Monitoring and Evaluation Section

of the

Project Development,

Implementation, and Evaluation

Policy

2020

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Policy Statement

In line with our core principles of community and development mindset, Pacific Assist embraces evaluation and monitoring as an opportunity to listen, improve effectiveness and efficiency, and broaden the organisation's knowledge, capacity, expertise, and perspectives.

Purpose

The purposes of Pacific Assist's monitoring and evaluation policy and procedures are to:

- Build empathy with the communities we serve by seeking their insights, opinions, and concerns
- Critically analyse and assess project plans
- Determine if projects are effective in building self-reliance capacity
- Assess the effectiveness of all project policies and procedures
- Identify strengths and report positive results
- Explore ways to improve effectiveness
- Identify weaknesses, deficiencies, and mistakes
- Seek feedback and receive complaints from primary stakeholders
- Undertake research to discover, gain insights about, and test possibilities, solutions, and/or methods that build individual and community self-reliance capacity

Scope

This policy applies to all Pacific Assist personnel, volunteers, partners, and service providers as it relates to their involvement with Pacific Assist and its projects.

Policy

When designing and conducting monitoring and evaluation, the policies and procedures below should be followed in conjunction with the policies and procedures outlined in the Primary Stakeholder Participation and Contribution Policy, and the Research Ethics and Practice Policy.

Pacific Assist conducts open and transparent appraisal, monitoring and evaluation in a scheduled and systematic way by:

- Reviewing policies and procedures on a biannual basis, including reviewing policy procedures against policy objectives

- Assessing project plans against a set of quality criteria before projects are implemented
- Monitoring and evaluating progress and effectiveness against project specific objectives at intervals during the project
- Monitoring and evaluating project results against Pacific Assist's strategic plan and long-term goals, key performance indicators tied to our core principles of self-reliance, and against project specific objectives
- Disaggregating data to enable monitoring of:

  - Human rights, protection, and inclusion
  - Gender equality and equity
  - Empowerment of people with a disability
  - The participation of children

- Conducting research projects

Pacific Assist's ultimate purpose is expressed in our vision - inspiring self-reliance. That purpose provides the foundation benchmark for the design, implementation, and evaluation of our projects. To this end, we have determined a set of quality criteria for appraising project plans and indicators for each of our core principles of self-reliance. Indicators are also to be developed for each project's objectives. These quality criteria and indicators are the benchmark against which project plans are appraised and project performance and effectiveness are measured. The project plan appraisal quality criteria are listed in connection with procedures for pre-project appraisal, self-reliance key performance indicators are listed directly below, and project specific indicators are included in project plans.

Self-reliance Key Performance Indicators

Note: in these key performance indicators the term "primary stakeholders" includes those who are vulnerable and marginalised such as children, women, the disabled, and the racially discriminated

Individual and Collective Self-determination

- Project coordinators identify primary stakeholder community groups and leaders and invite them to participate in the project
- Primary stakeholders are invited to participate in the project in ways that are sensitive to the social and environmental context in which they live

- Primary stakeholder groups are represented on project leadership and management committees
- Primary stakeholders and/or their representatives take a key role in making the decisions regarding the design and implementation of the project
- Marginalised and vulnerable individuals and groups (such as children, women, the disabled, and the racially discriminated) are engaged/represented in needs identification and solution development and implementation

Personal Responsibility and Integrity

- To the degree possible, primary stakeholders contribute financially to the project
- Primary stakeholders assess their individual and collective strengths and weaknesses (capacity)
- Primary stakeholders identify and implement solutions
- Primary stakeholders seek and take up opportunities for personal and professional development
- Primary stakeholders act in accordance with project policies and procedures
- Primary stakeholders act in accordance with local laws

Community

- Pacific Assist personnel reach out to and build relationships of trust with the primary stakeholder community, including vulnerable and marginalised individuals and groups
- Pacific Assist personnel expand their knowledge of the primary stakeholder community's culture, values, customs, beliefs and practices
- Pacific Assist personnel identify power relationships within the primary stakeholder community
- Project policies and procedures invite collaboration, cooperation, and mutual respect within and between communities, including between women and men
- Pacific Assist projects promote the protection of primary stakeholders (particularly those who are most vulnerable and marginalised) from, and identify their risk of, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence, abuse, exploitation (including sexual exploitation), neglect, or other harm
- Primary stakeholders are able to express their opinions and hold Pacific Assist accountable for their obligations and commitments through effective feedback and complaint mechanisms

