MONITORING & EVALUATION IN GLOBAL HEALTH

What Is M&E?

Lecturer: Nami Kawakyu

Introduction
In this lecture, we'll review definitions for monitoring and evaluation, describe the ways in which the two differ, and discuss why M&E is a critical part of any successful program.

What Is M&E?
Let's begin by defining what M&E is. M&E is a process of collecting, analyzing, applying and disseminating data to assess progress toward program goals and objectives. M&E contributes to identifying program successes and challenges, which informs programmatic decision making, improving performance and contributing to achieving desired results.

What Is Monitoring? What Is Evaluation?
While monitoring and evaluation work hand in hand, they are distinct concepts:

Monitoring can be defined as the ongoing, routine collection and analysis of data about a program's activities in order to measure program progress.

Evaluation can be defined as the systematic process of collecting, analyzing, and using data about a program's design, implementation, and results to determine its effectiveness.

Both monitoring and evaluation are important in informing decisions and adjustments about program implementation.

Monitoring vs. Evaluation
Monitoring and evaluation also each serve unique functions in an M&E system. Though we'll go into more detail elsewhere in the course, let's take a moment to examine some of the key differences between monitoring and evaluation.

Monitoring is primarily concerned with:
- *Regular, ongoing* data collection and analysis to track program progress;
- Monitoring is typically focused more on tracking <u>outputs</u>, or, the immediate results of your activities; and
- Is used to inform day-to-day management. Monitoring helps program managers to understand the extent to which activities are being implemented as planned, on time, and within budget.

Whereas **evaluations** are mainly focused on:
- The assessment of program effectiveness. In other words, how well a program was implemented and whether it made a difference.

- Evaluations also often assess whether the program was efficient and relevant.
- Evaluations are focused more on measuring <u>outcomes,</u> which are typically intermediate changes and <u>impacts</u>, which are long-term, large-scale changes.
- Evaluations provide a broader overview of the program.

Why Is M&E Important?
Looking at the big picture, why is M&E important? And why should programs spend the time, money and effort on M&E?

A well-designed M&E system can help you:

- Assess the extent to which a program is achieving its goals, objectives, and outcomes
- Determine if a program is on track in carrying out its planned activities
- Make evidence-based decisions about key program issues, including addressing unexpected challenges
- An M&E system also helps in promoting and celebrating program accomplishments
- And contributes to organizational learning and knowledge sharing
- Finally, M&E systems are important as they hold programs to be more accountable to stakeholders, encouraging stakeholder input and improving stakeholder buy-in

M&E is an essential process because it helps ensure your programs are effective, efficient and relevant. Ultimately, this allows for greater improvements in your target population.

In this lecture, we discussed the concepts of monitoring and evaluation, how they are distinct from one another and why M&E is a necessary and valuable aspect of any program.