



Monitoring and Evaluation

M&E Officer

Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) officers lead the implementation of M&E activities in the field. Typically they are based in field offices and/or in regional offices. The role of M&E officer may slightly vary by organization and program, but in general it is

responsible for designing routine monitoring forms, providing training on data collection, compiling and aggregating data, maintaining databases, generating descriptive statistics, and providing support to surveys and evaluations.

The M&E officer's core competency areas include:

1. M&E concepts
2. Program design
3. Developing and operating a program M&E system
4. Sampling for qualitative studies and quantitative surveys
5. Data quality management for all data collection activities
6. Qualitative techniques for monitoring
7. Quantitative techniques for data collection
8. Data entry and descriptive statistics
9. Reporting the results
10. Techniques for presenting information

1. M&E Concepts

1.1 Understand M&E concepts and the purpose of M&E.

1.2 Be able to clearly define the program cycle and results chain: needs and capacities assessment, problem analysis, development of conceptual framework or Theory of Change, selection and implementation of activities/outputs, outcomes, impact.

1.3 Identify indicators/signs of progress along the program cycle; have an operational understanding of standard and program-required indicators.

1.4 Understand and interpret the Results Framework (RF), M&E plan, Performance Management Plan (PMP), and Indicator Performance Tracking Table (IPTT).

1.5 Know indicators, strategies, and tools for tracking program progress and bottlenecks and to achieve cross-cutting objectives, including gender and environment.

1.6 Understand the difference between descriptive and inferential statistics.

1.7 Understand the concept of participatory monitoring.

1.8 Know how to plan for and use mixed research methods.

1.9 Understand the fundamental concepts of data quality assurance.

2. Program Design

2.1 Assess the needs and capacities of the target communities.

2.2 Include communities in problem analysis and program design.

2.3 Develop the conceptual framework and determine activities, process, outputs, outcomes, and impact of the program.

2.4 Be familiar with gender assessment tools and implementation of gender assessment studies.

2.5 Be familiar with environmental indicators and initial environmental assessments.

3. Developing and Operationalizing a Program M&E System

- 3.1 Contribute to the development of a comprehensive M&E plan.
- 3.2 Identify and elaborate key M&E activities.
- 3.3 Train field staff on data gathering and data compilation techniques.
- 3.4 Identify data users and their information needs.
- 3.5 Develop routine/activity monitoring data gathering forms and reporting formats.
- 3.6 Assess/monitor community participation in and satisfaction with implementation, monitoring, and evaluation (including protection issues).

4. Sampling for Qualitative Studies and Quantitative Surveys

- 4.1 Know commonly used probability and purposive sampling techniques.
- 4.2 Know potential sources of and precautions to protect against sampling biases.

5. Data Quality Management for All Data Collection Activities

- 5.1 Implement data quality assurance activities according to the M&E plan.
- 5.2 Know data pitfalls and issues and strategies to minimize them.

6. Qualitative Techniques for Monitoring

- 6.1 Develop topical outlines/key topics to facilitate discussions to guide data collection.
- 6.2 Identify appropriate tools and methods to gather gender-sensitive information.
- 6.3 Use qualitative data:
 - 6.3.1 To interpret quantitative data
 - 6.3.2 To inform quantitative data collection design (e.g., data to collect, coded responses)
 - 6.3.3 To verify quantitative data
 - 6.3.4 For open-ended inquiry
- 6.4 Understand how to use and monitor/supervise key qualitative methods:
 - 6.4.1 Key informant interviews
 - 6.4.2 Focus group discussions
 - 6.4.3 Use of direct observations as an M&E tool
 - 6.4.4 Commonly used interactive tools (maps, matrix, calendars)

The Core Competency Series was developed by staff from The Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) Program with significant contributions from the various task forces of the Food Security and Nutrition (FSN) Network. The series intends to provide hiring managers, program managers, and program staff with explanations of the basic skills and knowledge senior technical staff may possess to carry out their positions effectively. Official job titles, functions, and requirements may vary based on organization and program.