Development Mindset

- A culture of learning and development exists where evaluation is embraced as an opportunity to learn and build capacity
- Evaluation reports identify strengths and publish positive results
- Evaluation reports identify weaknesses, deficiencies, and mistakes
- Project leadership and management teams explore ways to improve effectiveness
- Project leadership and management teams promote opportunities for all primary stakeholders, including the vulnerable and marginalised, to build their capacity, flourish, and reach their highest potential
- Projects develop primary stakeholders' initiative, creativity, and innovation

Procedures

Evaluate Policies and Procedures

The Projects Manager evaluates Pacific Assist's policies and procedures by:

- Completing a biannual internal review that consists of:

  - Seeking feedback from project coordinators about the effectiveness and practicalities of policies and procedures
  - Analysing project progress and evaluation reports
  - Analysing incident reports
  - Analysing complaints and/or internal investigation reports
  - Checking that all information and references are current
  - Checking that templates and tools referred to in policies and procedures are being utilised appropriately and that they are still fit for purpose
  - Submitting a report to the board of directors summarising the findings of the review. The report should include any recommended changes in policies or procedures to the board of directors
  - Updating, as necessary, policies, procedures, templates, and tools
  - Communicating changes to the relevant personnel, primary stakeholders, partners, and/or service providers

- Completing the triannual ACFID Code Self-Assessment
- Reporting results from the biannual review and the triannual ACFID Code Self-Assessment in Pacific Assist's annual report and on the website

Pre-project Appraisal

As per the policies and procedures outlined in the Project Design – Initial Engagement and the Project Plan Approval sections of the Project Development, Implementation, and Evaluation Policy, project plans are to be submitted to the board of directors for assessment and approval before being implemented. Refer to the Project Plan Approval section of the Project Development, Implementation, and Evaluation Policy for the specific submission and approval procedures. On receipt of a project plan submitted for approval, the board of directors use the following set of quality criteria to assess the merit of the plan:

- How does the proposed vision and objectives of the plan align with Pacific Assist's vision, mission, and 4 core principles of self-reliance
- How does the plan reflect the initial concept brief that was approved by the board of directors
- Was a comprehensive context analysis completed as part of the development of the plan
- Does the plan include all the required components outlined in the Project Design – Initial Engagement section
- Does the plan incorporate the policies and procedures outlined in the Project Monitoring and Evaluation section and the Research Ethics and Practice Policy
- Does the plan incorporate the policies and procedures of the Primary Stakeholder Participation and Contribution Policy
- Has appropriate due diligence and risk assessment been carried out
- If the plan includes components outside the experience of the board of directors, has it been subject to review by an advisory board and/or other relevant expert opinion? If yes, what was their assessment
- How does the proposed project fill a need not being met by other NGOs or agencies
- Does the plan include provision for partnering with other like-minded organisations and agencies? If yes, in what ways do the experience, expertise, and resources of partners increase the probability of achieving the project objectives
- Does the plan include all the required components outlined in the Project Implementation - Partner Engagement section
- Does Pacific Assist have the resources and expertise to successfully carry out the plan

The board's written assessment of the plan is provided by the project manager to the project coordinator and the project leadership committee. Once final approval has been received, the final assessment is published on the project page of the website. Based on results of ongoing monitoring and evaluation of project progress and effectiveness, project leadership and management committees may submit recommended changes to the project plan during the project. The board of directors should assess such changes against the same criteria outlined above and provide a written assessment to the project coordinator and the project leadership committee.

Monitor Project Progress (real time / live audit)

As indicated above, Pacific Assist monitors and evaluates progress and effectiveness against project specific objectives at intervals during the project. In this way, what is and what isn't working can be identified sooner rather than later, course corrections can be made if needed, and learnings can be reflected on and shared.

