being considered by many project developers/clients which they tend to be given little priority and as a result they are done simply for the sake of fulfilling the requirements of most policies, funding, and agencies without necessarily using them as a mechanism of ensuring success of the projects.

It is important for all government and its agencies to enforce the strict adherence to the use of Monitoring and Evaluation. It is also, important note that each

project may have unique requirements and this reason and in such circumstances, project managers and developers should attempt to develop suitable monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to suit the project for effectiveness.

It is recommended that further education be given to many project managers in aspects of monitoring and evaluation priority so as to encourage them to use these tools often and correctly.

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