7. Quantitative Techniques for Data Collection

7.1 Design tools for routine monitoring data collection.

7.2 Develop protocols for routine monitoring and surveys.

7.3 Conduct physical measurements (i.e., anthropometric, infrastructure).

7.4 Implement structured surveys, including:

7.4.1 Conduct field-testing of survey instruments

7.4.2 Know sampling and non-sampling errors and strategies to minimize them

7.4.3 Train and coordinate enumerators

7.4.4 Use interviewing techniques

7.4.5 Supervise and test validity and reliability of data in the field

7.5 Manage surveys, including:

7.5.1 Logistics planning

7.5.2 Gathering required information to construct sampling frame

7.5.3 Designing and facilitating training for enumerators

7.5.4 Overseeing data collection

8. Data Entry and Descriptive Statistics

8.1 Manage data entry, including:

8.1.1 Designing data entry applications in common packages, e.g., MS Excel, MS Access, Epi-Info

8.1.2 Entering data into MS Excel, MS Access, or any other simple database

8.1.3 Organizing data in such a way that it is easily accessible by staff concerned

8.1.4 Managing the database

8.2 Conduct descriptive analysis, including:

8.2.1 Possess the basic skills for using SPSS or a similar data analytic software

8.2.2 Understanding central tendency and measures of spread

8.2.3 Producing frequency tables, cross tables, correlations, means testing, and different measures of central tendency

8.2.4 Understanding tests of significance (e.g., p-values, confidence intervals)

9. Reporting the Results

9.1 Collect, compile, and aggregate reports from field staff.

9.2 Check for data consistency and compare them with the target.

9.3 Interpret quantitative results.

9.4 Interpret and report qualitative data.

9.5 Use quantitative and qualitative data in combination.

10. Techniques for Presenting Information

10.1 Know how to write narrative for reports, including:

10.1.1 Developing and effectively presenting case studies and success stories in reports

10.1.2 Collecting and using quotations reports and success stories effectively and responsibly

10.2 Create and effectively use tables in reports and presentations.

10.3 Create and effectively use graphs and charts in reports and presentations.

10.4 Create and present clear and effective oral presentations.

10.5 Design and effectively use PowerPoint presentations.

Notes on Program Implementation

- While the M&E officer implements monitoring activities in the field, the M&E manager is responsible for the design of the system, tools, and methodologies.
- While sampling strategy and sample size calculation will be done by the M&E manager, the M&E officer must have a basic understanding about commonly used sampling techniques.
- While the M&E manager is responsible for developing the qualitative and quantitative tools, the M&E officer must have the skills to use them.
- While statistical data analysis should be conducted by the M&E manager, the M&E officer must be able to generate frequency tables and compute mean, median, and standard deviation.
- While analytical report preparation is the responsibility of M&E manager, the M&E officer must be able to compile the reports collected from the field, produce simple tables and graphs using MS Excel, and interpret the numbers so that it is easy for the users to understand and make sense of the numbers.



The Technical and Operational Performance Support (TOPS) Program is the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) Office of Food for Peace-funded learning initiative, bringing the highest quality information, knowledge, and promising practices in food assistance programming to implementers and donors around the world to ensure more communities and households benefit from the U.S. Government's investments to fight global hunger.

The TOPS Program Core Competency Series is made possible by the generous support of the American people through the USAID. The contents are the responsibility of Save the Children and do not necessarily reflect the views of USAID or the United States Government.

This is Version 2 of the core competencies for the Monitoring and Evaluation Officer position, produced in September 2015.

Photo credit: © 2013 Chelsea Hedquist, Courtesy of Photoshare

Contact: The TOPS Program
2000 L Street, NW, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036
info@TheTOPSProgram.org

Visit, join: www.TheTOPSProgram.org
www.FSNnetwork.org
Twitter: @FSNnetwork
#TOPSProgram