To monitor and evaluates project progress across the course of the project:

- Design the monitoring and evaluation process during the project planning stage
- During the project planning stage, in consultation with primary stakeholders, project coordinators determine a project vision statement, project objectives, and project indicators – the benchmarks against which progress and effectiveness are measured
- The project vision statement is a brief statement summarising how the project contributes to Pacific Assist's vision of inspiring self-reliance. For example, "self-reliance through building teaching and learning capacity," or "self-reliance through healthy eating and active lifestyles"
- The project objectives outline the specific goals of the project, and the project indicators identify how each objective will be measured. For example:

  - Objective: Assist principals' build their capacity to lead teaching and learning in their schools by preparing principals to meet Diploma of School Leadership English prerequisites: 1) Language proficiency (English/French and Bislama); and, 2) English for academic purposes
  - Indicators:
    - Principals' language proficiency at time 0 and at quarterly intervals
    - Principals' academic writing in English capacity at time 0 and quarterly intervals

- In addition to determining the project vision statement, objectives, and indicators, the project design team must also determine the indicator data collection method. Methods include, but are not limited to:

  - One-on-one conversations
  - Small group feedback forums Paper and pencil or online surveys
  - Interviews
  - Tests and examinations
  - Social media discussion groups
  - Suggestion boxes
  - Complaint handling reports
  - Case studies and/or research projects (quantitative, qualitative, mixed methods)

- The decision about which data collection method/s to use and the schedule for data collection will be dictated by the nature of the project and a judgment about what will be most effective in the circumstances. The project design team make this decision, and the rationale and justification for the decision must be documented in the project plan

- Whatever the method all monitoring and evaluation processes must adhere to the Research Ethics and Practice Policy

- The project leadership and management committee, under the direction of the project coordinator, is responsible for implementing the monitoring and evaluation process in accordance with the project plan

- Reporting is an essential element of monitoring and evaluating progress and effectiveness. Reporting contributes to transparency, accountability, ongoing learning, risk management, and stimulating innovation. As such, the project leadership and management committee report results from monitoring and evaluation conducted during the project. However, reports need to adhere to Pacific Assist's privacy policy and the Publishing Results section of the Research Ethics and Practice Policy

- Like decisions about monitoring and evaluation data collection methodologies, decisions about who to report to and reporting methods will be dictated by the nature of the project and a judgment about what will be most effective in the circumstances. The project design team make this decision, and the rationale and justification for the decision must be documented in the project plan. However, as a minimum, and subject to Pacific Assist's privacy policy and the Publishing Results section of the Research Ethics and Practice Policy, reports of ongoing project monitoring and

evaluation must be provided to:

> ➢ The Pacific Assist's projects manager and board of directors
> ➢ Partners

In addition, results might also be reported to:

> ➢ Representatives of primary stakeholder groups
> ➢ The project primary stakeholder community
> ➢ Pacific Assist personnel, volunteers, and service providers
> ➢ Donors
> ➢ Potential project funders and/or sponsors
> ➢ Other NGOs and the broader development sector
> ➢ Governments and their various departments
> ➢ The public

- Decisions about who to report results to should be based on what is in the best interests of project participants and primary stakeholders
- Methods for reporting results will also vary according to the nature of the project, the monitoring and evaluation method/s, and who the results are being delivered to. Methods for reporting results of project progress and effectiveness include but are not limited to:

> ➢ Annual and semi-annual project reports
> ➢ Other formal reports
> ➢ Pacific Assist website
> ➢ Pacific Assist promotional material
> ➢ Press releases
> ➢ Public presentations
> ➢ Research partner channels
> ➢ Large and small community meetings
> ➢ Workshops and seminars
> ➢ Social media and online forums
> ➢ Email and text messages
> ➢ Newspaper and magazine articles
> ➢ Peer reviewed publications

- However, the results are obtained and reported, and whoever they are reported to, they should be used to celebrate achievement and to inform and improve practice (adjust approaches, identify weaknesses, deficiencies, and/or mistakes), and

broaden the organisation's knowledge, capacity, expertise, and perspectives. To achieve this, leadership and management committees must be intentional and think strategically about how they use results. There are many ways to reflect on results and lessons to inform and improve practice. These include, but are not limited to:

> ➢ Holding workshops for leadership and management committee members, participants, and primary stakeholders to discuss results and their implications
> ➢ Conducting roundtables with other NGO's and relevant agencies to share, discuss, and reflect on the implications of results
> ➢ Sharing results with and seeking feedback from advisory boards and others well qualified and experienced in the context and domain of the project
> ➢ Using social media forums for hosting discussions about results and their implications
> ➢ Establishment of a shared data base capturing data and lessons

- The project leadership and management committee include in their reporting of results to the board of directors any recommendations for changes to the project plan based on the results of monitoring and evaluation. Recommended changes must be approved by the board before being implemented. The board of directors will assess recommended changes against the same criteria as the original plan and the results of monitoring and evaluation, and provide a written assessment to the project coordinator and the project leadership committee.

Post-Project Evaluation

The post-project monitoring and evaluation process is an extension of the ongoing progress monitoring and evaluation process and is designed during the project planning stage. Unless stated here, the same policies and procedures apply to both. Indicators for measuring final performance will likely be the same as progress indicators, although there may be some variation depending on the nature of the project, the project objectives and indicators, and the data collection methods utilised. As with the progress monitoring and evaluation procedures, the design team determine the measurement process and document the rationale and justification for the decision in the project plan.

In addition to assessing achievement in relation to self-reliance key performance and project objectives indicators, the post project evaluation should also include an assessment of the overall implementation of the project, particularly in relation to components of the project plan not measured and assessed as part of the ongoing progress monitoring and evaluation.

For example:

- The effectiveness of the context analysis in providing an accurate picture of the primary stakeholder social and environmental context
- The effectiveness of the initial engagement process as a means of connecting with and engaging primary stakeholders broken down by primary stakeholder subgroups:
    - Government
    - NGOs
    - Community Groups
    - Schools
    - Business and Industry
    - Families
    - Women
    - Children
    - The Disabled
    - The Racially Discriminated

- The effectiveness of the project leadership and management structure
- The effectiveness of rights, protection, and inclusion policies and procedures
- The effectiveness of ongoing progress and monitoring, and evaluation processes assessed against the objectives of policy procedures. The following policies should be assessed:
    - Child Safety and Wellbeing
    - Complaints Handling
    - Empowerment of People with a Disability
    - Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability
    - Fraud and Corruption Prevention
    - Gender Equality and Equity
    - Privacy
    - Public Materials
    - Rights, Protection and Inclusion
    - Safeguarding
    - Whistleblowing
    - Transparency

- Forecasted costs against actual costs
- The effectiveness of fundraising efforts

- The effectiveness of financial management systems
- Contribution and/or performance of partners and service providers in relation to expectations laid out in MOUs and statements of engagement
- Potential partnerships that have arisen during the project
- Compliance with local and international legal obligations
- A review of complaints and complaint handling effectiveness
- How the project has contributed to and/or implications for Pacific Assist's vision, mission, strategic plan and long-term goals

Also include in the post-project evaluation recommendations for implementing the same or similar projects in the future.

If the project is being conducted over an extended time frame (longer than one year) assessment of overall implementation should be conducted at the end of the first year and then biannually.

The policies and procedures outlined previously for determining data collection methods and reporting on progress monitoring and evaluation (Monitor Project Progress (real time / live audit)) apply to data collection methods and reporting on the overall implementation of the project.

Annual Report

Each project leadership and management committee also prepare an annual project report and submit it to the Projects Manager by June 30 to be included with the Pacific Assist Annual Report prepared for the Annual General Meeting conducted in August. The Annual Report should include:

- A brief description of the project and any partners
- The project vision, objectives, and project indicators
- The status of the project
- Discussion of challenges faced during the year
- Key achievements for the year
- Summary of the results of monitoring and evaluation
- Strategic plan for the next twelve months

Depending on the length of the project, this may or may not be part the post-project evaluation. If it is included in the post-project report, the annual report should be a stand-alone item.

Related Policies

- Project Development, Implementation, and Evaluation Policy
- Primary Stakeholder Participation and Contribution Policy
- Research Ethics and Practice Policy